

# CONSTITUTION

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## CRC CHURCHES INTERNATIONAL AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED

Ratified at CRC Churches International Australia National Council Meeting  
1<sup>st</sup> October 2015 at Kingston City Church, Melbourne, Australia.

### **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	Page
1. Preamble	2
2. The Name	2
3. Definitions	2
4. Principles, Objectives and Powers	3
5. Ministers	4
6. State Councils	8
7. National Council	9
8. National Conference	10
9. National Executive	13
10. Duties of National Executive Members	15
11. Marriage, Divorce, Re-marriage and Sexual Conduct	16
12. Disputes	17
13. Other Provisions	17
14. Alterations to the Constitution	18
15. Common Seal	18
Appendix 1 – Procedures for resolving disputes and terminations	19
Appendix 2 – Procedures for appointment of Local Church Delegates	25

## 1. PREAMBLE

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- 1.1. The CRC Churches International has been raised up by God as a fellowship of local churches and ministers with a purposeful spiritual vision, mission, ministry focus and set of shared core values. These succinctly-expressed statements written into our Charter reveal our deeply-held beliefs and underpin and guide all of our various activities.

Our movement (previously known as the “National Revival Crusade” (1945 - 1952); “Commonwealth Revival Crusade” (1952 -1963); and “Christian Revival Crusade” (1963 -1998)) began during World War II, offering hope to our nation whose very existence was being threatened. It was birthed with a passion to reach lost people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to crusade for a national Christian revival with a unique Australian approach to ministry.

- 1.2. CRC Churches International at national level has expression through a fellowship of local churches and ministers who are affiliated with recognised CRC Churches International - State Councils, and who work together in co-operative fellowship which is based on mutual love and respect.
- 1.3. Each State Council is required to draw up a Constitution incorporating the requirements of both the Charter and Constitution of CRC Churches International Australia.

## 2. THE NAME

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- 2.1. The name of the Organisation is: "CRC Churches International Australia Incorporated" - also referred to as the “CRC” or "National Council," and its Constitution is hereinafter referred to as the “National Constitution.”
- 2.2. Any State Council (refer to clause 6) in affiliation with the National Council shall be required to use the following name style "CRC Churches International (name of State) Incorporated".
- 2.3. The National Council may register the name of CRC Churches International in any State where there is no recognised State Council (subject to legal requirements).

## 3. DEFINITIONS

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In this Constitution, and unless a contrary intention is apparent –

“Act” means the South Australian Associations Incorporation Act 1985.

“Constitution” means the Rules of the Organisation.

“Charter of the CRC Churches International Australia” means the document that sets out the Vision, Mission, Values, Ministry Focus, Ethics and Beliefs of the Organisation.

“Members” means persons holding a National Minister’s Credential, according to clause 5.3.1.4 of this Constitution.

“Membership” means the status of Members.

“Associate Members” means persons holding any of the other credentials specified in clauses 5.3.1.1, 5.3.1.2, 5.3.1.3, 5.3.1.5.

“Associate Membership” means the status of Associate Members.

“Delegate” means a Local Church Delegate with voting rights appointed according to the procedures as set out in Appendix 2 of this Constitution.

*“National Council”* means the Organisation.

*“National Executive”* means the Management Committee of the Organisation.

*“Annual General Meeting”* means the meeting of the Members and Associate Members of the Organisation called according to clause 8.3.2 of this Constitution.

*“Financial Year”* means the year determined by the National Council as the period over which the finances of the Organisation are recorded, assessed, audited, and submitted for endorsement at the Annual General Meeting.

*“National Conference”* means the annual gathering of all Members, Associate Members and leaders of local churches for fellowship, discussion, encouragement and promotion of the vision and purposes of the Organisation according to clauses 8.1 and 8.2 of this Constitution.

*“State Council”* means the CRC Churches International Australia as formed and registered in a state or states of Australia according to clauses 1.3, 6.1 and 6.2 of this Constitution and which is a corporate member of the Organisation.

*“Local Church”* means a local community of Christian believers who are affiliated with the CRC Churches International Australia according to the requirements of the Charter, the National Constitution, and the relevant State Constitution and which is a corporate member of the Organisation.

*“Policy Documents”* means the documents approved by the National Council for the Organisation according to clause 4.3.

## **4 PRINCIPLES, OBJECTIVES AND POWERS**

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- 4.1 The National Council exists to represent the CRC in Australia in the promotion of Jesus Christ and to therefore and otherwise facilitate: the training and recognition of ministers relating to the States; the ongoing provision of training opportunities for ministers, leaders and lay people; the maintenance of CRC standards of ethics; the promotion of home and overseas mission in the planting and the recognition of outreach churches and ministries through governing or sponsoring churches; the formal recognition of affiliating churches; the provision of services and departments such as youth and children, etc., to work with churches, regions and State Councils accordingly; the encouragement and recognition of CRC ministry networks and activities, etc. for ministers; the representation of the CRC in other forums including representation on other bodies where there is a common interest such as interdenominational bodies and events; the promotion and support and establishment of other para-church organisations such as Christian schools, bible societies, missions societies, mercy ministries, charitable bodies, etc; and cooperation with secular organisations with a public interest resonating with the Christian cause or ethics; and to therefore raise whatever resources and assets which may be required to sustain the current and future needs of the National Council in whatever capacity it may be able and may so determine in fulfilling these purposes.
- 4.2 The National Council accepts the Vision, Mission, Values, Ministry Focus, Ethics and Beliefs set down in the "Charter of CRC Churches International", (hereinafter referred to as the 'Charter') and the approved policy documents of the Organisation.
- 4.3 The approved policy documents of the Organisation are those documents so designated by resolution in accordance with clause 8.4.1.1 hereof.
- 4.4 From time to time the National Executive may develop documents as guidelines which may be offered and recommended for use by the State Councils, Credential Issuing Authorities or other sub-committees and local churches as

appropriate. These documents collectively will be referred to as "CRC Ministerial Guidelines".

- 4.5. The assets and income of the Organisation shall be applied solely in furtherance of the principles and objectives and no portion shall be distributed directly or indirectly to the members of the Organisation except as bona fide compensation for services rendered or expenses incurred on behalf of the Organisation.
- 4.6 The National Council shall have all the powers conferred by section 25 of the Associations Incorporation Act 1985 (SA).

## 5. MINISTERS

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### 5.1. Ministry Gifts

- 5.1.1. The National Council recognises that various Ministry Gifts (i.e., men and women gifted by God who are exercising significant ministries) are given to the Body of Christ to enable it to function effectively.
- 5.1.2. These Ministry Gifts may have various levels of maturity and expression and are duly recognised according to the nature of their function.

### 5.2. Applications for Credentials, Fees, etc.

The procedures to be followed in applying for ministry recognition, granting of credentials, setting of fees, etc. are defined in the current "CRC Ministerial Guidelines" documents (refer to clause 4.4) of the Organisation as recommended by the National Executive.

### 5.3. Classification of Ministry

- 5.3.1. The following credentials may be issued to people who are Ministry Gifts within the Organisation:

#### 5.3.1.1. Trainee Minister's Credential

This Credential is issued by the State Council or officers nominated by the State Council and may be issued to those in a training/apprenticeship role, for the purpose of giving official recognition to a person who:

- Fulfils regular pastoral, ministry and platform responsibilities in a local church as a minister in training, or
- Has been given responsibility for an outreach under the auspices of a CRC local church or a State Council, or
- Is pioneering a local church with the objective of it becoming a recognised CRC Churches International Church, or
- Is fulfilling a viable form of ministry and is obviously a developing Ministry Gift.

#### 5.3.1.2. Minister's Credential

This Credential is issued by the State Council or officers nominated by the State Council and may be issued to a person under the auspices of a CRC local church or State Council who is functioning as:

- The Senior Minister of a local church, or
- An Assistant / Associate Minister continuing to perform an effective ministry related to a particular locality.

5.3.1.3. Specialist Minister's Credential

This Credential is issued by the State Council or officers nominated by the State Council and may be issued to a person who is functioning:

- In a specialised area of ministry under the auspices of a CRC local church or a State Council, or
- As an itinerant minister under the auspices of a CRC State Council, or
- As an effective minister, and is not covered by other credential classifications.

5.3.1.4. National Minister's Credential

This Credential is issued by the National Executive on the recommendation of the relevant State Council or officers nominated by the State Council as recognition of a ministry which is esteemed as a Ministry Gift to the Organisation, and which may extend beyond the particular realm or location of service concerned.

5.3.1.5. Affiliated Minister's Credential

This Credential is issued by National Executive on the recommendation of the relevant State Council or officers nominated by the State Council, and may be issued to:

- A minister who is holding (or has recently held) the equivalent of a National Minister's Credential in another movement or denomination and is moving into permanent ministry within the Organisation, or
- A minister who is credentialed with the Organisation, but whose ministry prevents the applicant from being closely involved in a CRC Churches International church or State Council (e.g. working overseas in a field or country where the Organisation is not registered) or,
- A minister in a Para-Church ministry not covered by other categories, or
- A minister of a local church that is considering becoming a:
  - a) Member Church of CRC Churches International Australia or;
  - b) Church in fellowship with CRC Churches International Australia.

5.3.1.6. Retired Minister's Credential

This Credential is issued by National Executive on the recommendation of the relevant State Council or officers nominated

by the State Council, and may be issued to a person:

- (a) Who has held at least one of the Ministry Credentials defined in clauses 5.3.1.2, 5.3.1.3, 5.3.1.4 or 5.3.1.5 for at least 10 years, and
- (b) Whose involvement at a State and/or National organisational level is no longer appropriate (e.g. due to advanced age or ill health).

In being granted a Retired Minister's Credential, such person would no longer have voting rights nor be included in any quorum requirements at State and National Council meetings and would not be required to pay credential fees.

A Member or Associate Member wishing to be reclassified as a Retired Minister should notify their State Executive; and on their recommendation, the National Executive may process the reclassification. Alternatively, the move for reclassification may be initiated by the National Executive or the relevant State Executive, if they deem that a particular Member or Associate Member is no longer able to fulfil their organisational responsibilities; and in consultation with the Member or Associate Member, make the appropriate decision.

#### 5.3.2. Credential Conditions and Expectations

The conditions and expectations pertaining to each of these classifications are defined in the current "CRC Ministerial Guidelines" documents (refer to clause 4.4) of the Organisation as recommended by the National Executive.

#### 5.3.3. Credentials may be issued to such persons who:

- 5.3.3.1. Are members of a recognised CRC Churches International church or a local church acceptable to the relevant State Council or a 'Para-Church' organisation acceptable to the relevant State Council.
- 5.3.3.2. Have the requisite proven natural and spiritual qualifications of an Elder as described in:
  - 1 Timothy 3:1-13
  - Titus 1:5-16
  - 1 Peter 5:1-10
- 5.3.3.3. Have the following characteristics:
  - Demonstrate stability, wisdom and spiritual maturity in their Christian walk;
  - Express a Ministry Gift in accordance with Ephesians 4:11 etc.;
  - Show integrity, loyalty and commitment to the fellowship and concepts of CRC Churches International.
- 5.3.3.4. Agree to abide by the requirements of:
  - The Charter of CRC Churches International Australia;
  - The Constitution of CRC Churches International Australia - National Council;
  - The Constitution of CRC Churches International Australia - State

Council, as applicable.

- 5.3.3.5 Adhere to the policy regarding Marriage, Divorce and Re-marriage and sexual conduct in relation to credentials (refer to clause 11).

#### 5.4 Termination of Membership

- 5.4.1 Any Member or Associate Member may, by notice in writing to the National Chairman, terminate their Membership or Associate Membership of the National Council by surrendering their credential, and forfeiting all rights and privileges of persons holding a ministry credential in CRC Churches International. Such termination shall take immediate effect on receipt of the notice by the National Chairman.
- 5.4.2 Additionally, Membership or Associated Membership automatically lapses whenever a person is issued a Retired Minister's Credential.

#### 5.5 Movement of Ministers

When Members or Associate Members propose to re-establish in a new location, then it is expected that such a move should be made in collaboration with:

- The respective State Chairman and any relevant appointed CRC officers.
- The Oversight of each local church which may be affected.

#### 5.6 Forfeiture of Credential

- 5.6.1. Should the Issuing Authority of a credential (as defined in clause 5.3.1) determine that a holder of a credential has violated the basic requirements of Scripture, or this Constitution, or the Charter, in the areas of:

- Use of finance, or
- Ministerial ethics, or
- Personal morality, or
- Doctrine'

then they shall be required to:

- Surrender their credential immediately.
- Resign from leadership of their church immediately.
- Resign from any leadership position held within the Organisation.
- Accept a reasonable period of restoration and rehabilitation as prescribed by the relevant Issuing Authority which has given due consideration to the current "Guidelines on the Discipline and Restoration of Ministers" document of the Organisation.

- 5.6.2. The procedure to be followed by the Issuing Authority in making such a determination, and the right of appeal against this determination, is outlined in Appendix 1, clause 2.

#### 5.7 Suspension of Credential

- 5.7.1 The relevant State Chairman together with the National Chairman shall have the power to suspend ministerial credentials. They may together take such action when they determine that a suspension is

appropriate given the circumstances of the case, and notwithstanding that the person concerned may not at that time have had sufficient opportunity to respond to the allegations.

In the event of a person having their credential suspended, they shall be required to immediately:

- Relinquish and step down from all positions they hold within the Organisation; and
- Cease any active role in their local CRC Churches International church.

Accordingly, the person's leadership duties in the Organisation would also be suspended pending an investigation and judgement thereon by the relevant Issuing Authority.

In this extraordinary eventuality the respective State Executive is to fully consult and work in loving cooperation with the local church Oversight. It is therefore also expected that the State Executive will make provision for ministry and counselling support to be given to the local church, its Oversight and any other aggrieved parties as may be agreed.

- 5.7.2 The procedure to be followed by the State and National Chairmen in making such a determination is outlined in Appendix 1, clause 3.
- 5.7.3 Where the person concerned is the State Chairman or National Chairman then the State Vice-Chairman, or National Vice-Chairman, as appropriate, shall act in the capacity of Chairman and call a special meeting of the National Executive to decide upon the suspension of the Chairman's credential.

## 6. STATE COUNCILS

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### 6.1. Recognition of a State Council

- 6.1.1. The National Executive may recognise a State Council when it has a membership of at least five persons, each holding a National Minister's Credential, representing no less than five affiliated churches, and when such State body conforms to the requirements of affiliation stated in clause 6.2.
- 6.1.2. If a State Council declines below these figures the National Executive will ensure the duties and responsibilities of the State Council are appropriately managed.

### 6.2. Affiliation of a State Council

- 6.2.1. State Councils may apply to the National Executive for affiliation with the National Council as corporate members on the basis of their acceptance of the Charter and of the National Constitution.
- 6.2.2. All applications for membership shall be submitted on the application form available from the National Administrator.



- 6.2.3. The National Executive may accept such applications on being satisfied with:
- The suitability of the (proposed) State Constitution.
  - The capability of personnel to administer the affairs of the State.
- 6.2.4. If a State Council desiring affiliation with the National Council fails to satisfy the above requirements then the National Executive may require such a State Council to work in conjunction with an existing recognised State Council. Such affiliation will be for coordination, liaison and protection and will be subject to review at the National Executive's discretion.

### 6.3. Constitutional Changes

Any proposed changes to a State Council's Constitution must be submitted to the National Executive for approval.

## 7. NATIONAL COUNCIL

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### 7.1 Membership of the National Council

- 7.1.1. Membership in CRC Churches International Australia - National Council comes through holding a National Minister's Credential (refer to clause 5.3.1.4.).
- 7.1.2. Associate Membership of the National Council comes through holding any of the other credentials specified in clauses 5.3.1.1, 5.3.1.2, 5.3.1.3, 5.3.1.5. Associate Members do not have voting rights and are ineligible to serve as members of the National Executive. (refer to clause 7.2)

### 7.2 Voting Rights

- 7.2.1. Members of the National Council (refer to clause 7.1) are eligible to vote and only persons holding a National Minister's Credential can serve as voting members of the National Executive.
- 7.2.2. In addition to the entitlement of clause 7.2.1 each local church may be represented at the National Council through a Local Church Delegate who shall be entitled to one vote. Instructions for the appointment of a Local Church Delegate are prescribed at Appendix 2.

### 7.3 Authority

The National Council, in accordance with the provisions of the National Constitution, has authority and power to raise finance, to form departments, to purchase, lease or rent properties, to establish trusts or other such entities to achieve its objectives, to manage and dispose of all monies and to make rules and regulations to administer its affairs.

### 7.4 Quorum

A quorum for a properly convened meeting of the National Council shall comprise four-tenths of the total number of Members who are

resident in Australia.

## 7.5 Wind-up Arrangements

- 7.5.1 The National Council can be wound up by special resolution at a duly convened meeting upon at least twenty one (21) days notification in writing to Members and Associate Members, specifying the intention to propose such a special resolution. Notice is deemed to have been given if such a notice has been posted or digitally sent to the last known addresses of each Member and Associate Member.
- 7.5.2 The motion will be passed if at the meeting referred to in clause 7.5.1, a three quarters majority of Members and Delegates present vote in favour of the resolution.
- 7.5.3 Should the National Council cease to function as an organisational entity its assets and funds shall be paid or transferred to a charitable institution (selected by the National Executive) having a vision, mission, ministry focus and core values wholly or in part similar to CRC Churches International Australia Inc. No individual Member, Associate Member or their relatives shall be entitled to receive any part thereof.

## 8. NATIONAL CONFERENCE

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- 8.1. A Conference of all Members and Associate Members, together with other recognised leaders of local churches, shall be held annually, and shall be for a minimum duration of three (3) days when all are expected to attend.
- 8.2. The Conference programme shall be arranged by the National Executive and shall be primarily for spiritual fellowship and promotion of vision, giving ample opportunity for discussion, sharing and mutual encouragement.
- 8.3. Annual General Meeting
- 8.3.1 An Annual General Meeting of all Members and Associate Members shall be held during the Conference for the conduct of National Council business affairs.
- 8.3.2 (was 5.5) The National Chairman (refer to clause 9.4.6) shall be instructed by the National Executive (refer clause to 10.1.2) to call a properly convened Annual General Meeting of Members and Associate Members of the National Council where formal notice shall be given in writing at least eight (8) weeks prior to the said meeting. Notice is deemed to have been given if such notice has been posted or digitally sent to the last known addresses of each Member and Associate Member.
- 8.3.3. The following items shall be considered at such a meeting:
- An audited statement of income and expenditure and balance sheet of that year shall be presented;
  - Reports from the National Chairman, and other designated leaders shall be presented;
  - Appointments shall be made to the National Executive as applicable (refer to clause 8.5);

- Office Bearers shall be appointed in accordance with the requirements of the National Constitution;
- Various recommendations may be made to the National Executive; and,
- Action may be taken regarding other items.

## 8.4 Voting

### 8.4.1. Procedures

While it is felt consistent with Scripture that there should be total unity in passing of resolutions and in appointments to office, for the purpose of the National Constitution and unless otherwise stated, the following procedures shall apply.

#### 8.4.1.1. General Business

A motion shall be passed by a simple majority of the voting members and delegates present at the meeting.

#### 8.4.1.2. Appointments to Office

- (a) If two (2) nominations are received, appointment to office shall be by a simple majority of voting members and delegates present.
- (b) In the event of more than two (2) persons being nominated, appointment to office shall be by a preferential system of voting. Each voter shall number their preferences in numerical order. The candidate receiving the lowest total score shall be declared elected.
- (c) In the event of a tied ballot for two (2) candidates there shall be a further ballot in respect to the tied candidates, and the candidate receiving a simple majority of votes shall be declared elected.
- (d) In the event of a tied ballot for more than two (2) candidates there shall be a further ballot in respect to the tied candidates and the preferential system of voting described above shall apply.
- (e) In the event of a further tied ballot or ballots there shall be further ballots as necessary, in accordance with sub-clause (c) or (d) as appropriate.
- (f) All voting for office shall be by secret ballot.

### 8.4.2 Absentee Votes

All Members and Delegates who, because of bona fide medical reasons, legitimate absence from the country, bereavement, or unavoidable logistical considerations, are unable to attend a meeting at which election of officers is to be held, shall be entitled to an absentee vote for the position of National Chairman, providing that vote is conveyed to the National Administrator in writing together with the reason for absence, at least twenty four (24) hours prior to the commencement of the National Council meeting. No other absentee voting shall be permitted. The eligibility of these absentee votes will be adjudicated jointly by at least two previous National Chairmen still

holding National Minister's Credential and who are presently not in office or standing as a candidate for office. In the event that this prerequisite cannot be met alternative suitable adjudicators will be appointed by the National Administrator.

## 8.5 Nominations for Office

### 8.5.1 National Chairman

- All nominations for the office of National Chairman shall be submitted in writing to the National Administrator sixty (60) days prior to any meeting at which election of such officer is to be held.
- Nominations shall be signed by a nominator, two (2) seconders and the nominee.
- Only those persons who are Members shall be eligible to nominate and second; and only those persons who have held a credential with the Organisation for at least ten (10) years, and who have held a National Minister's Credential for at least five (5) years shall be eligible to stand for office. The National Administrator shall advise all Members in writing of the names of those who are properly nominated at least thirty (30) days prior to any meetings at which election to office is held.
- In the event that no nominations are received in the appropriate time, or the nominee(s) withdraw(s), the National Executive shall have the power to re-appoint the incumbent Chairman for a further one (1) year term; or if they are unavailable, the incumbent Vice-Chairman for a one (1) year term as Chairman. If neither person is available the National Executive may appoint one of their current members as National Chairman for one (1) year.

### 8.5.2 National Vice-Chairman

- All nominations for the office of National Vice-Chairman shall be submitted in writing to the National Administrator sixty (60) days prior to any meetings at which election of such officer is to be held.
- Nominations shall be signed by a nominator, two (2) seconders and the nominee.
- Only those persons who are Members shall be eligible to nominate and second; and only those persons who have held a credential with the Organisation for at least ten (10) years, and who have held a National Minister's Credential for at least five (5) years, shall be eligible to stand for office. The National Administrator shall advise all Members in writing of the names of those who are properly nominated at least thirty (30) days prior to any meetings at which election to office is held.

### 8.5.3 Other elected Executive Members

- Nominations for elected Executive Committee Members shall be submitted in writing to the National Administrator sixty (60) days prior to any meetings at which the election of such officer is to be held. Nominations shall be signed by a nominator, two (2)

seconders and the nominee.

- Only those persons who are Members shall be eligible to nominate and second; and only those persons who have held a credential with the Organisation for at least five (5) years, and who currently hold a National Minister's Credential shall be eligible to stand for office. The National Administrator shall advise all Members in writing of the names of those who are properly nominated, at least thirty (30) days prior to any meetings at which election to office is held.

## 9. NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

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- 9.1. The National Council shall have expression through a National Executive which shall comprise:
- 9.1.1. The National Chairman elected according to clause 8.5.1.
- 9.1.2. The National Vice-Chairman elected to office according to clause 8.5.2.
- 9.1.3. A number of Executive members determined and elected according to clause 8.5.3.
- 9.1.4. A minimum of seven (7) voting members including the National Chairman and the National Vice-Chairman.
- 9.1.5. The National Executive can additionally appoint persons to assist them, such as a National Administrator and Executive Secretary, in a non-voting capacity to fulfil specific roles as required.
- 9.2. All persons appointed to this Executive are expected to be in attendance at all properly convened meetings.
- 9.3. A quorum for this Executive shall comprise three-fourths of the total number of voting Executive members.
- 9.4. The National Executive shall:
- 9.4.1. Serve with the National Chairman to set the spiritual direction and faith goals of the Organisation and ensure that these are compatible with the Organisation's Core Values (refer to Clause 4.1.2 and Charter article 4).
- 9.4.2. Work with the National Chairman to develop guidelines of operation and specific strategies to achieve the Organisation's Vision, Mission and Ministry focus (refer to Clause 4.1.1, 4.1.3 and Charter articles 3 & 4).
- 9.4.3. Act as the Credential Issuing Authority for National Ministers, Affiliated Ministers and Retired Ministers.
- 9.4.4. Implement decisions made by the National Council at its Annual General Meeting (refer to clause 8.3).
- 9.4.5. Have authority to accept applications for membership with the Organisation by churches and ministers in those States and Territories where there is no State Council.
- 9.4.6. Organise the National Conference, the Annual General Meeting and other authorised National functions.

- 9.4.7. Meet at least twice a year. Any meeting may be held via video conference, tele-conference or internet conferencing.
- 9.4.8. Ensure that a copy of the minutes of each Annual General Meeting and National Executive Meeting is forwarded to all Members and Associate Members.
- 9.4.9. Have power to appoint such committees as considered desirable to carry out such functions as shall be delegated by the National Council.
- 9.4.10. Appoint a person qualified and registered according to clause 35(2)(b) of the South Australian Associations Incorporation Act 1985, to audit the accounts of the Organisation.
- 9.4.11. Appoint a Public Officer of the Organisation in accordance with the requirements stated in clause 56 of the South Australian Associations Incorporation Act 1985.

## 9.5. Election of Office Bearers

9.5.1. The National Council shall, at an Annual General Meeting, elect:

- A National Chairman for a term of four (4) years (see clause 8.5.1).
- A Vice-Chairman and other Executive Members for a term of two (2) years (see clauses 8.5.2, 8.5.3).

(a) National Chairman.

Where, for some unforeseen reason, a new National Chairman is elected to office before the full four (4) year term of the previous Chairman is completed, the new Chairman must serve out the remainder of the four (4) year term of service before a new four (4) year term election is held.

b) National Executive.

Where, for unforeseen reason, a National Executive cannot be appointed at the end of the normal two (2) year term, the incumbent Executive shall remain in office until a vote can be taken at the next properly convened meeting of the National Council. In this instance the new Executive would be appointed to function only until the end of the normal biennial elective cycle, i.e., for a period of less than two (2) years.

9.5.2. Inability of National Chairman to serve

Should the Chairman, by reason of death, voluntary resignation or some other incapacity be rendered incapable of carrying out their leadership responsibilities, the Vice-Chairman will become the Acting Chairman. In the event that the Vice-Chairman is unable to serve as Acting National Chairman, the National Executive will meet as soon as practicable to appoint an Acting Chairman from within its own number. A three-fourths majority vote of the voting members present is required.

A properly convened election for the office of National Chairman (who will serve out the remaining time of the current four (4) year election cycle) is to be conducted at the next National Council meeting. The election of a National Chairman to a full four (4) year term of service must be in accordance with clause 9.5.1.

9.5.3. Removal from Office

Further to the procedures of clauses 5.6 and 5.7, the National Executive shall have the power, by a three-fourths majority decision of the voting members present to remove from office and suspend or remove the credential of the National Chairman, any National Executive Member and other CRC officers or Department Heads if they have contravened the requirements specified in clause 5.6.

9.5.4. The National Executive shall have power to appoint interim office bearers and other personnel as required.

9.6 Passing of Resolutions

While it is felt consistent with Scripture that there should be total unity in the passing of resolutions, a motion shall be passed by the National Executive by a simple majority of voting members present.

## 10. DUTIES OF NATIONAL EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

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10.1. National Chairman

The duties of the National Chairman shall be:

- 10.1.1. To serve the best interests of CRC Churches International as its Senior Officer, by helping the Organisation outwork its Vision, Mission and Ministry focus and stay aligned to its Core Values (refer to clause 4.1 and Charter articles 3, 4, 5).
- 10.1.2. To preside at the National Conference and the National Council Annual General Meeting.
- 10.1.3. To call and chair meetings of the National Executive.
- 10.1.4. To coordinate the duties of Executive members and their leadership contribution.
- 10.1.5. To implement decisions that may be given by the National Executive and National Council.
- 10.1.6. To exercise on a larger scale whatever their ministry and calling enable them to do.
- 10.1.7. To represent the National Council to society in general.
- 10.1.8. To undertake other such duties as may be determined from time to time by the National Executive and National Council.

10.2. National Vice-Chairman

The duties of the National Vice-Chairman shall be:

- 10.2.1. To represent or deputise for the National Chairman where necessary.
- 10.2.2. To assist the National Chairman.
- 10.2.3. To exercise on a larger scale whatever their ministry and calling enable them to do.

10.3. National Administrator

The National Administrator will be responsible for the duties of Secretary/Treasurer which will be determined by the National Executive, and will include:

- 10.3.1. Making and filing true records and minutes of the proceedings of the National Council Annual General Meeting.
  - 10.3.2. Acting as Secretary for the National Executive and ensuring that accurate records of the proceedings of all meetings of the said Executive are made, filed and distributed where directed.
  - 10.3.3. Issuing the required annual Credentials as detailed under clause 5.3., and maintaining an accurate register of Members and Associate Members.
  - 10.3.4. Acting in conjunction with the National Executive, utilise approved methods of banking, drawing, recording and reporting of monies placed in their care, and appoint an auditor to annually audit the accounts.
  - 10.3.5. Outworking various other tasks as determined by the National Chairman and Executive.
- 10.4. Members of the National Executive
- The duties of the members of National Executive shall be:
- 10.4.1. To be available to attend meetings and effectively serve on the National Executive as it undertakes its various activities.
  - 10.4.2. To exercise general spiritual leadership as the opportunity affords.

## 11. MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, REMARRIAGE AND SEXUAL CONDUCT

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- 11.1. Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage and sexual conduct in relation to Credentials, Local Church Eldership Boards, Ministry Leaders, and Church Members.
- 11.1.1. The CRC Churches International Australia understands that the Biblical model of marriage is a life-long, monogamous legally-performed marriage between a man and a woman, in which there is constant love, continual care, mutual respect, Godly order, submission and sexual intimacy. In such a context children may be born and raised in an atmosphere of loving care, Godly training and discipline.

In our local churches, subject to issues of care and safety within our congregations, we aim to be inclusive, accepting and welcoming of all people without necessarily affirming certain behaviours.

However the standard of Biblical holiness needs to apply to official church members and leaders. Therefore, any sexual relationship outside of marriage, between a man and a woman (such as adultery, de facto relationships); homosexuality; or any other form of sexual conduct prohibited by Scripture is deemed unacceptable for CRC ministry leaders. Those persons who continue in, or promote as acceptable Christian behaviour such practices, will be disqualified from being an official local church member, ministry leader or eldership board member, and from holding a credential within CRC Churches International Australia.



- 11.1.2. Where an applicant has been divorced, the relevant Credential Issuing Authority needs to carefully consider the principles outlined in the current "Guidelines on Divorce and Remarriage" document of CRC Churches International as recommended by the National Executive.
- 11.1.3. Recognition is also given to the validity of remarriage for a person whose spouse has died or a divorced person who:
- Satisfies the requirements of the relevant Issuing Authority which has given due consideration to both the current "Guidelines on Divorce and Remarriage" and "Ministry Guidelines" documents of CRC Churches International as endorsed by the National Executive.

## 12. DISPUTES

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### 12.1. Disputes between Members and/or Associate Members

- 12.1.1. Ideally all disputes should be resolved on the basis of the following Scriptures:
- Matthew 18:15-20; Matthew 5:23-26
  - Galatians 6:1-5
- 12.1.2. If this fails then the matter shall be referred to the relevant State Executive (hereinafter referred to as the "State Executive"), which shall make a decision in relation to the matter according to the procedure in Appendix 1, clause 1. Such decision shall be binding upon the parties to the dispute, subject to the right of appeal as outlined in Appendix 1, clause 1.

### 12.2. Disputes in and between State Councils

If a dispute between groups of Members, Associate Members and/or churches (as distinct from an intra-State dispute that is handled under clause 11.1) is not being successfully resolved by the normal process operating within the State(s), then the National Executive can be called upon to arbitrate and resolve the matter in dispute as outlined in Appendix 1, clause 5.

## 13. OTHER PROVISIONS

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The National Executive, with the endorsement of the National Council, shall have power to:

13. 1. Establish a "Missions Executive" to effectively recognise, assist, support and co-ordinate personnel who are available to serve in both Home and Overseas Missions;
- 13.2. Establish a "Ministry College" to provide an advanced teaching faculty to develop and train prospective ministers, missionaries and other ministries;
- 13.3. Appoint Ministry Leaders who are not credentialed ministers; and establish such other departments, trusts, committees, etc. as it deems necessary to achieve its objects;

- 13.4. Establish a logo to be used by National and State bodies within Australia;
- 13.5. Publish such books, magazines, periodicals, newsletters and other material as are necessary for the spreading of the Gospel and promotion the vision and activities of the Organisation; and appoint editors and commission writers as needed.
- 13.6. Undertake any other ministry initiatives that the National Executive deems consistent with the vision, mission and values of the CRC.

## 14. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

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Alterations, additions to, or repeal of any provisions of this Constitution shall be made as follows:

- By a two-thirds majority of all Members and Delegates present at a properly convened meeting of the National Council, the meeting being held in Australia.
  - A quorum for such a meeting shall comprise of fourth-tenths of the total number of Members and Delegates resident in Australia.
  - Notification of all proposed changes to the Constitution is to be advised to all Members, Delegates and Associate Members at least sixty (60) days before the Annual General Meeting. Notice is deemed to have been given if such notice has been posted, faxed or digitally sent to the last known address of each Member and Associate Member.
- or
- By the National Executive providing the same has been approved by resolution of each recognised State Council, having been passed with a majority of not less than two-thirds of those Members present at each State Council meeting.

## 15. COMMON SEAL

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- 15.1. The National Council shall have a Common Seal, which shall be kept by the National Administrator at the Registered Office of the Organisation.
- 15.2. The Common Seal shall not be affixed to any deed or instrument except by resolution of the National Executive. The affixing of the Common Seal shall be attested by the signatures of any two (2) members of the National Executive authorised to do so.
- 15.3. Upon the agreement of the National Executive, those authorised to execute any deed or instrument shall comply with the decision and affix the Common Seal in accordance with clause 15.2 of the National Constitution.

## Appendix 1

### Procedures for resolving disputes and terminations

#### 1. Disputes between Members and/or Associate Members

- 1.1. If the matter cannot be settled according to the scriptural basis referred to in clause 11.1.1 of this Constitution then the following procedure shall be adopted by the relevant State Executive (hereinafter referred to as the "State Executive").
- a) The State Executive shall give thirty (30) days notice in writing that it proposes to consider the matter in dispute, requiring the parties to the dispute to make written submissions concerning the matter, which submissions must be forwarded to the State Executive and the other party, or parties, to the dispute within fourteen (14) days prior to the proposed meeting of the State Executive.
  - b) If the State Executive deems it appropriate it may invite the parties to submit responding written submissions and/or to present oral submissions.
  - c) In the event that there is a dispute as to the material allegations of fact, then the State Executive shall make such inquiries as it deems fit and make findings of fact thereon, provided that the parties shall be given reasonable opportunity to present further evidence, in such a manner as the State Executive shall determine.
  - d) Nothing herein shall require the State Executive to hear oral evidence, or to allow the persons concerned to be represented by legal counsel.
  - e) Nothing herein shall require the State Executive to be bound by the rules of evidence, but the State Executive shall act according to equity, good conscience and the substantial merits of the case without regard to technicalities and legal forums.
  - f) The decision of the State Executive shall be recorded in writing and a copy thereof provided to the parties of the dispute.
- 1.2. Any of the parties to the dispute may appeal to the National Executive whose decision thereon shall be final and binding upon the parties, provided always that the only grounds for such appeal shall be that the decision was arrived at in breach of natural justice or that the decision was manifestly unfair.
- 1.3. The appeal to the National Executive shall be heard by three (3) persons appointed by the National Chairman (such persons to have each held a National Minister's Credential for not less than ten (10) years). The appeal shall be governed by the following procedure:
- a) The appeal shall be instituted by giving written notice to the State Executive and to the National Chairman within fourteen (14) days of receiving notice of the decision and shall set out precise particulars of the grounds upon which it is asserted that the decision appealed against was in error.
  - b) The persons hearing the appeal shall make such inquiries as they deem fit in the circumstances, provided always that the State Executive and the parties to the dispute shall have a reasonable opportunity to make written submissions in respect of the matters

raised in the appeal.

c) The decision on the appeal shall be determined by simple majority.

d) In the event that the appeal is allowed, the matter shall be remitted to the State Executive to be determined in accordance with such directions as may be given by those persons who heard the appeal and comprised the majority.

e) If any of the parties to the dispute fails to abide by the decision of the State Executive, or where there has been an appeal, the outcome of that appeal, such person or persons shall be deemed to be in breach of this Constitution and the Charter and shall be liable to disciplinary action which may include the forfeiture of their credential(s).

1.4. In the event that the dispute is between persons who are not affiliated with the same State Council, the matter shall be referred to the National Executive. The National Executive shall appoint a committee, hereinafter referred to as the "Dispute Committee", comprising three (3) persons, (such persons to have each held a National Minister's Credential for not less than ten (10) years); and the Dispute Committee shall make a decision on the matter, which decision shall be binding on the parties to the dispute. The procedure to be followed by the Dispute Committee in making a determination on the matter shall be as specified in clause 1.1 above with appropriate modifications.

1.5. There is no right of appeal once a determination has been made by the Dispute Committee.

## 2. Forfeiture of Credential

2.1. When the Issuing Authority proposes to consider making a determination on the forfeiture of a credential for any of the reasons given in clause 5.6.1 of the National Constitution, the following procedure shall apply:

a) The person concerned shall be given thirty (30) days notice in writing of the proposal and such written notice shall provide general particulars of the allegations made against them.

b) The person concerned shall have the right to make written submissions responding to the allegations, which written submissions must be forwarded to the Issuing Authority within seven (7) days prior to the proposed meeting.

c) If the Issuing Authority deems it appropriate it may invite the person concerned to present oral submissions.

d) In the event that there is a dispute as to material allegations of fact, then the Issuing Authority may make such inquiries as it deems fit, and may make findings of fact, which findings shall be binding upon the person concerned, provided that they shall be given reasonable notice of the evidence against them and a reasonable opportunity to present evidence on their behalf, in such a manner as the Issuing Authority shall determine.

e) Nothing herein shall require the Issuing Authority to hear oral evidence or to allow the person concerned to be represented by legal counsel.

- f) Nothing herein shall require the Issuing Authority to be bound by the rules of evidence, but the Issuing Authority shall act according to equity, good conscience and the substantial merits of the case without regard to technicalities and legal forums.
- 2.2. Should the Issuing Authority make a determination under this clause, the person concerned may appeal against the decision.
- 2.3. An appeal shall be instituted by the person concerned giving written notice to the Issuing Authority within fourteen (14) days of the receipt of the decision, and to the relevant appellant body, provided always that the only grounds for such an appeal shall be that the decision arrived at was in breach of the rules of natural justice and/or that the penalty resulting from the decision was manifestly excessive.
- 2.4. Where the Issuing Authority is the relevant State Council or officers nominated by the State Council, the appeal shall be to the relevant State Council, which appeal shall be decided by three (3) members of that State Council who shall be appointed by the Chairman of the State Executive. In the event that the Issuing Authority is the National Executive then the appeal shall be to the National Executive, and the National Chairman will appoint three (3) members of the National Council to decide upon the appeal. Only those persons who have held a National Minister's Credential for ten (10) years or more, and who were not involved in the making of the decision subject of the appeal, are eligible for appointment.
- 2.5. The body to whom the appeal is made shall determine the appeal within a reasonable time and shall make such inquiries as it deems fit in the circumstances, provided always that the Issuing Authority and the person concerned shall have a reasonable opportunity to make submissions in respect of the appeal, whether written or oral (which the appellant body may determine).
3. Suspension of Credential
- 3.1. When the State and National Chairman decide it is appropriate to suspend a person's credential in accordance with clause 5.7 of this Constitution, the following procedure shall apply:
- a) The relevant State Chairman and National Chairman shall notify the person of the decision to suspend their credential. Suspension is to take effect immediately from the date of notification.
- b) Notification may, in the first instance, be made verbally by the National Chairman. The notification must also be put in writing in a letter signed by both the relevant State Chairman and National Chairman. This notification may be in the form of two letters signed separately by the relevant State Chairman and National Chairman or, in one letter signed jointly by both the relevant State Chairman and National Chairman. Copies of the letter(s) of notification are to be forwarded to the relevant State Executive and National Executive members.
- c) The person concerned has no right of appeal against the suspension; however the suspension must be investigated in accordance with clause 5.7 of the Constitution. The suspension must be reviewed by the respective State Executive, in the case of Associate Members or by the National Executive, in the case of a

Members.

d) Suspension is “temporary” until such time as the matter can be investigated and reviewed by the appropriate Issuing Authority. This review process would normally be completed as soon as possible, preferably within a three (3) month period and generally not more than six (6) months from the date of issue of the suspension. During the period of the suspension the person concerned is to hand in their credential to the State Chairman and loses the right to represent the church, preside at public services, weddings, funerals and committee meetings: or be involved in any of the financial transactions of the church. (e.g. signing cheques, operating credit cards).

e) After the matter has been investigated the person’s credential must either be forfeited under the provisions of clause 5.7, or a minimum time of a further two (2) years imposed for a period of restoration according to the CRC Guidelines on Discipline and Restoration, or the suspension lifted.

f) Where the suspension is lifted, this should be notified in writing to the person concerned in a letter jointly signed by the relevant State Chairman and National Chairman.

#### 4. Termination of State Council Affiliation

4.1. In the event that the National Executive proposes to consider terminating the affiliation of a State Council as in clause 11.2 of this Constitution the following procedure shall apply:

a) The Chairman of the National Executive shall appoint a Special Committee (hereinafter referred to as the Executive Sub-committee), comprising five (5) persons (such persons to have each held a National Minister’s Credential for not less than fifteen (15) years) to investigate the action of the State Council concerned.

b) The State Council concerned shall be given thirty (30) days notice in writing of the proposal and such written notice shall provide general particulars of the allegations made against the State Council.

c) The State Council concerned shall have the right to make written submissions responding to the allegations, which written submissions must be forwarded to the Executive Sub-committee within seven (7) days prior to the proposed meeting of that Committee.

d) Should the Executive Sub-committee deem it appropriate it may invite the State Council concerned to present oral submissions.

e) In the event that there is a dispute as to material allegations of fact, then the Executive Sub-committee may make such inquiries as it deems fit, and may make findings of fact, which findings shall be binding upon the State Council concerned, provided that the latter shall be given reasonable notice of the evidence against it and a reasonable opportunity to present evidence on its behalf, in such a manner as the Executive Sub-committee shall determine.

f) Nothing herein shall require the Executive Sub-committee to hear oral evidence, or to allow the State Council concerned to be represented by legal counsel.

g) Nothing herein shall require the Executive Sub-committee to be

bound by the rules of evidence, but the Executive Sub-committee shall act according to equity, good conscience and the substantial merits of the case without regard to technicalities and legal forums.

h) The findings of the Executive Sub-committee shall be recorded in writing and given to the National Executive, with a copy to the State Council concerned.

l) The State Council shall then have fourteen (14) days in which to make a written submission to the National Executive concerning the findings or any action that should be taken in relation thereto.

j) Following receipt of the State Council's submission, or the expiry of the fourteen (14) days from the date of delivery of the Executive Sub-committee's findings to the State Council, the National Executive shall determine the action to be taken against the State Council concerned.

k) There is no right of appeal against the decision of the National Executive.

## 5. Disputes in and between State Councils

5.1. If the matter of disputes in and between State Councils cannot be resolved between themselves, and the National Executive proposes to consider the matter as in clause 11.2 of this Constitution, the following procedure shall apply:

a) The National Executive shall give thirty (30) days notice in writing that it proposes to consider the matter in dispute, requiring the parties to the dispute to make written submissions concerning the matter, which submissions must be forwarded to the National Executive and the other party, or parties, to the dispute within fourteen (14) days prior to the proposed meeting of the National Executive.

b) If the National Executive deems it appropriate it may invite the parties to submit responding written submissions and/or to present oral submissions.

c) In the event that there is a dispute as to the material allegations of fact, then the National Executive shall make such inquiries as it deems fit and make findings of fact thereon, provided that the parties shall be given reasonable notice of the evidence so gathered and a reasonable opportunity to present further evidence in such a manner as the National Executive shall determine.

d) Nothing herein shall require the National Executive to hear oral evidence, or to allow the State Councils concerned to be represented by legal counsel.

e) Nothing herein shall require the National Executive to be bound by the rules of evidence, but the National Executive shall act according to equity, good conscience and the substantial merits of the case without regard to technicalities and legal forums.

f) The decision of the National Executive shall be recorded in writing and a copy thereof provided to the parties of the dispute.

- 5.2. Any of the parties to the dispute may appeal to the National Council through the National Chairman, whose decision thereon shall be final and binding upon the parties, provided always that the only grounds of such appeal shall be that the decision of the National Executive was arrived at in breach of natural justice or that the decision was manifestly unfair.
- a) The appeal to the National Council shall be heard by three (3) persons appointed by the National Chairman (such persons to have each held a National Minister's Credential for not less than fifteen (15) years. Only those persons who were not involved in the making of the decision subject of the appeal are eligible for appointment. The appeal shall be governed by the following procedure:
  - b) The appeal shall be instituted by giving written notice to the National Executive and to the National Chairman within fourteen (14) days of receiving notice of the decision and shall set out precise particulars of the grounds upon which it is asserted that the decision appealed from was in error;
  - c) The persons hearing the appeal shall make such inquiries as they deem fit in the circumstances, provided always that the National Executive and the parties to the dispute shall have a reasonable opportunity to make written submissions in respect of the matters raised in the appeal;
  - d) The appeal shall be determined by 'simple majority.'
  - e) In the event that the appeal is allowed, the matter shall be remitted to the National Executive to be determined in accordance with such directions as may be given by those persons who heard the appeal and comprised the majority;
  - f) If any of the parties to the dispute fails to abide by the decision of the National Executive, or where there has been an appeal, the outcome of the appeal, such party or parties shall be deemed to be in breach of this Constitution and the Charter and shall be liable to disciplinary action which may include the termination of affiliation.



## *Appendix 2*

### Procedures for appointment of Local Church Delegates

#### 1. AFFILIATED CHURCHES

- 1.1. The delegate system recognises that our Charter and National Constitution prescribe “that CRC Churches International is a fellowship of local churches and ministers.” A local church, as an entity in itself, will often be represented at National and State Councils by Members or Associate Members from the church, but it is not uncommon for our smaller churches to have no voting members.
- 1.2. For a local church to be eligible for a delegate it must fit within the definition of a local church as defined by the relevant State Constitution.

#### 2. ONE DELEGATE PER CHURCH

- 2.1. The delegate representation provides for each church to have, in addition to any Members or Associate Members from the church, one representative at both State and National Council meetings.
- 2.2. A Local Church Delegate will have full voting rights at our National and State Council meetings without being an official member of the National and State Council.
- 2.3. A Local Church Delegate should be a serving elder of the church, or a person scripturally suited to eldership. (1Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). If a local church is led by a person holding a Trainee or Ministers Credential, the Eldership Board may select them to be their delegate representative (with voting rights) at the National and their respective State Council.
- 2.4. A Local Church Delegate will be responsible for accurately representing National and State Council matters to their local Eldership Board and for accurately conveying the thoughts and intentions of their local church to the National and State Council.

#### 3. APPOINTMENT OF DELEGATE

- 3.1. A delegate is to be endorsed by their Eldership Board, in an officially minuted eldership meeting, and recommended to the appropriate State Executive for approval. Approval would generally be automatic but the State Executive has the option of precluding/deferring someone if known impediments exist, and delegates must have the continuing confidence of their State Executive. If a known impediment exists, the State Executive will discuss their decision with the local church Eldership Board in a spirit of mutual respect and confidence.
- 3.2. Nomination of the Church Delegate is to be formally made using the official nomination forms.
- 3.3. There is an expectation that delegates will attend State and National Council meetings; and in selecting delegates, church elderships should recommend people who are willing and able to attend State and National Council meetings and fairly represent their church.

#### 4. NATIONAL REGISTER

- 4.1. Names of approved delegates are to be advised by the State Secretary to the National Office for inclusion in an official register of Church Delegates. Church Delegates will receive copies of National and State Executive minutes and CRC mail-outs.
- 4.2. Local Church Delegates cannot stand for National or State constitutionally-elected official positions (i.e. Officers and Executives) as only persons holding a National Minister's Credential are eligible.

#### 5. CESSATION AS DELEGATE

A Local Church Delegate will cease to be the official church representative if:

- 5.1. The Local Church Eldership, in an officially minuted eldership meeting decide that it is no longer appropriate for the incumbent to continue.
- 5.2. The delegate resigns from this position through a formal letter to the Church Eldership. Where there is no eldership, the letter of resignation is to be forwarded to the State Chairman.
- 5.3. The State Executive rescinds approval for the incumbent to act as the official church delegate. There is no appeal provision similar to that which applies to National and State Council members who hold either a National Minister's Credential or Minister's Credential.
- 5.4. Where a Local Church Delegate ceases to represent a church, a replacement delegate may be appointed by following the normal nomination procedures.

#### 6. VOTING ELIGIBILITY

In order to be eligible to vote at State or National Council meetings, nomination for the office of a Local Church Delegate must be received by the State Secretary at least ninety (90) days prior to the State or National Council meeting. An application for a delegate received after this time will render them ineligible to vote in a State or National Council meeting.

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