



Presbytery of Western Australia

26 Regulations: Powers of a Presbytery Standing Committee

That the Assembly resolve:

To authorise the Standing Committee, on advice from the Legal Reference Committee, to add to the current Regulation 3.7 a description of the powers of a Presbytery Standing Committee giving it on-going authority to act for the Presbytery on urgent matters.

Proposer: Ian Tozer

Seconder: Lorraine Stokes

Rationale:

The Uniting Church's Constitution, Paragraph 30, requires that there be a Presbytery Standing Committee. This parallels the requirements for a Synod (36) and the Assembly (47). However, unlike in paragraphs 36 and 47, nothing more is said about the powers Presbytery Standing Committee.

Similarly, the Regulations (as amended to 30 August 2017) say little more than that there shall be a Presbytery Standing Committee (3.7.2 (a)). Regulation 3.7.2 (c) gives the Presbytery the ability to "determine" the powers of its Standing Committee. This is helpful until a matter arises where the Presbytery has not specified the powers of its Standing Committee. Such matters may or may not be contentious. When matters are contentious, a decision needs to be taken to the Presbytery or a decision of the Presbytery Standing Committee needs to be confirmed by a Presbytery meeting. If the next scheduled meeting is a long way off, this requires calling a Special Meeting.

Regulation 3.7.4.1 (d–e), states of the Synod Standing Committee:

- (d) *The Standing Committee is empowered to act on behalf of the Synod between meetings of the Synod in respect of any of the responsibilities of the Synod except such as the Synod may determine.*
- (e) *The Standing Committee shall deal with matters referred to it by the Synod.*

There is no reason there should not be a similar statement about the Presbytery Standing Committee in the Regulations.

Recent experience in the Presbytery of Western Australia brought this gap to light. It seems both reasonable and helpful change to make a change to the Regulations