



## B4 STANDING COMMITTEE

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Standing Committee held six face to face meetings and six meetings via video conference during the last triennium. The move to online meetings from a meeting held in April 2020 was due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Apart from the scheduled Standing Committee meetings, three additional meetings were held. One meeting was held to consider whether approval would be given for online gathering for worship with Holy Communion, another to carry out regular Standing Committee business and another to consider the risks associated with holding the Sixteenth Assembly in a face-to-face way or whether to move to an online meeting. When the Standing Committee met face-to-face, meetings commence with dinner on Friday evening and conclude at 4.00pm on Sunday; when meeting online, meetings began Friday night and concluded on Sunday afternoon. The exception in this triennium was the March 2021 meeting which began Friday afternoon in order to address the significant amount of preparation for the Sixteenth Assembly.
- 1.2 The Standing Committee builds community each time it meets, beginning each of its meetings with worship which usually includes Holy Communion. Throughout, worship and prayer including attention to pastoral matters provided by the President and members of the Standing Committee is an important foundation for its work. Over the last triennium the Standing Committee has been very conscious, and grateful, that it has been supported by the prayers of many members of the church and is certain that this support has been reflected in the spirit with which its work has been undertaken and the outcomes of its deliberations.
- 1.3 The venue for 5 meetings has been Mary McKillop Place (MMP) in North Sydney. When MMP was closed to bookings for two years due to major renovations, the next meeting was held at the Castlereagh Boutique Hotel in Sydney CBD. All other meetings for the triennium were held online. There have been several changes to the membership of the Standing Committee since the Fifteenth Assembly. Rev Dennis Corrowa served as a Standing Committee member for the August 2018 meeting only, Rev Garry Dronfield resigned following his resignation as UAICC President in April 2020 and Pastor Mark Kickett continued as a UAICC member in the role of Interim Chairperson, Ayla Williams became the additional UAICC representative from July 2020, Rev Felicity Amery served until July 2019 after which she resigned due to her appointment as the General Secretary of the South Australian Synod, Rev Helen Paine was appointed to the Standing Committee according to the Regulations following the resignation of Rev Felicity Amery, and Rev Fie Marino resigned in March 2020 due to his appointment to a staff role in UnitingWorld. The Standing Committee made one co-option in order to augment the skill mix of Standing Committee members. The participation of individual members of the Standing Committee is presented in the table below.

1.4

Member	Eligible to attend	Attendance
	9 regular meetings, 3 additional meetings (2/4/2020, 5/9/2020 and 30/01/2021)	
Deidre Palmer	12	12
Colleen Geyer	12	12
Sharon Hollis	12	12
Stuart McMillan	12	11
Dennis Corrowa	1	1
Garry Dronfield	6	4
Mark Kickett	11	7
Ayla Williams	3	1
Felicity Amery	4	4
David Baker	12	12
Rob Brown	12	11
Hayden Charles	12	6

Steve Francis	12	11
Geoffrey Grinton	12	12
Andrew Johnson	12	12
Jason Kioa	12	11
Elaine Ledgerwood	12	12
Clare Ligtermoet	12	11
Fie Marino	6	3
Kath Merrifield	12	11
Nicole Mugford	12	12
Helen Paine	8	6
Catherine Pepper	12	11
Elaine Rae	12	11
Geoff Thompson	12	10
Yuko Tonai-Moore	12	10
Ian Tozer	12	11
<b>Coopted members</b>		
Stuart Woodward (from March 2019)	11	11

- 1.5 Business for the Standing Committee is generated by developing issues in the life of the church and society as well as referrals from the Assembly, Assembly agencies, synods, presbyteries, and from Standing Committee members. In addition, the Standing Committee exercises oversight of the work of the Agencies and in particular monitors performance of Boards to which it has delegated significant authority; as well as taking responsibility for ensuring the responsible management of finance and risks in the Assembly. The Standing Committee investigates risk at its meetings through reviewing its Risk Appetite Statement, Risk Register and summaries of the risk registers of the agencies (AFARC reviews agency risk registers in detail). Throughout 2020 the Standing Committee also oversaw a specific, whole of Assembly COVID-19 risk register.
- 1.6 Following decisions made at the 15<sup>th</sup> Assembly, two major areas of business for the Standing Committee in this triennium have been an understanding of sovereignty and treaty for First Peoples and how this might affect the Uniting Church's practices and processes; and resourcing the church on marriage and same gender marriage. Additionally, significant work following decisions at the 15<sup>th</sup> Assembly regarding continuing witness, climate change, disability access and domestic and family violence also contributed to the Standing Committee's agenda. All of these will be discussed in more detail later in this report.
- 1.7 In addition to these major calls on its time the Standing Committee has also addressed itself to the referrals from the 15<sup>th</sup> Assembly and other matters brought to it from within the life of the church.
- 1.8 Continuing the major focus across the life of the church to review and improve the church's practices that will serve to protect children and vulnerable people from abuse, two significant entities were established over the last triennium, both as joint initiatives of the Assembly and the Synods. The first was the establishment of UCA Redress Ltd as the entity for the Uniting Church to connect with the National Redress Scheme for survivors of child sexual abuse in Uniting Church congregations, agencies and schools. Secondly, the National Safe Church Unit was established as a national institution of the Uniting Church, again as a joint initiative of the Assembly and the Synods. Both of these continue our collective commitment to being a safe Uniting Church.
- 1.9 Standing Committee minutes are usually available on the Assembly's website (<https://assembly.uca.org.au/about/assembly-standing-committee>), and the Standing Committee decides if minutes are not made available due to decisions regarding confidentiality.

## 2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS OF THE 15<sup>th</sup> ASSEMBLY

- 2.1 Of the significant amount of work referred to the Standing Committee from the 15<sup>th</sup> Assembly, most was attended to and completed. Some outstanding items or items in progress are as follows:
- 2.2 **Apology to LGBTIQ+ Australians** (Assembly minute 18.30). During the triennium a Task Group has been established to undertake this work. The Task Group's work is ongoing and will be brought to the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

- 2.3 **Regulations – Membership of UAICC** (Assembly minute 18.22). An amendment to Regulation 3.2.1(a) has been considered by the Assembly Legal Reference Committee and discussed with UAICC National Executive. This amendment will be finalised by the August 2021 Standing Committee meeting.
- 2.4 **Support for the Australian Roman Catholic Church 2020 Plenary Council.** (Assembly minute 18.33) This resolution to stand in solidarity with the Australian Roman Catholic Church as its people enter into a formal period of preparation for the 2020 Plenary Council, and its associated requests, has not yet been actioned due to the Plenary Council being postponed to October 2021 due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

### 3. ARISING FROM THE 15<sup>th</sup> ASSEMBLY

- 3.1 All resolutions of the 15<sup>th</sup> Assembly where the Assembly resolved to undertake certain action were put into effect, apart from those identified in Section 2 of this report. Those matters that were referred to the Standing Committee for implementation are reported in the following section of the report.
- 3.2 **Amendments to Regulations.** There were many decisions by the 15<sup>th</sup> Assembly approving amendments to the Regulations (see Section 13 of this report). The Assembly Legal Reference Committee supported the Standing Committee with expertise and wisdom in drafting the Regulations that were approved by the Standing Committee. In addition, there was 1 Presidential Ruling plus other requests that did not lead to a Ruling.
- 3.3 **Family and Domestic Violence.** (Assembly minute 18.06) The Standing Committee in response to this resolution requested the Assembly Resourcing Unit (ARU) to scope educational and theological materials relating to the Statement adopted by the 15<sup>th</sup> Assembly. This work was completed and resources compiled for the use of the Church and its members. It is available ([Beyond Violence - Uniting Church Australia](#))
- 3.4 **Disability Access Guidelines.** (Assembly minute 18.18) In response to the resolution to adopt the 'Statement of Access and Welcome', the Statement was sent to all Synods as a starting point for further conversation and action regarding justice and equality for people with disability; as well as a request for them to develop Disability Action Plans in accordance with the federal Disability Discrimination Act 1992. The Assembly also developed its own Disability Action Plan (<https://uniting.church/statement-of-access-and-welcome/>).
- 3.5 **For the Whole Creation.** (Assembly minute 18.12.01) In response to the request to consider specific actions, resourcing and ways of connecting practically with other councils to address issues related to climate change, the Assembly Resourcing Unit worked with others to develop a National Climate Action Plan based on three focus areas: Prophetic – Raising our voice for stronger action; Practical - Walking the Talk through Emissions Reduction and Adaptation Responses; and Pastoral – walking alongside those most impacted. This Plan is intended to apply directly to the Assembly including Assembly Agencies, and by invitation, encouragement and resourcing to all other parts of the Uniting Church including Synods, Church Schools, Agencies, Presbyteries and Congregations. The President also held a Conference in Fiji, *For the Whole Creation*, contributing to this work.
- 3.6 **Peace Treaty between Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea** (Assembly minute 18.13.01). In response to this resolution the Standing Committee referred the resolution to the UnitingWorld Board for their ongoing work with partner churches in Korea and with the World Council of Churches; and the President wrote to the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition to inform them of this resolution and encourage the Australian Government to continue to work towards a peaceful Korean Peninsula. In June 2020, the Uniting Church in Australia joined global churches and ecumenical bodies including the World Council of Churches calling for immediate steps to formalising peace on the Korean Peninsula.
- 3.7 **Continuing Witness.** (Assembly minute 18.31) In response to this resolution, a Task Group was established. The Task Group reported throughout the triennium to the Standing Committee with its work continuing until the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly. The Standing Committee determined that three documents – The Confession of Belhar, *Laudato si'*, and The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification – would be presented to the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly at its reconvened meeting to be considered by the Uniting Church, between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Assemblies.

- 3.8 **Recognition of UCA Languages.** (Referred to the Standing Committee, ASC minute 18.56) The Standing Committee resolved to affirm and celebrate that within the UCA there are congregations and Ministers for whom their heart language is not English; and to therefore encourage Synods and Assembly Agencies to further recognize this in the processes involved with placements, the admission of ministers and the training and formation for ministry. This was communicated to the relevant bodies.
- 3.9 **Pastoral Support for Seasonal Workers.** (Referred to the Standing Committee, Proposal 58 approved, ASC minute 18.28.06) In response to this resolution the Assembly Resourcing Unit facilitated the establishment of a network within the Uniting Church of those ministering to seasonal workers; supported Synod staff advocating for fair treatment of seasonal workers; and supported and engaged with the National Council of Churches in Australia and the Pacific Conference of Churches in their advocacy efforts in this area. Presbytery Ministers were also made aware of the resolution and support available from the Assembly if any seasonal workers were being supported in their Presbytery.

## 4. LIVING OUT THE COVENANT: SOVEREIGNTY AND TREATY

- 4.1 **Recognition of First Peoples as Sovereign.** (Assembly minute 18.09) Following the resolution at the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly that in the light of the Preamble to the Constitution of the Uniting Church and the Statement from the Heart and their understanding of sovereignty, that affirmed that the First Peoples of Australia are sovereign in this land, the Standing Committee established the Sovereignty Affirmation – Practical Outcomes Task Group. The Task Group worked throughout the triennium, and with the UAICC, to progress possible practical outcomes as a result of the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly resolution. This work, including policy development, education and advocacy will continue into the next triennium.
- 4.2 **Day of Mourning.** (Assembly minute 18.17.01) In response to this resolution, Uniting Church members were encouraged to support a Day of Mourning to occur on the Sunday prior to 26<sup>th</sup> January each year, to engage during worship services in activities such as reflection and discussion of the profound effect of invasion and colonization on First Peoples. Resources were developed each year by the Assembly Consultant Covenanting collaborating with the UAICC, and many congregations took up this opportunity, as well as a national service which took place in 2021.
- 4.3 **Memoranda of Understanding between UAICC and Synods.** (Assembly minute 18.17.02) This resolution encouraged Synods to enter into conversations with Congress that lead to Memoranda of Understanding that spell out the mutual rights, obligations and responsibilities in those relationships. These conversations have begun and are continuing, being cognisant of the particular contexts in each Synod.
- 4.4 **National Conference Conversations with UAICC.** Following a referral of a proposal from the Assembly and subsequent Standing Committee resolutions, the Assembly Consultant, Covenanting met with National Conference Chairs and conducted workshops with a number of National Conferences with members of UAICC. The Acknowledgement of Country resource developed throughout this triennium has also be translated into a number of languages.

## 5. MARRIAGE AND SAME-GENDER RELATIONSHIPS

- 5.1 (Assembly minute 18.07) The 15<sup>th</sup> Assembly determined to vary its policy on marriage by recognising two statements of belief on marriage. In addition it resolved that Ministers and celebrants authorised by the Uniting Church in Australia may exercise freedom to decide whether their religious beliefs allow them to accept requests to celebrate marriages; and noted that Church Councils had certain authorities re marriages performed on their properties, while not having authority to require Ministers or to prevent a Minister in placement in their Congregation, from celebrating marriages.
- 5.2 The Standing Committee was tasked with considering any further action that would be necessary to enact these resolutions. The Standing Committee approved the Additional Marriage Liturgy (2018), and authorised the Additional Marriage Liturgy (2018) for publication and use, as at 21 September 2018. The Standing Committee also established a Task Group to develop a set of resources on theological and biblical themes relating to the resolutions to assist Uniting Church members consider issues that had been raised.

- 5.3 The President and Associate General Secretary met with Chairs of National Conferences in order to keep them updated about actions that were being taken as a result of the Assembly resolutions. The General Secretary and members of the Assembly Resourcing Unit developed information and responses to a set of frequently asked questions for the clarity of Uniting Church members.
- 5.4 There were no changes to Regulations as a result of these resolutions.

## 6. GUIDANCE TO THE CHURCH RE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NON- GEOGRAPHIC PRESBYTERY

- 6.1 The Assembly Standing Committee resolved (ASC minute 18.67.13) that, exercising its guiding authority, Uniting Church Constitution 38(b)(i), to advise the Church that:

The possibility of a non-geographic, theologically-based presbytery or synod intended to assert its doctrinal independence from other councils of the church is outside the purpose and rationale of the inter-conciliar mode of 'waiting upon God's Word' and 'obeying God's will' by which "the whole body of believers may be united by mutual submission in the service of the Gospel" (see Basis of Union, Paragraph 15).

*"The Uniting Church recognises that responsibility for government in the Church belongs to the people of God by virtue of the gifts and tasks which God has laid upon them. The Uniting Church therefore so organises its life that locally, regionally and nationally government will be entrusted to representatives, men and women, bearing the gifts and graces with which God has endowed them for the building up of the Church. The Uniting Church is governed by a series of interrelated councils, each of which has its tasks and responsibilities in relation both to the Church and the world.*

*The Uniting Church acknowledges that Christ alone is supreme in his Church, and that he may speak to it through any of its councils. It is the task of every council to wait upon God's Word, and to obey God's will in the matters allocated to its oversight. Each council will recognise the limits of its own authority and give heed to other councils of the Church, so that the whole body of believers may be united by mutual submission in the service of the Gospel."*  
(Basis of Union, Paragraph 15)

- 6.2 On request from the Standing Committee, the General Secretary sent this advice to Synods asking that it also be sent to Presbyteries.

## 7. ADDITIONAL WORK OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

- 7.1 **Assembly Board Remuneration Policy.** Over a number of meetings, the Standing Committee discussed and developed a Board Remuneration Policy for the Boards of Assembly Agencies. The Assembly Board Remuneration Policy and Guidelines were approved at the November 2019 Standing Committee meeting.
- 7.2 **Regulations Review.** In July 2019 the Standing Committee established a Task Group to undertake a comprehensive review of the Uniting Church Regulations for the future of the church. The work of the Task Group will continue into the next triennium with a report being brought to the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly.
- 7.3 **UnitingWorld Legal Structure.** Following request from UnitingWorld, and extensive work and discussion, foundational documents were developed for UnitingWorld to become a Public Benevolent Institution (PBI). The Standing Committee approved the UnitingWorld application to the ACNC for registration as a charity and to the ATO for PBI status.
- 7.4 **Disability Royal Commission National Task Group.** Following the establishment of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability, the Standing Committee approved the establishment of the Disability Royal Commission National Task Group at its November 2019 meeting. The National Task Group provides oversight of the response of the Uniting Church to the Royal Commission, including a collaborative approach to any responses and submissions to the Royal Commission.
- 7.5 **General Secretary's Performance Review.** The performance of the General Secretary was

reviewed and affirmed following extensive consultation with stakeholders of the Assembly. The Assembly Standing Committee is recommending to the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly that the appointment of the General Secretary be extended for 3 years.

## **8. EXERCISING OVERSIGHT OF ASSEMBLY AGENCIES AND COMMITTEES**

- 8.1 The Standing Committee has invested significant effort in the preparation for, and conduct of, regular meetings with Board and Committee Chairs and National Directors ensuring that greater and more rigorous attention is given to the oversight of delegated Boards and Committees. During this triennium the Standing Committee worked through a schedule for reporting to it by Assembly agencies and committees according to a common reporting framework. Included in this framework is governance documentation, risk, governance and compliance, financial status, policy, public profile, delivery on Strategic Plans and operational matters.
- 8.2 There is more detailed and regular oversight of the finances and risks in individual areas of operation via the work of the Assembly Audit, Finance and Risk Committee. The Standing Committee continued oversight of its risk register for its own areas of responsibility and it is provided at each meeting of the Standing Committee for consideration and review. During the triennium the Standing Committee developed a Risk Appetite Statement, and reviewed the risk register in line with the Statement. The Standing Committee also developed a new risk register format which more closely aligns risks to the areas of work for which the Assembly has responsibility.
- 8.3 The Standing Committee reviews and receives reports from Advocates regarding the operation of and issues raised in the Circles of Interest. Members of Circle Panels are also consulted about the work of the Standing Committee and sit on Task Groups for particular projects overseen by the Standing Committee.
- 8.4 The task of continually improving governance capacity in the Standing Committee is key to the effective work of the Standing Committee. Standing Committee pays attention to expanding the source of people who can be identified for serving on Assembly bodies in an attempt to add diversity and deepen the skill mix available for the work of these groups. Additionally, Standing Committees underwent an extensive orientation and several training session/s on the nature and role of governance.
- 8.4 The Standing Committee Governance Reference Committee has continued to regularly meet prior to each meeting of the Standing Committee, which has been beneficial for the work of the Standing Committee.

## **9. COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

- 9.1 As all parts of the Uniting Church adapted to restrictions and a focus on wellbeing during the pandemic, so too did the Assembly, including staff working remotely and all operations moving online. The Standing Committee has met via videoconferencing from the end of its in-person meeting in March 2020.
- 9.2 In order to resource the governance oversight of the Standing Committee for the Assembly, briefings were provided to the Standing Committee monthly including updates from the Business Continuity Team and Assembly Executive, a COVID-19 specific Risk Register and staffing and budgetary implications.
- 9.3 The Standing Committee met in an extraordinary meeting in April 2020 to give permission for Uniting Church congregations to celebrate Holy Communion in on-line communities in accordance with Guidelines that were also approved. (ASC minute 20.34.02) Currently this permission is in place until November 2021.

## **10. PRESIDENTIAL RULINGS**

- 10.1 Presidential Ruling #34 addressed the question of whether the resolution of the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, headed 'Response to Victorian Assisted Dying Legislation', adopted by the Synod in July 2019 at the 14th meeting of the Synod was constitutionally valid. The President ruled that the resolution was constitutionally valid. The Presidential ruling was confirmed by the Standing

## **11. ASSEMBLY FINANCE**

- 11.1 Following on from the previous triennium, the Assembly has continued to attend to robust budget and cost controls in order to move to a more financially sustainable future. The oversight, advice and wisdom of members of the Assembly Finance Audit and Risk Committee, and the Assembly Investment Advisory Committee; as well as the commitment of Assembly executive leaders have contributed to building the foundations for this important goal. The detailed report regarding Assembly finance is provided as document B4A.
- 11.2 Standing Committee appreciates the generous financial contributions from the Synods towards the Assembly budget for each of the three years of 2019 - 2021. This support continues to be given when resources across the Church are under significant stress and need to be wisely managed and distributed.
- 11.3 During this triennium, the Assembly has also had to face financial challenges. The responsibility that the Assembly has, to pay redress to survivors of historical sexual abuse remains an important commitment. Provisioning for these payments has been a significant undertaking in order to meet this responsibility. COVID-19 impacts on all parts of the Assembly required constant monitoring and planning, at times planning for a scenario that could not easily be predicted. The Standing Committee received regular updates on these challenges, and the Assembly Finance Audit and Risk Committee also scrutinized the risks and financial impacts, providing advice to the Standing Committee.

## **12. EXEMPTIONS FROM THE OPERATION OF REGULATIONS**

- 12.1 From time to time the Standing Committee is asked to exercise its authority under Regulation 3.10.1 to approve alternate Regulations and/or exemptions from Regulations for particular bodies.
- 12.2 During the last triennium there were five requests for exemption to the operation of the Regulations.
- 12.3 An exemption from Regulation 3.6.3.1(d) was granted to the Synod of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory in order that a proposal regarding the appointment of the Moderator could be taken to the Synod meeting in July 2019.
- 12.4 An exemption from Regulation 3.7.4.1 (a) (i) was granted to the Queensland Synod, in order for the ex-Moderator to be granted leave of absence after serving for one year on the Synod Standing Committee following the conclusion of their term as Moderator. This exemption was provided until the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly. An exemption was granted from Regulation 3.7.4.1(a)(i) in order to excuse the current ex-Moderator of the Queensland Synod from their role on the Synod Standing Committee for the duration of the 34<sup>th</sup> Synodial term. An exemption was granted from Regulation 3.7.4.1(a)(iii) in order for the length of time served by elected members to the Synod Standing Committee to serve a term of three years.
- 12.5 An exemption from Regulation 3.3.8(a)(iii)(1) as granted to the Assembly regarding Synod membership of the Assembly for the meeting of the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly in order to reduce membership due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- 12.6 An exemption from Regulation 3.5.6(b) was granted to the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, in order to allow for the 2021 meeting of the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania to not commence with a public act of worship, understanding that a public act of worship would take place on Friday 26 February 2021 from 7:30pm on the opening day of the Synod meeting.
- 12.7 An exemption from Regulation 3.3.9(b)(ii) was granted to the Northern Synod in order that the nomination and election of Northern Synod persons to the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly meeting could occur at a special meeting of the Synod.

## **13. AMENDMENTS TO THE REGULATIONS**

- 13.1 The 15<sup>th</sup> Assembly authorised the Standing Committee on advice from the Assembly Legal Reference Committee to amend the following parts of the Regulations when the Standing Committee deems it necessary (Assembly minute 18.19):

- Moderator Term of Office
- Membership of Standing Committee
- Powers of a Presbytery Standing Committee
- Membership of UAICC
- Candidates for Ministry
- Pastors

- 13.2 An additional definition was added to the Regulations: **Congress** means Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress
- 13.3 Regulation 3.6.3.1 was amended so that the Regulation relating to Moderator be brought in line with Presidential Ruling #33, regarding the term that the Moderator of a Synod is elected for, so that it conforms to the Constitution of the Church
- 13.4 Regulation 3.7.5.1 was amended to change the titles of Congress ex-officio members of the Standing Committee, and the title of an Assembly staff attendee at the Standing Committee.
- 13.5 Regulations 2.3.2.1, 2.3.2.2, 2.3.2.3, 2.3.2.4, 2.3.2.5, 2.3.2.6, 2.3.2.7, 3.7.4.3 were amended to clarify the process for candidature for a Minister with respect to Congress and the Congress Ministerial Education Board; and the Ministerial Education Board with respect to Congress
- 13.6 In Part 6 of the Regulations, Regulation 2.3.2.5(a) was deleted from the opening paragraph in Part 6, and 6.1 to align the Regulations which are covered by Part 6 and provisions where rights of appeal are specifically granted
- 13.7 The Standing Committee amended Regulations 2.10.1(k)(ii) and 2.10.4(d) following identification of consequential amendments from the revision of the Appeals Regulations in 2014 which had not been carried through to the Regulations.

#### **14. UCA REDRESS LTD AND THE NATIONAL SAFE CHURCH UNIT**

- 14.1 As indicated in Section 1 of this report, two significant entities were established over the last triennium, both as joint initiatives of the Assembly and the Synods. The first was the establishment of UCA Redress Ltd as the entity for the Uniting Church to connect with the National Redress Scheme for survivors of child sexual abuse in Uniting Church congregations, agencies and schools. Secondly, the National Safe Church Unit was established as a national institution of the Uniting Church, again as a joint initiative of the Assembly and the Synods.
- 14.2 The 15<sup>th</sup> Assembly resolved (Assembly minute 18.08.04) to request the Standing Committee to make changes which it deemed necessary to the Regulations to implement policies and practices in response to any recommendation of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. No such occasion arose during the course of the triennium.
- 14.3 In March 2019 the Standing Committee approved the revised “National Child Safe Policy Framework – March 2019” as replacing the version approved in March 2017. The Framework was due for review, and the revised framework aligns with the *Ten Principles for a Child Safe Organisation* approved by COAG after their development by the Australian Human Rights Commission.
- 14.4 The National Safe Church Unit and UCA Redress Ltd report annually to the Standing Committee.

#### **15. STAFF MATTERS**

- 15.1 During the course of this triennium, no staff appointments were made or resignations received for staff appointed by the Standing Committee.

#### **16. BUSINESS PASSED TO THE NEXT STANDING COMMITTEE**

- 16.1 The outgoing Standing Committee has provided a number of suggestions for attention and action by the incoming Standing Committee arising from its work on governance and other matters.



## **17. FUTURE MEETING DATES**

- 17.1 The incoming Standing Committee elected by the Sixteenth Assembly will hold its first two meetings in Sydney on August 27-29 and November 12-14.