



**Uniting Church in Australia**  
**ASSEMBLY**  
Assembly Standing Committee

15 – 17 July 2022

DOCUMENT 7

Title	<b>Assembly Investment Advisory Policy (Assembly Investment Advisory Committee)</b>
Type of Paper	For approval
Assembly or ASC Minute	ASC Minute 21.42 (ASC Meeting held 27 – 29 August 2021)
Consultation	Assembly Investment Advisory Committee (AIAC) Assembly Finance, Audit and Risk Committee (AFARC) General Secretary National Director, Strategic Finance and Administration
Purpose	To provide an updated Assembly Investment Advisory Policy, (“Investment Policy”), as endorsed by AIAC and AFARC, for approval by ASC.
Rationale & Findings Summary	<p>Assembly Standing Committee agreed, in August 2021:</p> <p><b>3. Assembly Investment Advisory Committee</b> <i>Stuart Woodward introduced Documents 13, 13A and 13B, consisting of a summary report and the proposed updated investment policy.</i></p> <p><b>21.42</b> <b>It was resolved to:</b></p> <p>21.42.01 <i>receive the report;</i></p> <p>21.42.02 <i>endorse the updated Assembly Investment Advisory Policy;</i></p> <p>21.42.03 <b><i>request the Assembly Investment Advisory Committee to incorporate the feedback from the Assembly Standing Committee into a twelve-month review of the policy, which is then brought back to the Assembly Standing Committee for consideration at the July 2022 meeting of the Assembly Standing Committee; and</i></b></p> <p>21.42.04 <i>request the General Secretary, in conjunction with the Assembly Finance, Audit and Risk Committee and the Assembly Investment Advisory Committee, to provide an information and education session for the Assembly Standing Committee regarding investments and related matters to an Assembly Standing Committee meeting prior to the review of the policy.</i></p> <p><i>(Extract from Minutes of August 2021 ASC Meeting; emphasis added)</i></p> <p>This discussion addresses the request made in item 21.42.03 (highlighted above), noting that 21.42.04 was addressed at the March 2022 ASC meeting.</p>

Feedback provided at the August 2021 ASC discussion of the Investment Policy was wide ranging, with ASC requesting consideration of the following matters when the Investment Policy was further reviewed:

- Assurance as to consistency with the AIAC Charter document;
- Greater clarity as to the purpose of the Investment Policy;
- Explicit consideration of ethical investments and ESG (environmental, social and governance) considerations (also further to discussion at March 2022 ASC as part of the information session);
- “Tightening” in order to distinguish “policy” from “procedure” (with this document focussed on the former) – making this document more “high level”; and
- Consultation with Assembly Agencies.

As noted, August 2021 ASC also requested an “information and education” session as a form of due diligence, which was held in March 2022.

The feedback received in August has now been addressed and incorporated into the attached, revised, Investment Policy. Responses to the ASC education session have also been addressed in the updated Investment Policy. The opportunity has also been taken for some editorial rationalisation and “tidying up”.

Against this background, numerous changes have been made to the Investment Policy such that presenting a “marked up” version of the Policy was infeasible. Instead, a “clean” version only is provided. However, for ASC’s benefit, a high level summary of the changes made (and proposed) follows.

Proposed changes to the Investment Policy since August 2021, as now attached, include:

- Highlighting the purpose of the Investment Policy, supporting the articulated function of the AIAC;
- Wholesale removal of procedural considerations – instead referring to the procedures and practices that exist within relevant Assembly documents;
- Reinforcing that investments are to be held, in the first instance, in UCA related institutions (such as Uniting Financial Services (NSW/ACT) or UEthical (VIC/TAS));
- Expansions of key definitions as part of portfolio design;
- Rationalisation of two previous tables of Potential Investment categories and Default Allocations into one table – providing greater clarity and consistency and removing potential inconsistencies in interpretation and application;
- Incorporating explicit reference to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals supporting the endorsed Ethical and ESG Investment principles;
- Enhancing arrangements for AIAC and Agency engagement practices; and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Numerous instances of editorial enhancements - tightening, shortening, re-ordering, simplification and clarification – removing redundant expressions, unnecessary detail etc.</li> </ul> <p>As a result of these changes, the revised Investment Policy is now considerably shorter than the version considered by ASC in August.</p> <p>AIAC, and AFARC, believe that the Investment Policy attached is an improvement on the version last considered by ASC, is more workable, simpler and clearer. It is endorsed for ASC approval.</p>
Attachments	Updated “Assembly Investment Advisory Policy”.
Proposals	That the Assembly Standing Committee: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approve the updated “Assembly Investment Advisory Policy”.</li> </ol>
Submitted by	<p>Graeme Rough Chair, Assembly Investment Advisory Committee <a href="mailto:grough@bigpond.net.au">grough@bigpond.net.au</a> 0411 225 332</p> <p>Stuart Woodward, Chair, Assembly Finance, Audit and Risk Committee <a href="mailto:stuartwoodward202@gmail.com">stuartwoodward202@gmail.com</a> 0414 886 346</p> <p style="text-align: right;">and</p> <p>Leo Iosifidis National Director, Strategic Finance and Administration Assembly Support Unit <a href="mailto:Leoi@nat.uca.org.au">Leoi@nat.uca.org.au</a> 0427 546 100</p> <p>5 July 2022</p>

**Updated Assembly Investment Advisory Policy.**

Refer separate document.