



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

10 – 12 March 2023

**DOCUMENT 16**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Assembly Secretariat Financial Sustainability Working Group - Proposal</b>
Type of Paper	For Approval
Assembly or ASC Minute	n/a
Consultation	Previous ASC Meetings Assembly General Secretary Assembly Finance Audit and Risk Committee (AFARC)
Purpose	To seek approval for the establishment of an Assembly Secretariat Financial Sustainability Working Group, with Terms of Reference as attached.
Rationale & Findings Summary	<p>At the March 2022 ASC meeting (Zoom), Committee members broke into break-out rooms to address a series of questions in relation to Assembly Secretariat Financial Sustainability. One of the outcomes of that discussion was support for a specialist, more holistic, Committee to address issues such as business planning, development of an Assembly Secretariat “value proposition”, specific fundraising initiatives and a broad communication strategy to support such matters.</p> <p>Since that ASC meeting, ASC has been regularly updated as work proceeded to give life to such a Committee. At the November 2022 ASC meeting, it was foreshadowed that a “fleshed out concept and proposal” might be ready for consideration at March 2023 ASC. Enthusiasm for this was subsequently evident in the question and answer session following the AFARC Report.</p> <p>Accordingly, this ASC meeting is now being asked to consider, and approve, establishment of, and Terms of Reference for, such a Committee. A draft document to this end is attached.</p> <p>AFARC endorses this proposal.</p>
Attachments	Draft Terms of Reference for a (new) Assembly Secretariat Financial Sustainability Working Group.
Proposals	<p>That the Assembly Standing Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Approve the establishment of the Assembly Secretariat Financial Sustainability Working Group;</li><li>2. Approve the Terms of Reference for the Working Group as submitted;</li><li>3. Appoint a Chair of the Working Group;</li></ol> <p>and request the Assembly General Secretary to convene the first meeting of the Working Group as soon as is practicable.</p>
Submitted by	Stuart Woodward, Chair, Assembly Finance, Audit and Risk Committee <a href="mailto:stuartwoodward202@gmail.com">stuartwoodward202@gmail.com</a> 0414 886 346 8 <sup>th</sup> February 2023

# **DRAFT**

**Final Version for ASC - March 2023**

## **ASSEMBLY SECRETARIAT FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY WORKING GROUP**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

[Date of approval – **ASC - MARCH 2023 TBC**]

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<b>Purpose:</b>	To oversee an holistic approach to Assembly Secretariat funding, resourcing, income, expenditure etc with an overarching goal of long term financial sustainability for the Assembly Secretariat.
<b>Reporting Arrangements:</b>	Reporting to the Assembly Standing Committee (ASC).
<b>Period:</b>	This Terms of Reference is for the period from March 2023 until July 2024 (unless concluded earlier).
<b>Membership:</b>	As determined by the ASC on the recommendation of the Assembly General Secretary.

#### **Background:**

1. The challenge of financial sustainability for the National Assembly Secretariat has been discussed, at length, at ASC meetings of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Assemblies, as well as having been reported to meetings of the full Assembly. Especially relevant is the Secretariat's reliance on Synod funding, noting the pressures that exist for Synods in that regard.
2. ASC conducted a workshop focussed on financial sustainability at its March 2022 meeting.
3. An outcome of the March 2022 workshop was the suggestion of a "specialist Committee" or Working Group to bring an holistic approach to funding, resourcing, income, expenditure etc with an overarching goal of financial sustainability for the Assembly Secretariat.

#### **Task Required:**

The Working Group will:

1. Develop / articulate an “Assembly Secretariat Value Proposition” that succinctly sets out the value that the Assembly Secretariat brings to the broader Uniting Church in order to underpin increased funding for the Secretariat. <sup>1</sup>
2. Identify and implement communication strategies to leverage / communicate such Value Proposition – a desired outcome of which will ideally be a broader funding base and an increased level of funding to support Assembly Secretariat initiatives.
3. Identify and implement strategies seeking to broaden funding sources for the Assembly Secretariat – thinking laterally and including, but not limited to, bequests and donations.
4. Engage with Assembly Agencies, seeking to gain from their experience and insights and especially seeking opportunities, as appropriate, to leverage systems, processes, know-how and related skills in relevant areas (such as fundraising).
5. Consider relevant “lessons” and experiences from other religious bodies as well as other entities / Synods of the Uniting Church in relation to financial sustainability.
6. Consider whether alignment exists between specific uses of Assembly funds and elements of a broader funding base; similarly consider any relationship between passive and active income sources and types of expenditures.
7. Target an increase in annual recurrent funding of circa \$1.5m.
8. Engage with the Assembly Finance Team, sharing (two way) relevant constraints, emerging issues or developments, opportunities and other matters pertinent to the Working Group’s deliberations.
9. Articulate any “risk” implications as part of the Working Group’s activities and outcomes.
10. Develop a plan to embed identified strategies within the ongoing work of the Assembly Resourcing Unit – i.e., to transition the work of the Working Group to “business as usual” within the Assembly Resourcing Unit.
11. Take into account any outcomes or proposals from the Act2 project that may impact this work.
12. Provide an interim report to AFARC’s July 2023 meeting.

### **Expected Outcomes:**

At the conclusion of its work the Working Group will:

1. Present a report to the Assembly Standing Committee in March 2024 (or prior to that if the Working Group’s activities are complete) covering the work undertaken – including actions implemented by Management and recommendations for further action.
2. Transition its work to the Assembly Resourcing Unit upon completion

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<sup>1</sup> In general terms, a value proposition is a succinct, easy-to-understand reason why a customer should buy a product or service from that particular business – a statement of the “benefits” that a company is delivering to customers who buy its products or services. It is meant to convince stakeholders, investors, or customers that a company, or its products or services, are worthwhile. If the value proposition is weak or unconvincing it may be difficult to attract investment and consumer demand. In the context of this discussion, an Assembly Value Proposition seeks to succinctly capture and articulate the value delivered by the Assembly Secretariat and why that is worthy of financial support.

### How the Working Group will work:

1. Be grounded in the gospel and build upon the tradition of the Uniting Church in Australia, being cognisant of, inter-alia, the breadth of the Church's activities, the many demands on scarce resources, and the Church's calling to advocacy.
2. Ensure that the activities of the Working Group are consistent with the Basis of Union of the UCA, the Constitution and Regulations, and align with the current strategic priorities of the Assembly.
3. Be mindful of the "Background" and "Task Required" as articulated above.
4. The Working Group will work collaboratively.
5. Where appropriate, conduct its work on the basis of rigorous analysis, contemporary research and lateral thinking – consulting as appropriate with specialist resources within Assembly and the broader Church (and elsewhere).

### Establishment:

The Working Group shall be established by the ASC.

### Membership:

Under the sponsorship<sup>2</sup> of the Assembly General Secretary, the Working Group will comprise:

	<b>APPOINTOR</b>	<b>NOMINEE</b>
Convenor	To be appointed by ASC	TBA
Assembly Associate General Secretary	To be appointed by Assembly General Secretary	Lindsay Cullen
National Director, Strategic Finance and Administration	To be appointed by Assembly General Secretary	Leo Iosifidis
Assembly Communications "Lead"	To be appointed by Assembly General Secretary	Made in consultation with National Manager, Media and Communications
Members – further two from ASC	To be appointed by ASC	TBA
Member – one from AFARC	To be appointed by Assembly General Secretary upon recommendation of AFARC	TBA
<b>TOTAL = Seven members</b>		

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<sup>2</sup> The sponsor is the person, at senior management level, who –

- is responsible for the success of an initiative;
- provides necessary guidance and resources to the broader team;
- champions the initiative;
- helps to remove obstacles that might reduce its overall chance of success;
- promotes the initiative's value and makes sure it has the right resources to succeed;
- provides context, expertise, and guidance to the team;
- acts as an escalation point for relevant decisions and issues; and who
- acts as the link between the Working Group and the appointing body.

Resources available to assist / support the Working Group include:

- AFARC (and the considerable work completed to date by AFARC);
- Assembly Resourcing Unit – especially the Finance and Administration team and Communication teams; and
- The Working Group may involve expert assistance from outside the Working Group for specific aspects of its work, subject to the Assembly General Secretary’s approval of any related expenditure.

Administrative support will be afforded by the Assembly Resourcing Unit.

Casual vacancies will be filled as required by the Assembly General Secretary and communicated to ASC.

The selection process will consider the skills and expertise required to undertake the work of the Working Group. The Working Group Task Group will be dismissed at the earlier of July 2024 or at the conclusion of the work it has been given.

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