



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

21-23 July 2023

**DOCUMENT 5**

<b>Title</b>	<b>General Secretary Report</b>
Type of Paper (Information/Decision)	For information and decision
Assembly or ASC Minute	Not applicable
Consultation	Associate General Secretary, National Directors for UnitingCare Australia, Frontier Services
Purpose	To advise the Assembly Standing Committee on Assembly progress against Strategic Plan, operations and issues relevant to its work
Rationale & Findings Summary	
Attachments	Attachment A: UnitingWorld Response re Croker Island Redress Attachment B: Strategic Plan and Business Plan
Proposal/s	That the Assembly Standing Committee: 1. Receive the report
Submitted by	Colleen Geyer Assembly General Secretary <a href="mailto:colleeng@nat.uca.org.au">colleeng@nat.uca.org.au</a> ; 0411 333 167

# GENERAL SECRETARY REPORT

## Introduction

As I write this report, the Uniting Church has just celebrated its 46<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, has moved through 26 days of prayer in the Uniting in Prayer initiative of Act2 and into the Collective Discernment Phase of Act2, and the first Synod for 2023 (the Synod of South Australia) has just met.

The Synod of South Australia begins a five-month period when all six Synods will meet. At these Synod meetings, four new Moderators will be installed and at least two new General Secretaries will be elected. At this meeting of the ASC, we will consider the theme of the President-elect for the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly, and the issues and challenges for the Uniting Church to be reflected on by nominees for President-elect at the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

Leadership transition in our Church will bring new life and energy, as well as perspective on the challenges we face for our future.

This ASC will approve the budgets for the Assembly and its Agencies, which have been signed off by Executive and Agency Boards. When the Federal Government presented its budget last month, there was, and continues to be, a lot of talk about balance, being there for those who are dealing with cost of living pressures, while not rocking the inflation boat. We too have had to find balance, what we can afford and what we can't, what are the cost of living pressures for us as well as asking are there any possibilities for financial sustainability.

These are not just questions for the Assembly, but for the whole Uniting Church. Reality has to guide us, while forward planning can either offer hope or despair. We find both of these in the Church. The story of Jesus offers us hope in transformation and new life. It also shows us that the journey to this necessarily includes challenge and facing reality.

The issues in this report, and that we will consider at this meeting, represent challenge and the need to face reality. They sit alongside the Act2 Project which is a journey to see if transformation is possible.

## Staff updates

Applications for the two National Consultant roles close at the end of June. Interviews and appointments will be made following review by the Associate General Secretary and myself.

I have approved the recruitment of an additional staff member for the Strategic Finance and Admin team, a Management Accountant. Currently this team is under pressure with the services it provides to the Assembly Secretariat and the three Assembly Agencies; as well as responsibilities providing support to AFARC, AIAC, National Disaster Relief Fund, the Cyber Security Task Group and the Assembly Secretariat Financial Sustainability Working Group, and to the National Insurance Program and other national initiatives.

All appointments are within the budget presented to the ASC.

## UnitingWorld Response to Croker Island Redress

Following resolutions passed by the March 2023 ASC meeting, the President and the General Secretary met with the Chair of the UnitingWorld Board to discuss a way forward regarding this issue. They also attended a special UnitingWorld Board meeting to answer any questions.

Following these meetings, the UnitingWorld Board considered the following proposal, which was resolved by circular resolution by email, with one abstention.

(Information provided by UnitingWorld in addition to the resolution, is included in **Attachment A.**)

## **UWB20230502**

*In light of the above, it is proposed that the Board:*

- 1. Notes the historical links that can be traced between the Methodist Overseas Mission and UnitingWorld and the long-term acceptance of the possibility of redress funds being required at some stage by the Board of UnitingWorld in its Risk Register,*
- 2. Confirms that the Board does not accept legal liability for the matters which are the subject of the Redress scheme,*
- 3. Notes UnitingWorld's Mandate and Constitution, including that the governance of UnitingWorld rests with the UnitingWorld Board, and that outside the reserve powers held by the ASC, the UnitingWorld Board has both a fiduciary duty and the authority to be the sole decision-making body regarding the use of UnitingWorld assets.*
- 4. Notes and is grateful for the clarification provided by the General Secretary of the ASC at the Board Meeting on 27 April 2023 that the request from the ASC was not intended to direct the board,*
- 5. Notes that a contribution of the amount proposed below would not be in breach of UnitingWorld's reserves policy.*
- 6. Notes that any further requests for contributions to matters of redress will be considered by the UnitingWorld Board on a case by case basis.*

*and*

*7. Resolves:*

- That UnitingWorld agrees to share equally with the Assembly the funding of such redress utilising funds and other assets to the extent that these can legitimately and appropriately be used for this purpose, up to a total of AUD1.5m,*
- That UnitingWorld source funds for this purpose through the sale of one of the remaining manses, subject to advice from the National Director.*

## **Act2 Budget Shortfall and Funding Request**

At the Assembly Standing Committee (ASC) meeting on 12 March 2023, the budget for completing the work requested by the 16th Assembly for the current phase of the Act2 Project, was considered. At its reconvened meeting in 2022, the 16th Assembly resolved:

*to request each of the Synods in consultation with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Congress to join with the Assembly to consider and contribute to resourcing the work.*

Initially, the Assembly Secretariat was able to fund the work of the project for the initial eighteen months (approximately \$500k). In order for the project to complete its work, a budget shortfall of \$327,356 was identified.

The ASC resolved the following, that:

*noting the decision of 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly regarding Act2 and the draft budget of the Act2 Project, request the Assembly General Secretary write to each of Synods requesting they consider what financial contribution they are able to make to fully funding the Act2 Project for the 2023-24 financial year.*

Following the March ASC meeting, I wrote to the General Secretaries regarding the ASC resolution. As at 29 June, Northern Synod and WA Synod have indicated to me that they are unable to provide a contribution. Another Synod has had further conversations with myself and Andrew Johnson about the funding request; and suggested that it would be helpful to provide an indication of a percentage split between the Synods.

I have since provided that to the other four Synods. At the time of writing this report, one Synod has responded with a contribution of \$100 000; and another will discuss the request at their next Standing Committee meeting.

I have also had conversations with the ND Strategic Finance and Admin, and AFARC about the responsibility of the Assembly to ensure that the work of the Act2 Project is able to be completed. These conversations are ongoing.

## **Task Group Updates**

**SOGICE Task Group Membership** - Following the March 2023 ASC meeting, the Assembly Officers made one further appointment to this Task Group, Anthony Hinds.

**Assembly Secretariat Financial Sustainability Working Group** – Following the March 2023 ASC meeting, the Assembly Officers appointed Lindsay Cullen as the Convenor of this Working Group. AFARC appointed Geoff Kerry as their representative. We are currently finalising the arrangements for the first meeting of this group.

**Continuing Witness Task Group** – The webpage to support the consultation work of the Continuing Witness Task Group with Presbyteries following the resolutions of the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly was completed (<https://uniting.church/continuing-witness-resources/>). I have also written to all General Secretaries asking them to alert Presbyteries about the resources and request for engagement.

## **Uniting for the Voice**

Following resolutions at the March 2023 ASC meeting, in support of the proposed change in the Australian Constitution to recognise an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament, as a step toward the invitation of the Uluru Statement to voice, truth telling, and treaty, the following have been done:

- A webpage, Uniting for the Voice, has been developed (<https://uniting.church/voice/>) which includes information about resolutions and statements of the Uniting Church, information and resources about the Uluru Statement and the referendum, FAQs, a resource to have a conversation about the issues in local communities and much more. I express gratitude to the Assembly Media and Comms team for their work in putting together this significant resource for our Church.
- I wrote to all Synods informing them of the ASC resolutions.
- A new signature block including the Uniting for the Voice graphic was designed for all Assembly staff who wish to use it.
- The Assembly staff meeting in July, followed by an online meeting of Assembly Senior Leaders, will focus on the referendum and the issues relating to the Uluru Statement. We will be led by Nathan Tyson, Manager, First Peoples Strategy and Engagement in the NSW.ACT Synod.
- A joint communications strategy across the Assembly has been developed.

## **Updates from Assembly Agencies**

### **Assembly Resourcing Unit**

Since the last ASC meeting, the Assembly Resourcing Unit (including the Mission and Ministry team, Assembly Support Unit and Communications Unit) has continued to work on projects as directed by the ASC and arising from our Strategic Directions (Respond to the Church, Identity, Innovation, Intergenerational and Intercultural). This has included:

### **Responding to the Church**

- Convening and resourcing meetings of the Net Zero Emissions Steering Group, which has met twice and before the ASC meets will have hosted a Roundtable meeting designed to hear from those working in this area within Synods, Agencies, Presbyteries and other parts of the Church, to begin mapping the commitments and actions of different parts of the Church and determining gaps, possibilities for collaboration etc.
- Convening the SOGICE task group, which will meet for the first time before the ASC meeting.
- Support for the Standards for Ministries Committee.
- Relational meetings with a wide range of Synod based workers and volunteers in Vic/Tas Synod related to Assembly interests including justice, covenanting, ecumenical and interfaith work, theological education, innovative practices, intercultural work and intergenerational work. (Similar trips to QLD Synod and SA Synod are planned for July and August respectively.)

- Continuing support for the Circle Advocates including individual face to face and zoom meetings and a group zoom meeting.
- Regular engagement with a variety of people from Congregations, Presbyteries and Synods regarding the regulations and processes of the Church.

### **Identity**

- Support of the UCA's commitment to the Voice, through planning and delivering congregational sessions, Introduction to Yes23 conversations webinar, "Yarning for Yes" First Peoples voices webinar, development of the "Uniting for the Voice" congregational resource handout and supporting powerpoint and videos supporting the Voice. (ASC members are invited to contribute short videos talking about their support of the Voice!)
- Regular connection with the national Justice network and with ecumenical and interfaith groups connected to justice issues (climate change, refugees and asylum seekers, justice for Palestine).
- Taking a lead role in organising the 10<sup>th</sup> "Building Harmony" Iftar Dinner, which had an inspiring focus on our religious traditions and the need to support the Voice referendum.

### **Innovation**

- Working with the NSW.ACT Synod 'Faith Communities' Working Group.
- Connecting regularly with the National 'New and Renewing' practitioners network.
- Supporting "OmegaCon" experimental gaming convention in Geelong.

### **Intergenerational**

- Updating of a range of Intergenerational resources for sharing through Assembly comms, the DNG Circle and on illuminate.
- Continuing work on the "Our Vision for an Intergenerational Church" resource.

### **Intercultural**

- Working with the BMC Circle in the development of the Intercultural Neighbouring Sunday resources.
- Attendance at Tongan National Conference and Korean National Conference.
- Working as part of a group bringing a proposal to the NSW.ACT Synod to add "Being an Intercultural Church" to the Synod Future Directions framework.

Additionally there has been a great deal of work done to enable the Assembly to improve in its approach to Cybersecurity and ability to prepare for and respond to any incidents of this nature.

## **Frontier Services**

### **Governance:**

The Board of Frontier Services continues to meet quarterly. It has two sub-committees, Finance and Risk and Development (focus on programs and fundraising/communications/marketing)

The Board is currently recruiting for up to three additional new members.

### **Finance:**

At the time of writing, during the last week of the financial year, the agency is working hard in its effort to maximise year-end fundraising in our tax appeal. The organisation is forecasting a small surplus for FY23 overall, subject to a reasonable fundraising result in the final weeks. Having initially set a deficit budget for the year, staff have worked hard to reduce costs, slowing recruitment and reducing the expenditure in several key areas. The surplus position has also benefited from a strong bequest result for FY23.

The budget established for FY24 shows a deficit in the first year (around \$360k) that should return to a surplus in subsequent years. The deficit is in part due to the recruitment of several new staff to assist our fundraising and communications. Expenditure to increase our donor base and to continue to seek funding through charitable trusts and foundations is also proposed. These new areas of expenditure should lead to an ongoing upturn in fundraising.

Financial reserves remain strong (\$9.3M).

**Risk:**

Frontier Services has adopted a Risk Register similar in structure and approach to that of the Assembly. The Finance and Risk subcommittee, the Board and management review the Risk at each meeting. High risks continue to relate to potential Redress obligations in the future. Frontier Services has received and responded to three Requests for Information in the last 6 months. At this rate, we are confident that our provisioning is adequate to meet any obligations.

Significant risks relate to:

- Cyber security
- Synods and presbyteries not adequately addressing their WHS and HR obligations towards Bush Chaplains
- Risks associated with shared services under the Service Level Agreement

Management believes it has the necessary controls in place at present to mitigate these risks.

**Human Resources:**

Staffing has remained stable, with only one staff member leaving the organisation in the last 6 months.

We are recruiting to replace that role and fill several new roles in the coming weeks/months. The current market is very competitive, making it hard to find suitable new staff, and also making the salary expectations of new and existing staff quite high.

**Program:**

Frontier Services has established new Memoranda of Understanding with Synods / Presbyteries for each Bush Chaplaincy. We have very positive and productive working relationships with these bodies.

Some movement in chaplains has seen one position conclude while several new chaplaincies are being funded in the new FY. There should be 20 funded roles in FY24.

The Outback Links volunteer program continues to take time to rebuild volunteer engagement post-pandemic, as people reengage and are become willing to travel and offer their services.

**UCA engagement:**

We are most grateful for the support we receive from congregations and individuals from across the Uniting Church. There has been an upturn in congregations holding services or events in support of our work. Our donors continue to be faithful in their financial support.

Frontier Services has made a submission to the Act2 process and continues to be willing to contribute where it is able.

**Relocation:**

Frontier Services continues to negotiate a relocation of its national office back to 262 Pitt Street Sydney where it would be co-located with the Assembly and UnitingWorld. There are many positives that would arise from such a relocation however, management is proceeding cautiously to ensure full cost/ benefit analysis is undertaken.

## **UnitingCare Australia**

During the reporting period the National Director, Claerwen Little, visited Somerville in Darwin, UnitingCare Queensland's Cairns sites and met with our aged care CEO's at the UnitingSA site in Semaphore.

Along with Colleen, the President and Rob Floyd, Claerwen also attended the UAICC conference in Darwin just after Easter and also attended the Uniting Ministry and Missions Network in Cairns, presenting along with the President on the work of UnitingCare Australia, Act2 and the Uniting for the Voice campaign to the twenty Directors of Mission and ministry agents from across the country.

Leaders Forum 2023: A date has been set for 19th September and will be held at UCity, the home of Uniting Communities in Adelaide. The event will run for the day and be followed by a celebration dinner. The two Improvement Notices from WorkSafe ACT have been resolved satisfactorily. The process also led to the review and updating of several policies and practices both at the Assembly level and in our own office environment.

Preparation of the UnitingCare Australia budget has been a challenging task this year given our need to reduce the deficit however we have presented a break-even budget so we can chart a path that is both sustainable and viable now and into the future.

## **Ageing to our Full Potential**

In support of our 2022 and 2023 Pre-Budget Submissions, we have continued to advocate for full funding of the Fair Work Commission's decision for a 15% interim wage increase for direct aged care workers from 30 June 2023, including on-costs. This has included facilitating attendance by skilled representatives from the UnitingCare network (Uniting NSW.ACT, Juniper and Eldercare) at roundtables hosted by Ministers Wells and Kearney which were seeking expertise to inform the implementation of the funding. Additionally the UnitingCare network publicly announced they would commit to a pledge to pass on the funding of the pay increase to their staff in a joint media statement with ACCPA, Anglicare Australia, Baptist Care, Catholic Health Australia.

On 4 May the Government finally announced that they would be funding the full 15% and we released a media statement – It's time to care about aged care workers: UnitingCare Australia welcomes pay rise at last.

The Aged Care CEO Network has continued to meet fortnightly during the reporting period and met face to face with Ministers Butler and Wells in Adelaide on 31 March at UnitingSA's Wesley House aged care facility. The 90 minute meeting saw both Ministers very engaged in the key topics of sustainability, workforce and home care.

The Home Care Working Group has met regularly to discuss government's progress with the new Support at Home Program and their internal activities in preparing for this change. A 12 month postponement of the Program to 1 July 2025 was announced in the May Budget.

The International Recruitment Project has commenced with Wesley Mission Queensland, UnitingCare Queensland, Resthaven and Juniper signing up to participate. Wesley Mission Queensland are holding the head agreement with the FIP Group who are specialists in international recruitment, particularly in the care sector.

The Aged Care national bodies including ACCPA, Anglicare Australia, Baptist Care and Catholic Health supported the delivery of a Summit in Canberra in June to focus on the future sustainability of aged care including the concept of increased consumer contributions.

## **Justice for First Peoples**

The First Peoples Network has continued to meet during the reporting period and are supporting the Church and Congress in relation to the Voice to Parliament. We participated in a Voice to Parliament advocacy day at Parliament House in collaboration with Anglicare Australia, Baptist Care Australia, Catholic Social Services, The Salvation Army and St Vincent de Paul. The day involved a number of meetings with politicians speaking to a joint letter to Federal Parliamentarians to urge them to support the Voice to Parliament.

We drafted a summary document outlining the comprehensive list of submissions, resolutions and statements that have been made across the Church included by the UAICC, the Assembly, Synods and UnitingCare Australia.

We led the drafting and consultation on a joint submission to the Joint Select Committee on the Constitution Alteration (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice) with the UAICC and Church. We also drafted and lodged a submission with the Senate Committee in relation to the continuation of compulsory income management – the Income Management Reform Bill.

### **Economic Equality and Inclusion**

We have drafted, in collaboration with the network, and lodged and number of submissions which have included a focus on the measures identified in our January 2023 Pre-Budget submission:

- The Extent and Nature of Poverty in Australia – Senate Community Affairs Committee
- Cost of Living Inquiry – Senate Select Committee
- Measuring What Matters – Treasury
- Income Management Reform – Senate Community Affairs Committee

In response to our submission on the Extent and Nature of Poverty in Australia, Claerwen was invited to speak to the Senate Community Affairs Committee on 27 February and was joined by Mark Newton from Parramatta Mission. Our opening statement to the Committee is available [here](#) and was followed up with a media release calling for immediate action to end poverty in Australia.

On 17 March we issued a media release urging the Government to prioritise wellbeing in the May Budget and welcomed the recommendations of the Interim Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee's report in our media release on 19 April. It was pleasing to see in the Budget a number of measures that aligned with our advocacy asks including an increase to working aged payments. This is a modest increase, as stated in our media release on Budget night, and we will continue to advocate for a further increase. We consulted with the network and the wider Church to draft and lodge a submission to the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into Philanthropy in May.

### **Stronger Community Services Network**

Our Networks, Working Groups and Communities of Practice (CoP) continue to attract strong membership and inform our advocacy activities. With a total of 34 meetings during the reporting period, the CoPs are actively meeting and sharing practice, information and resources. In response to requests from the network, we have established three new Communities of Practice during this quarter:

- Australian Disability Enterprises (ADE)
- Op Shops
- Trauma Informed Aged Care (Forgotten Australians)

The Quality, Risk and Compliance CoP facilitated an online presentation in March by UnitingCare Queensland on lessons learned from their cyber incident in 2021. The CoP also met face to face at Uniting Vic.Tas in Melbourne in May to share knowledge and resources with presentations on data dashboards, quality reporting, software solution procurement and clinical governance frameworks. The Industrial Relations CoP had a briefing from MinterEllison on the impacts of the Secure Work, Better Pay legislation and multi-employer bargaining on 10 May. The Aged Care CEO Network had a presentation from MinterEllison in relation to compliance risk and the Compliance Statement that Boards will be required to sign in October this year.



**Assembly Business Plan July 2020 – June 2024\***  
**Updated as at June 2023 (all updates in RED)**

### Reporting the Business Plan

The Intention will be that the Business Plan will outline the areas of work for the Assembly, the expected outcomes of that work and the key activities involved in achieving the work.

Status	Colour Code
Planned activity	Planned
Completed Activity	Completed
On Track	On Track
Some delay / concern	Some Delay
Major delay/concern	Major Delay

### An example:

Activities	July 2020- June 2022	July 2022- June 2023	July 2023- June 2024
<b>ABCD Task Group</b>			
<i>Expected outcomes</i> This Task Group will ...			
- Activity 1 – This activity is progressing well	On Track	Completed	
- Activity 2 – This activity is delayed slightly because....		Some Delay	
- Activity 3 – This activity has experienced a major obstacle because ....	Major Delay	Major Delay	Planned

\* It was agreed this plan would extend for one year to align with the Assembly triennium

**For noting:**

- If an initiative has been completed, it will be removed from the Business Plan, so that only current and future initiatives are included
- Only the status of initiatives in the current year of operation (ie July 2022-June 2023) is shown in the plan
- If the delivery of an initiative is up achievable due to capacity of Assembly staff or Task Groups or Working Groups, this will be noted

## Strategic Direction 1: Respond to the Church

Respond to the ongoing needs of the whole Church and other Councils

### SD1.S1: Respond to the specific issues within areas of mandated responsibility

Respond to issues arising in determining doctrine and worship, ecumenical and international relationships, government and discipline including guiding decisions on the tasks and authority to be exercised by other Councils, and the general oversight and promotion of the life and mission of the Church

#### Activities:

Generally, this is undertaken on an ad-hoc basis, responding to inquiries and requests from across the Church. These will be added to this section or another more relevant section and reported accordingly.

### SD1 Strategy 2: Enact Decisions of the Assembly

Support Task Groups arising from Assembly/ASC: Sovereignty, Continuing Witness, Disability Access; Enact decisions on Domestic and Family Violence, Climate Change.

Activities	July 2020- June 2022	July 2022-June 2023			July 2023- June 2024
		Jul-Oct	Nov-Feb	Mar-Jun	
<b>SD1.S2 Assembly Decisions</b>					
<b>SD1.S2.1 Continuing Witness Task Group</b>					
<p><b>Expected Outcomes</b></p> <p>The consultation resources have been developed, and webpage also developed. General Secretary has written to Synods, asking these to be brought to the notice of Presbyteries so they can participate in the consultation for this work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Task Group are moving to Consultation Phase</li> <li>- Reporting and final proposals to 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly</li> </ul>	On Track	On Track	On Track	On Track	Planned
<b>SD1.S2.2 Apology to LGBTIQ Australians Task Group</b>					

<p><b>Expected Outcomes</b></p> <p>To develop the wording of an official apology from the Uniting Church in Australia to LGBTIQ Australians for the Church’s role in the silence, rejection, discrimination and stereotyping of LGBTIQ people, couples and families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The ASC requested the President to undertake conversations regarding the progression of this work.</li> <li>- The President and General Secretary met with the Task Group to update them of the decisions of the ASC</li> <li>- The President will report to the July ASC meeting.</li> </ul>	Some Delay	Some Delay	Some Delay	On Track	Planned
<b>Activities</b>	July 2020- June 2022	July 2022-June 2023			July 2023- June 2024
		Jul-Oct	Nov-Feb	Mar-Jun	
<b>SD1.S2.3 Climate Action Plan</b>					
<b>SD1.S2.3a A call to action for climate justice: listening to First Peoples wisdom</b>					
<p><b>Expected Outcomes</b></p> <p>Membership and proposed way forward was considered and discussed at March 2023 ASC meeting. Work is progressing with the group having met two times and organizing a roundtable meeting for interested people involved in this work in Synods, Presbyteries and Agencies</p>		Some Delay	Some Delay		

	July 2020- June 2022	July 2022-June 2023			July 2023- June 2024
		Jul-Oct	Nov-Feb	Mar-Jun	
<b>SD1.S2 ASC Decisions</b>					
<b>SD1.S2.4 Act 2</b>					
<p><b>Expected outcomes</b> Resource the Assembly to address the significant challenges and opportunities facing the Uniting Church into the future including identity, sustainability and structure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reported to Reconvened Assembly. Act2 Project unit in place and will report to each ASC meeting.</li> </ul>	On Track	On Track			
<b>SD1.S2.5 Church in the Digital Age</b>					
<p><b>Expected outcomes</b> To consider the theological implications of the Church in the digital age.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Requests have been made of the Transforming Worship, Discipling the Next Generations and Growing in Faith Advocates and Panels. Reports will come to the November 2023 and March 2024 ASC meetings</li> </ul>	On Track	On Track			
<b>SD1.S2.6 Chaplaincy</b>					
<p><b>SD1.S2.7 Preventing Harm from Sexual Orientation &amp; Gender Identity Change Efforts (SOGICE)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Terms of Reference and Membership were approved.</li> <li>- Work of Task Group is progressing</li> </ul>		Some Delay	Some Delay		

<p><b>SD1.S2.9 Moving Forward in Being a Multicultural Church</b></p> <p><b>Expected Outcomes</b>          Develop resources for Intercultural Neighbouring Sunday (See SD5.S2 Intercultural Church)</p> <p>General Secretary to consider an approach to move towards simpler, friendlier, and more equitable church structures, processes, and ways of working that foster CALD participation and intercultural partnership, and report to future ASC meetings; and for this work to be included in the Act2 Project. (See Act2)</p> <p>Review of the National Property Policy for the UCA and a Review of Regulations relation to Faith Communities will be included in the ongoing ActCT2 project. (See Act2)</p>					
<p><b>SD1.S2.11 Review of the Regulations – Delegation of Authority to Amend Part 5 of the Regulations</b></p> <p><b>Expected Outcomes</b>          Make Regulations under Part 5 of the Regulations (Church Discipline), subject to:</p> <p>a. those Regulations being generally in accordance with the amended Framework of Principles and subject to appropriate consultation on the draft regulations; and</p> <p>b. the approval of those Regulations by the Assembly Standing Committee on the advice of the Assembly Legal Reference Committee. (See S3.SD3)</p>					

### SD1 Strategy 3: Standards for Ministries (Education for all specified ministries and admission of ordained)

Committee conducts consultations with MEBs and Colleges, revise Ministry of Pastor competencies and related Lay Preacher competencies, revise Admission processes, revise Phase 3 and Phase 4 standards including guidelines for supervision

Activities	July 2020- June 2022	July 2022-June 2023			July 2023- June 2024
		Jul-Oct	Nov-Feb	Mar-Jun	
<b>SD1.S3 Standards for Ministries</b>					
<b>Expected Outcomes</b> To advise the Assembly and the Assembly Standing Committee on the standards required for Specified Ministries within the Uniting Church and to ensure that the Assembly's responsibilities in relation to training for Specified Ministries and admission of ministers from other denominations are met					
Conduct Consultations in accordance with schedule - Plans for NSWACT underway	On Track	On Track			
Other areas of focus - As per Mandate, reporting to ASC as required.	On Track	On Track			
<b>Expected Outcomes</b> (following the August 2022 ASC) That the Assembly Standing Committee:  Direct Standards for Ministries to create a specialised Chaplaincy sub-committee with appropriate skilled and experienced people to collate and coordinate the delivery of the attached Recommendations for Further Work, consulting with synods and colleges and advising presbyteries with respect to best practice.  - A number of prospective members have been approached and the membership will be approved and a date for a first meeting set by the February 2023 SFM Standards for Ministries Committee to include a question regarding courses, formation and field placements for Deacon in the consultations carried out with MEBs and report to ASC (from Reconvened Assembly).  - Will be reported to ASC as part of the next SFM reports.					

**SD1 Strategy 4: Maintain and extend the work of Circles of Interest**

Support the work of Advocates, publicise Circles in the wider Church, further develop the mechanisms by which the Circles and Panels can support and extend the work of ASC and Assembly Staff

Activities	July 2020- June 2022	July 2022-June 2023			July 2023- June 2024
		Jul-Oct	Nov-Feb	Mar-Jun	
<b>SD1.S4 Circles of Interest</b>					
<p><b>Expected outcomes</b></p> <p>Involve people in the national life of the church, providing a mechanism for sharing and learning, seeking broad input, disseminating information widely, encouraging growth and deepening discipleship and discerning together God’s will.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Resolution from Reconvened Assembly re Climate Change and likely engagement in First Nations Voice will be key areas of work</li> <li>- <b>Season of Creation – engagement in this series through National Update</b></li> <li>- <b>Next report to ASC in March 2024</b></li> </ul>	On Track	On Track	On Track		



## Strategic Direction 2: Identity

Communicate a clear and concise message — who are we as the UCA and what is our distinct role in working toward the coming of the Kingdom of God in Australia

### SD2 Strategy 1: Find ways of telling the UCA Story

Remind the Church of our foundational values and commitments; sharpen ways of describing the vision and purpose of the Uniting Church in our context

Activities	July 2020- June 2022	July 2022-June 2023			July 2023- June 2024
		Jul-Oct	Nov-Feb	Mar-Jun	
<b>SD2.S1 Telling the UCA Story</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Slides developed for members of ARU to share Identity markers (based on Strategic Directions Commitments) at each meeting or service in which they participate</li> <li>- ARU MM and Comms coordinate sharing and articles for National Update and Socials based on telling our story</li> </ul>		On Track	On Track		

### SD2 Strategy 2: Continue working on the practical implications of the Covenant

Remind the Church of the Covenant, encourage exploration of the practical consequences of the Covenant, stimulate further thinking regarding the practical and theological implications of the Preamble to the Constitution.

Activities	July 2020-June 2022	July 2022-June 2023			July 2023- June 2024
		Jul-Oct	Nov-Feb	Mar-Jun	
<b>SD2.S2 Covenant</b>					
<b>Expected outcomes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Develop and deepen Covenant relationships</li> <li>● The Covenant is central to the life of UCA, and the journey involves the whole Church.</li> <li>● Covenant conversations in the Church involve First Peoples.</li> <li>● All UCA communities are included and feel included as part of the UCA journey of Reconciliation</li> <li>● First Nations theological writing is being championed</li> </ul>					
Elevate First Nations voices in conversations and submissions –	On Track	On Track			

Conversations with Congress about First Nations Voice to Parliament have begun					
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**SD2 Strategy 3: Address National issues in the public space for the Gospel**

Respond to calls for submissions; facilitate regular review of “Our Vision for a Just Australia” and evaluate how Australia and the Uniting Church are performing against the benchmarks set

Activities	July 2020- June 2022	July 2022-June 2023			July 2023- June 2024
		Jul-Oct	Nov-Feb	Mar-Jun	
<b>SD2.S3 Justice and Advocacy</b>					
<b>Expected outcomes</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assembly regularly reviews and updates its “Vision for a Just Australia”</li> <li>• Assembly advocates to in the public space on key themes within the Vision.</li> <li>• Assembly identifies, communicates and works towards the Uniting Church’s commitments within these areas.</li> </ul>					
Our Vision for a Just Australia Document created, updated and used <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Annual review of Vision document and reporting progress</li> <li>- Discussions with the national justice network has suggested that this document should be regularly updated in line with the federal election cycle</li> </ul>	On Track	On Track	On Track	Planned	
Assembly advocacy in the public space in line with Vision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Engagement with new Federal Government is being planned.</li> <li>- Plans in place for COP27 have begun</li> </ul>	On Track	On Track	On Track	Planned	

**SD2 Strategy 4: With Synods, implement the Safe Church Framework**

Work collaboratively with Synods to implement the National Safe Church Framework, contribute to a National Curriculum using the UnitingLearning platform

Activities	July 2020- June 2022	July 2022-June 2023			July 2023- June 2024
		Jul-Oct	Nov-Feb	Mar-Jun	

SD2.S4 Safe Church					
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### Strategic Direction 3: Innovation

Take risks, experiment and shape our church to respond to the needs of today and those of the future.

#### SD3 Strategy 1: Support networks and councils of the church exploring emerging expressions of the church

Support and communicate the work of networks exploring emerging expressions of the Church, and encourage sharing of models, resources and approaches between Synods and Presbyteries

Activities	July 2020- June 2022	July 2022-June 2023			July 2023- June 2024
		Jul-Oct	Nov-Feb	Mar-Jun	
<b>SD3.S1 Emerging expressions of church</b>					
<p><b><i>Expected outcomes</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assembly communications channels including Circles are actively sharing ideas and resources and stories about innovative mission and new ways to be the church. Circles are seen as an important place for people to participate.</li> <li>• Intentional connections with international groups offering leadership in this, including from non-European</li> <li>• Innovation is seen as part of our DNA / core-business in our thinking</li> <li>• We have a culture of scanning the horizon and permission-giving</li> </ul>					

**SD3 Strategy 2: Enable collaboration on Uniting Learning platform**

Work with Synod Lay Educators, Safe Church stakeholders and other Synod and Agency groups to enable generous sharing of educational resources and develop creative online learning material.

Activities	July 2020- June 2022	July 2022-June 2023			July 2023- June 2024
		Jul-Oct	Nov-Feb	Mar-Jun	
<b>SD3.S2 Uniting Learning</b>					
<p><b><i>Expected outcomes</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uniting Learning platform is being used by the majority of ministers and lay leaders for their core safe church awareness training.</li> <li>• The platform is providing reminders and activity reports to relevant internal and external stakeholders regarding safe church</li> <li>• The platform is being used for onboarding of staff and upskilling of staff</li> <li>• The platform has a wide and growing range of discipleship modules</li> <li>• Discussion is now happening with larger stakeholders regarding an ongoing, sustainable governance administration and financial model</li> </ul>		On Track	On Track	Planned	

### SD3 Strategy 3: Address the structures and regulatory framework of the whole church

Address the issue of whether the current structures and regulations of the Church are ‘fit for purpose’ in our context; specifically review how regulations have encouraged or have caused barriers to exploring and forming new forms of Church.

Activities	July 2020- June 2022	July 2022-June 2023			July 2023- June 2024
		Jul-Oct	Nov-Feb	Mar-Jun	
<b>SD3.S3 Regulatory Framework</b>					
<p><b>Expected outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16<sup>th</sup> Assembly sets clear pathway for Act 2</li> <li>UCA members are engaged in Act 2</li> <li>Project is meeting its schedule and deliverables               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make Regulations under Part 5 of the Regulations (Church Discipline) (See S1.SD2.11)</li> <li>The remainder of the Regulation Review project has been included into Act2 for the remainder of this triennium</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	On Track	On Track			

### SD3 Strategy 4: Develop ways for future sustainability of Assembly

Identify alternative funding models and sources to enable the work of the Assembly to be supported in a sustainable manner

Activities	July 2020- June 2022	July 2022-June 2023			July 2023- June 2024
		Jul-Oct	Nov-Feb	Mar-Jun	
<b>SD3.S4 Future Assembly Sustainability</b>					
<p><b>Expected outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assembly has a consistent, sustainable income stream</li> <li>Reserves are accumulating to enable financial resilience</li> </ul> <p>Establishment of Assembly Secretariat Financial Sustainability Working Group</p>					

## Strategic Direction 4: Intergenerational

Welcome, equip and hold together the different generations, in the life, ministry, decision making and leadership of the church.

### SD4 Strategy 1: Growing emerging generation faith/leadership

Contribute to the development of models and opportunities for growing the faith and leadership of members of emerging generations, with focus on the unique experiences of different generations

Activities	July 2020- June 2022	July 2022-June 2023			July 2023- June 2024
		Jul-Oct	Nov-Feb	Mar-Jun	
<b>SD4.S1 Growing faith and leadership</b>					
<b><i>Expected outcomes</i></b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● There are strong examples of, and sharing of experiences and learnings regarding               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Different generations are supporting each other rather than separate silos</li> <li>☐ Key Church conversations and discussion/decision happen intergenerationally</li> <li>☐ Children and younger people are involved in Church processes, for example calling a minister.</li> <li>☐ All generations learn together - Church is a reflection of the community</li> </ul> </li> <li>● All Circle Panels contain a proportion of members who are from younger generations</li> <li>● Discipling the Next Generations Circle operating effectively</li> <li>● Intentional mentoring programs in place for mutual learning between younger and older generations for leadership in the Church and wider community</li> <li>● Assembly activities would be in different spaces, not just inside offices</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gathering and sharing stories of success</li> <li>- Engagement through DNG Circle and National Youth Children and Family Coalition</li> <li>- Intergenerational Framework is capturing key areas of focus</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Internship model in place – <b>NOT POSSIBLE IN THIS TRIENNIUM</b></li> </ul>	Deferred				
NYALC 2023 planned	On Track	On Track			

## SD4 Strategy 2: Develop an Intergenerational ministry framework

Develop a framework for intergenerational ministry, including a rationale for how and why different aspects of this work should be carried by particular Councils of the Church

Activities	July 2020- June 2022	July 2022-June 2023			July 2023- June 2024
		Jul-Oct	Nov-Feb	Mar-Jun	
<b>SD4.S2 Intergenerational Ministry Framework</b>					
<p><b>Expected outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intergenerational relationships are intentionally modelled across the life of the Church (Assembly leading with examples)</li> <li>• Clear and clearly understood definition(s) of intergenerational church and intergenerational ministry</li> <li>• Intergenerational church focus has a missional edge</li> <li>• Intentional connections with Schools have begun to develop</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collaboratively develop a framework with Circles and other Synod and Presbytery stakeholders  <b>Framework complete before March 2023 - provided to ASC for information. ASC may suggest further work / actions</b>  <b>Framework will address definitions and key areas of focus for intergenerational ministry</b></li> </ul>	Some Delay	On Track			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mentoring (and reverse mentoring) is developed – <b>NOT POSSIBLE THIS TRIENNIUM</b></li> </ul>	Deferred				

### SD4 Strategy 3: Support and take part in national youth events as negotiated with synods

Together with the President and emerging generation workers in Synods, plan, organise and deliver a National Young Adult Leaders Conference for 2021 and take part in any other Youth Events as Negotiated with Synods

Activities	July 2020- June 2022	July 2022-June 2023			July 2023- June 2024
		Jul-Oct	Nov-Feb	Mar-Jun	
<b>SD4.S3 National Youth Events</b>					
<b>Expected outcomes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Assembly runs one bi-annual youth event</li> <li>● Assembly facilitates interactions between Synods to encourage other youth events               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Events planned and implemented - <b>NYALC in planning for 2023</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Some Delay	On track			

### SD4 Strategy 4: Partner with Congress in enabling work with emerging generations

Goals and outcomes for this area of work will be developed in consultation with Congress.

Activities	July 2020- June 2022	July 2022-June 2023			July 2023- June 2024
		Jul-Oct	Nov-Feb	Mar-Jun	
<b>SD4 S4 Partner with Congress in emerging generations work</b>					
<b>Expected outcomes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Participate in National Youth Events</li> <li>● Assembly facilitates interactions between Synods to encourage other youth events               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Engagement in events (as in SD4.S3)</li> <li>- <b>NYALC Planned for 2023</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>- Congress included in Internship Program – <b>NOT POSSIBLE IN THIS TRIENNIUM</b></li> </ul>	Some Delay	On Track			
	Deferred				



## Strategic Direction 5: Intercultural

Learn from and enable diverse cultural groups within the church to flourish together

### SD5 Strategy 1: Engage National Conferences

Attend and support National Conferences representing the wider UCA; enable two-way communication between the National Conferences and the Assembly.

Activities	July 2020- June 2022	July 2022-June 2023			July 2023- June 2024
		Jul-Oct	Nov-Feb	Mar-Jun	
<b>SD5.S1 Engage National Conferences</b>					
<p><i>Expected outcomes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Conferences working closely together and with the Assembly</li> <li>NCs are a resource for the wider Church</li> <li>Assembly has a database of intercultural congregation and key leaders</li> <li>Being a Multicultural Church Circle operating effectively</li> </ul>		On Track	On Track		

**SD5 Strategy 2: Develop a vision for intercultural ministry**

Develop, test and deliver training and resources across the Church, establish training of trainers, share best practice, enable online components to be delivered by UnitingLearning

Activities	July 2020- June 2022	July 2022-June 2023			July 2023- June 2024
		Jul-Oct	Nov-Feb	Mar-Jun	
<b>SD5.S2 Intercultural ministry</b>					
<p><b>Expected outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clear understanding of what we mean by intercultural and being an intercultural Church.</li> <li>• Move from a multicultural to an intercultural Church</li> <li>• Church has theological resources that includes culturally diverse voices and perspectives</li> <li>• Resources and training in place to support all UCA groups to move to a more intercultural understanding and practice (meeting practice, worship, fellowship, community engagement)</li> </ul> <p>Develop, test and deliver training and resources across the Church, establish training of trainers, share best practice, enable online components to be delivered by UnitingLearning  <a href="#">Incorporated into Living as an Intercultural Church Webpage</a></p>		Completed			
- <a href="#">New Intercultural Neighbouring Sunday as per Assembly Resolution</a>		On Track	On Track		

### SD5 Strategy 3: Collate and publicise language resources

Ensure that language resources are collected and easily available, develop new language resources, increase the accessibility of the Assembly website to CALD communities

Activities	July 2020- June 2022	July 2022-June 2023			July 2023- June 2024
		Jul-Oct	Nov-Feb	Mar-Jun	
<b>SD5 S3 Language resources</b>					
<b>Expected outcomes</b>		Complete			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Major documents are available in multiple languages, in written, audio and video formats</li> <li>A process is in place to identify appropriate documents</li> <li>We have a pool of professional (paid) as well as volunteer translators</li> <li>Assembly website and social media platforms reflect diverse languages</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Church meetings take into account diverse languages</li> </ul>		Some Delay	Some Delay		

### SD5 Strategy 4: Support engagement of Congress with National Conferences

Work with Congress to support the ongoing engagement of National Conferences with First Peoples and the broader intercultural conversation within the UCA

Activities	July 2020- June 2022	July 2022-June 2023			July 2023- June 2024
		Jul-Oct	Nov-Feb	Mar-Jun	
<b>SD5.S4 Engagement with UAICC</b>					
<b>Expected outcomes</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CALD communities within the UCA have a strong understanding of the Covenant and the UAICC</li> </ul>					
- Opportunities for engagement between UAICC and National Conferences are in place	Deferred				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National Conferences are just beginning to start meeting. Assembly and UAICC resources limited – <b>NOT LIKELY TO HAPPEN THIS TRIENNIUM</b></li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Walking on Country opportunities for diverse CALD communities</li> <li>- <b>NOT LIKELY TO HAPPEN THIS TRIENNIUM</b></li> </ul>	Deferred				