

## **AGENDA 4.4**

# **Standing Committee on Nominations**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS AND KEY RESULTS AGAINST PLAN**

- Changes to constitution implemented
- Liaison with boards, councils, commissions and committees
- Synod resolution promoted

### **SUCSESSES**

All casual vacancies have been filled during the synodical term with support and cooperation of the governing bodies requiring them. Processes have been developed to implement the changes made to appointment processes at the last synod and to ensure transparency in the way that recommendations are made to appointing bodies.

### **LESSONS LEARNT AND CHALLENGES**

We have learned that we need to promote vacancies widely and in as many ways as possible, while not forgetting the importance of approaching people in person in order to fill vacancies. This demands a significant commitment from committee members and investment of administrative support time. There is a need within LCA governing bodies to have access to affordable and competent governance training.

### **MAJOR IDENTIFIED RISKS**

1. Resistance to required professional standards training and working with children checks
2. The lack of availability of younger people
3. The slowing down of the implementation of limiting terms of service to 10 continuous years on a governing body

## **MEMBERS**

Anthony von Brandenstein, Jodi Brook (consultant), Kate Burke, Colleen Fitzpatrick (chairperson), Mark Gierus (from 2020), Charmaine Harch (GCB representative), Margit Hubbers, Peter Schirmer (consultant), Warren Schirmer, David Wear (until 2020), Jayne Welke (minutes and administrative support)

## **BACKGROUND**

The Standing Committee on Nominations (SCON) works with the governing bodies of the church to find suitable members. SCON is responsible for processing nominations and forwarding them with recommendations to the appointing bodies.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS/RESULTS AGAINST PLAN**

### **MAJOR ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS**

At the convention of General Synod in 2018, the decision was made that all governing bodies, except for the General Church Board, would no longer be appointed by voting at such a convention, but appointments to governing bodies were to be made by the body to which they

reported. This is an important step in ensuring that governing bodies are skills based.

In the intervening time, SCON has developed and implemented processes for working together with governing bodies in the recruitment and selection of members. Part of this process has meant that there is the opportunity for discussion with the appointing body about the characteristics they are looking for in new members, and in recruiting with these in mind. There have been a number of casual board vacancies during the synodical term, and SCON has worked with a representative of each of these boards to recruit and screen nominees before working together to recommend a preferred candidate to the appointing body. This has been a positive process for all concerned. These processes have been documented so that they can be standardised as the need arises.

The resolution from the last convention of General Synod that was approved by General Church Board, was that by 2025, each governing body would appoint a suitably qualified person aged under 30 years of age with councils and committees to appoint such a young person by 2022. This has been discussed with many groups, and they are actively seeking to fulfil this requirement. Jodi Brook was appointed as a consultant to SCON to assist with this.

The principle that members should serve no longer than 10 continuous years on any governing body has been raised, but the decision by General Church Board that the significant change to appointment processes and other changes to the constitution means that the time of appointment will now date from the time of that change. This has slowed down the implementation of the intention of that resolution.

SCON members are very conscious that those appointed to governing bodies are leaders within the LCANZ, and so enforces the need for appointees to have the appropriate screening checks and professional standards training. In line with their responsibility to 'recommend to General Church Board any policies and procedures to improve the identification and recruitment of suitable people ... for good governance at all levels', it was recommended to GCB that all synod delegates should conform with these as General Synod is the highest decision-making body of the church.

## **PROGRESS AGAINST PLAN/OBJECTIVES**

The desire to recruit younger people to governing bodies has been limited to some extent by the lack of opportunities for face-to-face gatherings during the pandemic. The lack of face to face meetings has also impacted recruitment more generally.

The committee has met on numerous occasions, using virtual technology when possible. We continue to strive for representation from a range of districts, ages and gender balance on governing bodies. With most bodies having only seven members, this is not always easy.

The Nominations form asks people to indicate if they would be prepared for their nomination to be considered for other roles if they are not appointed. A talent bank of these nominations has been developed and a small number of successful appointments have been drawn from this. Nominations which have not been fully completed are followed up to ensure that due process is satisfied.

Information about nominations and recommendations for appointments are formally submitted to appointing bodies.

## **SUCSESSES**

The calibre of nominations received by SCON has been of a very high standard. This has been as a result of advertising vacancies as well as networking. It is important that we promote vacancies widely so that we can ensure that we have good governance. It is also necessary that we engage with as wide a range of our community as possible.

Processes have been developed to ensure that appointing bodies receive the information that they need to make an informed decision. Recommendations for appointment are backed up by factual information gleaned from nomination forms and from interviews and referee checks.

One of our major successes was the appointment of members to the Committee of Lutheran Earth Care Australia and New Zealand resulted in a very highly qualified and geographically diverse group of experts.

## **LESSONS LEARNT AND CHALLENGES**

SCON has met regularly as there have been administrative requirements such as the development of procedures and the necessary tools to implement them as well as recommendations of appointments to process.

The greatest challenge is to promote vacancies throughout the LCANZ. The move to electronic media has needed to be embraced so that younger people have access to our communications.

Governance training has become increasingly important for those who are members of boards. This applies more widely than LCANZ governing bodies and includes our schools and aged care and community service organisations. We are aware that our institutions are struggling to find suitably qualified Lutheran members for their governing boards, and we had hoped to work more closely with Districts but this has been impacted by the pandemic. SCON has however, maintained a talent bank of nominees that were not appointed and has on occasion used this successfully to source potential members.

The processes required to ensure that the best people are appointed to governing bodies take time. The committee members are a disparate group of volunteers, and the workload is significant if we are to maintain the standards that we have established.

We have learned the importance of personal approaches to people to encourage those with relevant skills and knowledge to nominate for positions within our governing bodies.

## **RISKS**

### ***Major risks***

1. The processes required to ensure that Working with Children checks and Professional Standards training requirements maintain currency have not yet been devised let alone implemented. We need to ensure that all volunteers conform to the required standards in order to ensure that we conform with the standards that are being developed and implemented.
2. The lack of availability of younger people means that it is difficult to recruit members for governing bodies from that age cohort. It is important that we have younger voices speaking into our church governance. This also has implications for succession planning.
3. The slowing down of the implementation of limiting terms of service to 10 continuous years has removed the need to replace some long standing members of governing bodies

## **Likelihood of identified risks occurring and potential impact**

1. Re 1 above: The increasing need for regulation following the outcome of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse strengthens the need for compliance to these checks. This could form a barrier for those who are unwilling to undergo the required checks and training nominating for positions.
2. Re 2 above: We need to develop new leaders so that there is good succession planning and also to ensure that the church is not seen as irrelevant as society changes and adapts.
3. Re 3. We are seeing this happening, and it has taken the pressure away from identifying new people which makes changes to membership less palatable.

## **Summary of action taken to mitigate risk**

1. Re 1: SCON will not accept nominations without the required documentation. The Committee also advocates for the standards to be met more widely eg by Synod delegates
2. Re 2: Information about vacancies on governing bodies is being advertised more widely using social media as well as the more traditional methods. Collaboration with Child Youth and Family Ministries continues, including having the Director a consultant to SCON. SCON continues to advocate for governance training to be available within the LCA system for members of all higher-level governance bodies.
3. Re 3: SCON continues to search for replacement members on all governing bodies, as well as suggesting to people that they can move between governing bodies.

## **ALIGNMENT TO 'OUR DIRECTION 2018-2024'**

1. Grow as God's People:
  - 1.5 Protect and uphold the dignity of ... children and the vulnerable – by ensuring that all nominees have undertaken professional standards training and have Working with Children checks – or their equivalent.
3. Enable us to Go and Grow 3.1: Governance by seeking to recruit people with suitable qualifications, knowledge and experience to governance roles.

## **COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION**

Members of SCON have engaged with all governing bodies within the LCA by email and letter and have visited with many of them. We have worked collaboratively with them to identify possible nominees, and to then shortlist and interview where required prior to making recommendations for appointment.