

MINISTRY GUIDELINES

CRC Churches International — Australia

Introduction:

The **CRC Churches International** is a ‘...fellowship of Local Churches and Ministers...’ We believe the nature of this fellowship is to cooperate together with a common vision and purpose. One of the key ways this is done is through the training, development and recognition of its Ministers. We believe it is in the interest of the future of the CRC Churches International to provide the highest possible standard of Christian character and maturity in the training and recognition of its Credentialed Ministers.

Therefore, the following “**Ministry Guidelines**” are provided to assist the various Issuing Authorities to have consistent guidelines for the training, development, assessment and recognition of the Ministry Gifts within the CRC Churches International Australia.

These are the recommended guidelines that are offered for use by the various Issuing Authorities. We believe that these guidelines will assist in providing high Christian standards of behaviour, ethics and discipline in the Ministry of the CRC Churches International. This is a standard that we expect from a Biblical understanding of the role of Ascension Gift Ministries.

PREAMBLE:-

Ministry Gifts:

It is recognised that the Ascension Gift Ministry is given by Jesus Christ to the Church. In most cases the development of the Ministry Gift is clearly recognised by other Ministry Gifts, particularly in the life of the Local Church. The existing Ministry Gifts will therefore play a major role in the development and recognition of such emerging Ministry Gifts.

Elders:

Within the CRC Churches International it is recognised that the office of Elder is a very important one. The natural and spiritual qualifications of an Elder are outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-13, Titus 1:5-16, 1 Peter 5:1-10. The recognition and appointment of Elders is a Local Church matter and recognised as such. It is possible that some Elders may, in time, exhibit the characteristics of the Ministry Gifts outlined in Ephesians 4:11. If such a Ministry Gift calling and characteristics become evident in a person's life, the person may be

nominated by a Credentialed Minister, with the endorsement of at least two other Credentialed Ministers, for training, development and recognition within the broader framework of the CRC Churches International.

Credential Fees:

Credential Fees are payable annually upon the issuing of a **Credential Invoice**. This will normally occur in July each year.

All Ministers credential fees are payable to the relevant State Secretary/Treasurer. The State Secretary/Treasurers forwards payments for National Ministers, State Ministers, Affiliated Ministers and Specialist Ministers to the National office and retains payments for Trainee Ministers to use in ongoing coaching and training.

Credential Cards will be issued upon the payment of the Credential invoices. These will be valid until June 30 of the following year.

The payment of fees is to be finalised within 30 days of receiving the Credential Fee account. If the Credential Fee is not paid within 30 days the Credential holder forfeits their voting rights. If after six months a Credential fee has not been paid the Issuing Authority may request an interview with the Credential holder to discuss the matter or to assess their ongoing commitment to the CRC Churches International.

1. MINISTERS

1.1. Membership

Membership in the CRC Churches International, National Council and State Council, is conferred through holding a Credential. (Refer clause 3)

Credentials may be issued to persons who:

- 1.1.1. Are Members of a recognised CRC Local Church or a Local Church acceptable to the relevant State Council or a "Para Church" organisation acceptable to the relevant State Council.
- 1.1.2. 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
- 1.1.3. Display the following characteristics:
 - Evidence of 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 the CRC Churches International.
- 1.1.4. Agree to abide by the requirements of:

- The Charter of the CRC Churches International;
- The Constitution of the CRC Churches International - Australia (National Council);
- The Constitution of the CRC Churches International - State Council, as applicable.

1.1.5. Have fulfilled the compliance requirements to hold a credential with CRC Churches International Australia by;

- submitting an up-to-date Police Check; and
- having undertaken recent relevant training in Child Safe Environments, Recognising and Responding to Child Abuse and Neglect, and Mandatory Notification Requirements.

Details of compliance requirements differ from state to state, so it is recommended that applicants view the documentation available on the CRC website, or contact the National Office for details.

1.1.6. Where an applicant has been divorced it is recommended that the Credential Issuing Authority adopt the "Guidelines on Divorce and Remarriage" as defined in the currently accepted document of the CRC Churches International.

1.1.7. The CRC Churches International understands that the Biblical model of a marriage relationship is to have one lifelong 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, training and discipline.

Recognition is also given to the validity of remarriage for a person whose spouse has died or a divorced person who meets the requirements outlined in the currently accepted "Guidelines on Divorce and Remarriage" within the CRC Churches International. Fornication, adultery, defacto relationships, homosexuality or any other forms of sexual deviation condemned by Scripture are deemed unacceptable and consequently no recognition for any area of Ministry can be given to such persons who continue in, or condone as acceptable, such practices.

2. MINISTRY GIFTS

2.1. Recognition of Ministry Gifts:

The CRC Churches International, National Council and State Councils, recognise that various Ministry Gifts are given by God to the Body of Christ to enable it to function effectively.

2.2. Levels of Expression and Maturity

These gifts may have various levels of maturity and expression and should be recognised according to the nature of their function.

3. CLASSIFICATIONS OF MINISTRY

The following classifications of Ministry are recommended in the normal process of Ministry training and development together with the procedures and steps involved. However, it is accepted that in some instances it may be deemed acceptable to the Issuing Authority to move an applicant directly to a State Minister's Credential (ie: bypassing the Trainee Minister's Credential) should the applicant have the proven qualifications and evidence of Ministry calling and fruitfulness.

The following Credentials may be issued:-

3.1. Trainee Minister's Credential

Issuing Authority: State Council or its nominated officers

This Credential may be issued by the State Council or its nominated officers, to those in a training/apprenticeship role, for the purpose of giving official recognition to a person who has formally completed the necessary competencies for a Trainee Minister and 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, 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

3.1.1. A Trainee Minister's Credential is to be normally held (at the discretion of the Issuing Authority) for a duration of at least three years before an application for a State Minister's or Specialist Minister's Credential is to be considered.

3.1.2. The Trainee Minister shall work under the covering of an approved Coaching Minister appointed by the Issuing Authority. The objective is that the appointed Minister has a close 'mentoring relationship' with the Trainee Minister and that the Trainee Minister demonstrates his/her competencies requisite to receiving a State Minister's Credential.

3.1.3. A person holding a Trainee Minister's Credential is an Associate Member of the relevant State Council and does not have voting rights but is expected to attend all State Councils and Conferences; and is strongly encouraged to attend all National Councils and Conferences.

3.1.4. The Issuing Authority has the right, in exceptional circumstances, to waive elements of the training requirements normally incumbent on the Trainee Minister – however all pastors being considered for a Trainee Minister's Credential must demonstrate that they have successfully completed the competencies required for a "Trainee Minister's Credential".

- 3.1.5. If the area of Ministry function for which this Credential was issued should cease, the Credential lapses forthwith.

3.2. State Minister's Credential.

Issuing Authority: State Council or its nominated officers.

- 3.2.1. This Credential is issued by the State Council or its nominated officers and may be given to such persons who have completed the requisite competencies for a CRC Minister and who are functioning as the Senior Minister or Assistant/Minister of a Local Church:
- while still gaining experience, or
 - who continues to perform an effective Ministry solely related to a particular locality; and
 - who has made the decision to step aside from some of their secular vocation to devote at least one day of effort to the Ministry of Christ in their local church. This does not prejudice ministers who because they are personally pioneering a new local Church or new Ministry venture may need to be in secular employment for a season
- 3.2.2. The State Minister's Credential is a recognition of an effective and fruitful Ministry being performed in a particular area of service and applies only to the office or position concerned.
- 3.2.3. The State Minister shall work under the covering of an approved Coaching Minister appointed by the Issuing Authority. The objective is that the appointed Minister has a close 'mentoring relationship' with the State Minister.
- 3.2.4. A State Minister will be registered with the Australian Government as a Minister of Religion and an Authorised Marriage Celebrant.
- (Ministers, who because of the change to the credentialling process have not completed the State Ministry Competencies, can apply to the Issuing Authority for a Marriage Celebrant's licence. A decision will be made based on:*
- *The applicant having completed the competencies pertaining to a Marriage Celebrant's training and responsibilities.*
 - *The length of time the applicant has held a State Minister's Credential. (Normally, [at the discretion of the Issuing Authority] a period of at least twelve [12] months would be considered a minimal requirement.)*
- 3.2.5. Any person issued a State Minister's Credential shall be a Member of the relevant State Council, with voting rights in accordance with State Constitutions, and is an Associate Member of the National Council without voting rights. Such persons are expected to attend all State and National Councils and Conferences.

- 3.2.6. A State Minister's Credential should normally be held for a minimum of three years before a person may be invited by the Issuing Authority in consultation with the Coaching Minister, to complete an application for a National Minister's Credential. (Refer 3.4)
- 3.2.7. A State Minister's Credential may be held in perpetuity, for the duration of one's Ministry life.
- It is recognised that in some cases the Minister in a local church fulfils a very significant and ongoing Ministry role that will continue through the Minister's lifetime. Due to any number of circumstances the person concerned may Minister to a relatively small number of people or may not move from their one place of Ministry due to secular employment or other circumstances.
- The person holding the State Minister's Credential may simply not have the Ministry calling or is not available for Ministry to the larger body of Christ. It is therefore the intent of this document that the CRC Churches International gives due honour and esteem to those who may hold a State Minister's Credential in perpetuity.
- 3.2.8. Before a State Minister's Credential is granted it is expected that the required State Ministry Competencies training courses (or their equivalent acceptable to the Issuing Authority) are completed or are in the process of being completed.
- 3.2.9. The Issuing Authority has the right, in exceptional circumstances, to waive elements of the training requirements normally incumbent on the State Minister – however all pastors being considered for a State Minister's Credential must demonstrate that they have successfully completed the competencies required for a "State Minister's Credential".
- 3.2.10. If the area of Ministry function for which this Credential was issued should cease, the Credential lapses forthwith.

3.3. Specialist Minister's Credential:

Issuing Authority: State Council or its nominated officers.

- 3.3.1. This Credential may be issued to a person involved in a specialised area of Ministry, or to a person who is functioning in a Ministry role within a Local Church, but is not covered by other Credential classifications.
- 3.3.2. It is a recognition of an effective and fruitful Ministry being performed in a particular area of service and applies only to the office or position concerned.
- 3.3.3. The Specialist Minister may, in certain circumstances, be registered with the Australian Government as a Minister of Religion and an Authorised Marriage Celebrant. Such applications are to be considered by the Issuing Authority and a decision will be made based on:

- The need in the Local Church for a registered marriage celebrant.
 - The character and stability of the applicant.
 - The length of time the applicant has held a Specialist Minister's Credential. (Normally, a period of at least twelve [12] months would be considered a minimal requirement.)
- 3.3.4. The Specialist Ministry may include such areas as:
- Prison chaplains
 - Hospital chaplains
 - Youth Ministry
 - Evangelistic Ministry
 - Education.
 - World Missions (Missionary), etc.
- 3.3.5. The written designation on the Credential will read as follows:
- "Specialist Minister
- 3.3.6. The Specialist Minister would normally have completed at least three years as a Trainee Minister and have completed the competencies necessary to become a Specialist Minister in the CRC... (See 3.2)
- 3.3.7. The Specialist Minister shall work under the covering of a Coaching Minister appointed by the Issuing Authority. The objective is that the appointed Minister has a close 'mentoring relationship' with the Specialist Minister.
- 3.3.8. A person holding a Specialist Minister's Credential shall be a Member of the relevant State Council with voting rights, except for constitutional or Credential matters [subject to consistency with the relevant State Constitution], and an Associate Member of the National Council without voting rights. Such persons are expected to attend all State and National Councils and Conferences.
- 3.3.9. Before a Specialist Minister's Credential is granted it is expected that the required competencies, training courses, or their equivalent acceptable to the Issuing Authority, are completed to the level of "Specialist Minister" or are in the process of being completed.
- 3.3.10. The Issuing Authority has the right, in exceptional circumstances, to waive elements of the training requirements normally required for a Specialist Minister – however all pastors being considered for a Specialist Credential must demonstrate that they have successfully completed the relevant competencies required for a "Minister's Credential"
- 3.3.11. If the area of Ministry function for which this Credential was issued should cease, the Credential lapses forthwith.

3.4. National Minister's Credential.

Issuing Authority: National Executive on the recommendation of the State Council or its nominated officers.

3.4.1. The National Minister's Credential is a recognition of the clear expression of an Ascension Gift Ministry which extends beyond the particular area of service concerned and is a recognition of the Ministry Gift throughout the CRC Churches International.

In order to provide an outline of the expectations of the Ministry of a person who is issued a National Minister's Credential the Minister should have completed the competencies required for a National Minister's Credential and:

- Have the capability to lead an average sized Australian Church of 80 to 100 people by providing the leadership, preaching Ministry, pastoral care, organisational and associated duties of that office;
- Or, in the case of the Minister being a Missionary, Itinerant Ministry, Teaching Ministry, etc, the Minister displays a level of Ministry capability, leadership and organisational capability commensurate with leading an average sized Church.
- That the person concerned has made the decision to step aside from their secular vocation and devote their full time efforts to the Ministry of Christ. This does not prejudice Ministers who because they are pioneering a new Local Church or new Ministry venture need to return to secular employment for a season;
- Or, in cases where a person may retain a secular business or employment interest that they display a clear priority for the Ministry of Christ and that they display an imminent willingness to step aside from their secular vocation.

3.4.2. This Credential is issued by the National Executive on the recommendation of the State Council or its nominated officers and may be given to such persons who have a proven Ephesians 4:11 Ministry Gift and who meet the Credential requirements as stated in Clauses 1&2.

3.4.3. All applications for a National Minister's Credential are to be submitted at the invitation of the Issuing Authority, in consultation with the Coaching Minister, to the State Issuing Authority who shall then make recommendations to the National Executive for endorsement.

3.4.4. Any person issued a National Minister's Credential shall then be:

- A Member of the State and National Councils with voting rights, and is expected to attend all properly convened Council meetings.
- Registered with the Australian Government as a Minister of Religion and an Authorised Marriage Celebrant.

- 3.4.5. The Issue Authority has the right, in exceptional circumstances, to waive elements of the training requirements normally incumbent on the National Minister – however all Ministers being considered for a National Minister’s Credential must demonstrate that they have successfully completed the competencies required for a “National Minister’s Credential”

3.5. Affiliate Minister's Credential:

Issuing Authority: National Executive on the recommendation of the State Council or its nominated officers in some cases, or a State Executive in all other cases.

This Credential may be recommended by the State Issuing Authority to the National Executive for approval for:

- a Minister who is holding (or has recently held) the equivalent of a "State Minister's Credential" in another movement or denomination and is moving into permanent Ministry within the CRC, or,
- to a Minister who is Credentialed with the CRC Churches International at a 'National Minister's' level, but whose Ministry prevents the applicant from being closely involved in a CRC Churches International church or National Council. (eg; Working overseas in a non-CRC Field or country)
- To a leading minister in a Para-Church ministry not covered by other categories,
- To a Minister of a significant local Church considering:
 - a) becoming a member Church of CRC Churches International
 - or
 - b) becoming a Church in fellowship with CRC Churches International.

This Credential may be approved by the State Issuing Authority for:

- a Minister who is holding (or has recently held) the equivalent of a "Trainee Minister's Credential" in another movement or denomination and is moving into permanent Ministry within the CRC, or,
- to a Minister who is Credentialed with the CRC Churches International at a 'State Minister's' level, but whose Ministry prevents the applicant from being closely involved in a CRC Churches International church or National Council. (eg; Working overseas in a non-CRC Field or country)
- To a minister in a Para-Church ministry not covered by other categories,
- To a Minister of a local Church considering:
 - a) becoming a member Church of CRC Churches International
 - or

b) becoming a Church in fellowship with CRC Churches International.

In the event of a Minister moving from another denomination the following shall apply:

- 3.5.1. The applicant must be in good standing with their previous Credentialing authority.
- 3.5.2. The applicant must be coming into the CRC to fulfil a Ministry role and function endorsed by the State Issuing Authority.
- 3.5.3. The applicant must exhibit a clear desire to be identified with the CRC and be committed to the objectives, philosophy, ethics, etc., of the CRC, as outlined in the Charter, Constitutional documents, etc., at State and National level.
- 3.5.4. A person holding an Affiliate Minister's Credential shall (where geographically possible) work under the covering of a Coaching Minister appointed by the Issuing Authority. The objective is that the appointed Minister has a close 'mentoring relationship' with the Affiliate Minister.
- 3.5.5. It is recommended that the Affiliate Minister's Credential shall be held for a minimum of one year prior to an invitation being extended by the State Issuing Authority in consultation with the Coaching Minister, to complete an application for a "National Minister's Credential", or a "State Minister's Credential". An Affiliate Minister must demonstrate satisfactory completion of the competencies required for a National or State Minister's Credential prior to the award of this credential.
- 3.5.6. A person holding an Affiliate Minister's Credential shall be a Member of the State Council with voting rights except for constitutional or Credential matters [subject to consistency with the relevant State Constitution], and an Associate Member of the National Council without voting rights. Such persons are expected to attend State and National Councils and Conferences.
- 3.5.7. In the case of a Minister who is not able to relate closely to a CRC Churches International church or State Council (eg; Working overseas in a non CRC Field) an Affiliate Minister's Credential may be held indefinitely.
- 3.5.8. A person issued an Affiliate Minister's Credential may be registered with the Australian Government as a Minister of Religion and an Authorised Marriage Celebrant.

3.6. Retired Minister's Credential.

Issuing Authority: National Executive on the recommendation of the State Council or its nominated officers.

- 3.6.1. The Retired Minister's Credential is a recognition given to a person who has provided at least ten years of faithful service in the CRC whilst holding a National Minister's Credential or a Minister's Credential and whose involvement at a State and/or National organisational level is no longer appropriate (e.g. due to advanced age or ill health).
- 3.6.2. 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.
- 3.6.3. A Minister holding a National Minister's or State Minister's Credential 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 Minister, make the appropriate decision.
- 3.6.4. Any person issued this Credential may be registered with the Australian Government for the purpose of conducting marriages
- 3.6.5. The holder of a Retired Minister's Credential is not required to pay the annual Credential Fee

3.7. Special Categories.

Issuing Authority: The National Executive

- 3.7.1. In the event of a person who is in a State or Territory of Australia where there is no State organisation, or who is not linked to an existing State organisation, or who is an overseas ministry or missionary ('Offshore'), who is seeking Ministry recognition with the CRC Churches International, the National Executive may issue a Credential providing that the same criteria are used for the Credential processing as are used by the State Councils.
- 3.7.2. Details of any 'Off shore' Credentials should be tabled at the next "International Leaders Gathering" by the National Chairman or National Missions Director. The purpose of this is simply for mutual cooperation and interest.

3.8. Title of Reference.

- 3.8.1 Ministers holding the following Credentials may be referred to as "Pastor":
 - Trainee Minister (At the mutual discretion of the Issuing Authority and Local Church)
 - State Minister
 - Specialist Minister

- National Minister
- Affiliate Minister
- Retired Minister

3.8.2 Churches within CRC Churches International Australia are strongly discouraged from using the term “Pastor” to refer to any persons within their churches who do not hold a recognised credential with the CRC.

3.9. Attendance at Conferences and Council Meetings.

- 3.9.1. It is expected that all National Ministers, State Ministers, Trainee Ministers, Specialist Ministers and Affiliate Ministers will be in attendance at all official State and National Council meetings and Conferences.
- 3.9.2. Should a Credentialed Minister fail to attend any State or National Council meetings for more than eighteen (18) consecutive months their Credentialing authority may request an interview to ascertain the ongoing commitment of the Minister to Ministry within the CRC Churches International.

3.10. Ministers Not Involved in Active Ministry.

- 3.10.1. Issuing Authorities will procedurally review all credentialed ministers and ascertain those who have ceased involvement in areas of active Ministry (excluding Retired Ministers). Ministers who have been assessed to be inactive shall forfeit their Credential registration after twelve (12) months, from the date of the review, have elapsed. Ministers who are assessed to be inactive will be notified in writing by the Issuing Authority their credential is under review given opportunity to show cause as to why their credential should be renewed.
- 3.10.2. Notwithstanding that anyone in this position may request an interview with the Issuing Authority if it is felt there are reasonable grounds for registration to continue beyond this period, but with the understanding that there will be regular reviews every twelve (12) months.

4. APPLICATIONS FOR CREDENTIALS.

4.1. Application forms

Applications for Ministry recognition shall be submitted to the Issuing Authority on the recommended Application Form. (Available from the State Secretary or from the CRC website)

4.2. Interviews

Applicants will be interviewed by the Issuing Authority.

4.3. The Submission of Applications

Applications for, Trainee Minister's Credential, State Minister's Credential, Specialist's Minister's Credential and Affiliate Minister's Credential are submitted at the discretion of the nominator in accordance with the guidelines of the appropriate Issuing Authority.

4.4. Application for a National Minister's Credential

Application for a National Minister's Credential shall be made only through the invitation of the State Issuing Authority and not by the applicant themselves. The basis of this invitation will be a review of the Minister's or Affiliate Minister's progress by the State Issuing Authority in consultation with the covering Minister.

Upon approval being granted by the State Issuing Authority, a recommendation will be submitted to the National Executive for approval at the National level of the CRC Churches International.

4.5. Right of appeal

In the event of any Credential applicant feeling they are being unjustly treated, they shall have the right of appeal to the Issuing Authority for the particular Credential. In such a case the appeal shall be heard by three (3) Ministers appointed by the State or National Chairman (as appropriate). The appointed Ministers must each have held a Minister's Credential for at least ten (10) years, and they cannot be Members of the relevant Issuing Authority. Their decision shall be final provided always that the only grounds of such appeal shall be:

- That the decision (felt as unjust) was arrived at in breach of natural justice; or
- That the penalty resulting from such a decision was manifestly excessive.

4.6. The normal Credentialing route

The normal route for anyone embarking on a Ministerial calling would be for the call of God to be recognised by the Local Church. The candidate would commence a period of at least 12 months which would be supervised by the local church. During this time the Local Church would construct a training schedule that enabled a candidate, under the supervision of his/her Senior Pastor (or their delegate), to complete the competencies required for a Trainee Minister, and any other relevant training that is required.

On successful completion of the requisite competencies an application for a Trainee Minister's Credential may be lodged by the Local Church with the State Issuing Authority. Formal notice must given to the State Coach Supervisor of candidates being trained at least six month before an application for a Trainee Minister's Credential can be lodged.

On receiving a Trainee Minister's Credential the minister will have a coach appointed to supervise three years of training. On successful completion of the competencies and training required for a State Minister the Coach will initiate an application for a State Minister's Credential if the candidate is ready. Where a Minister has alternative training/experience that is acceptable to the relevant

Issuing Authority, this may be taken into account and adjustments made to the three year minimum period that Trainees are normally required to complete.

The majority of Pastors, whose scope of ministry is generally limited to expression within their local church, will not normally progress beyond the award of a State Minister's Credential. However where a State Minister demonstrates a clear expression of an Ascension Gift Ministry and is a recognized as a Ministry Gift **throughout** the CRC Churches International they will be invited to pursue a National Minister's Credential. (refer to 3.4).

The opportunity to pursue a National Minister's Credential is by invitation.

1. The first opportunity to commence on the National Credential pathway will be extended to a candidate during their interview for a State Minister's Credential. At this time the Credentialing Committee, in consultation with the candidate and the candidate's coach would affirm the candidates gifting and scope of ministry and would appoint a coach.

After the State Minister has served a minimum period of three years and when all competencies have been completed, the Coach would recommend to the State Credentialing Committee that the Minister should be considered for a National Minister's Credential.

The Credentialing Committee, in consultation with the Coach, would then consider the Minister's progress and if appropriate interview the Minister before recommending to the National Executive that the Minister be awarded a National Minister's Credential.

2. Trainee Ministers who are not initially considered as a candidate for a National Credential will be assisted by their coach to develop a professional training program. This training program will be aimed to equip the Minister with specific ministry skills appropriate to their ministry focus. This training program may include some competencies from Minister's training schedule, professional or ministry courses and other ministry skill based programs.
3. State Executives and State Credentialing Committees will regularly review the credentials of all Pastors. Ordinarily this will be based on the first hand experience of the review team and any information forwarded by other National Credentialed Ministers. Where it is considered a Minister should be invited to apply to progress towards a National Minister's Credential a Coach will be appointed to assist the Minister to complete all outstanding Minister's competencies. A candidate for a National Minister's Credential would be expected to serve a minimum of three years as a Minister and complete all the Minister's competencies. Once these requirements have been satisfied the Minister's coach may recommend the Minister to the State Credentialing Committee for a National Minister's credential.

4.7. Annual Credential reviews

All Credentials are reviewed each year by the Issuing Authority.

4.8. Credential Fees

The National and State Councils shall determine fees and subscriptions to be paid when Credentials are issued.

4.9. National Credential Authorisation

National Minister's Credentials, Affiliate Minister's Credentials and Retired Minister's Credentials issued by the National Executive shall be officially signed by the National Chairman.

4.10. State Credential Authorisation

All Trainee Minister's Credentials, Minister's Credentials and Specialist Minister's Credentials issued by the State Council or its nominated officers shall be officially signed by the relevant State Chairman.

4.11. Procedures for Special Circumstances

In the event of a need to receive and process an application for a Credential in a special circumstance (eg. A Minister from another movement or denomination who is taking the leadership of a CRC Church, an overseas situation , etc) where a decision needs to be made outside the time frame of a scheduled meeting of the relevant Issuing Authority, the following procedure may apply:

- All the relevant paper-work, application forms, references from previous Credentialing authority or denomination, background information etc is mailed to the Members of the Issuing Authority giving Members adequate time for consideration
- In addition to the endorsement of an Eldership there should be an endorsement from at least two Ministers having held a Minister's Credential for at least ten years
- A decision by email/post may be made, provided that all those who consist of the Issuing Authority are agreed
- In the event of one or more Members of the Issuing Authority not in agreement and the supply of further references, information etc does not result in total endorsement then:

A meeting of the Issuing Authority by a telephone conference may be used to arrive at a decision, or if this does not result in a decision, then the matter will be adjourned to the next scheduled meeting of the Issuing Authority unless it is mutually agreed to call a special meeting to reach a decision

5. FORFEITURE OF CREDENTIAL

5.1. Violation of Ministerial Standards

Should the Issuing Authority determine that any person holding a Credential has violated the basic requirements of Scripture, the Charter, National Constitution or the relevant State Constitution 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 Local Church or Ministry immediately.
- Accept a reasonable period of restoration and rehabilitation as prescribed by the currently approved guidelines of the National Council (See clause 4:11 of the CRC National Constitution).

5.2. Removal of a Credential

These areas of violation are defined more fully in the following statements. A Minister's Credential may be removed for any of the following reasons:

- Falling into grave doctrinal error or deception regarding the Declaration of Faith contained in the CRC Churches International Charter, or
- Wilfully violating the rules of the CRC Churches International Charter, National Constitution and/or the relevant State Constitution, or the CRC Duty of Care Policy, or
- Being overtaken by moral failure, and/or by personal problems of such a nature that would discredit the work of the Lord, discredit the high standards of Christian practice and witness of their respective Local Church or Ministry and produce a detrimental effect on the high standards of Christian practice and witness of the CRC Churches International.

The removal of a Credential automatically deems the person to have lost all Membership, positions, rights and privileges within the CRC Churches International and the Local Churches and Ministries of the CRC Churches International.

5.3. Right of appeal.

If the State Council or its nominated officers makes a determination pursuant to this Clause (according to the currently approved "Restoration of Ministry Guidelines" of the National Executive) then the person concerned shall have the right of appeal to the relevant State Council, which appeal shall be decided by three Members of that State Council who have held a Minister's Credential for at least ten (10) years (appointed by the State Council but who shall not be Members of the State Executive), and in the event of that appeal failing a further right of appeal to the National Executive (which shall be decided by three Members of the National Executive nominated by the Chairman) whose decision shall be final provided always that the only grounds of such appeal shall be:

- (a) that the decision was arrived at in breach of natural justice; or
- (b) that the penalty resulting from the decision was manifestly excessive.

5.4. Resignation

In the event of a Minister of the CRC Churches International resigning from the National or State Council or resigning their Credential, it shall be deemed that

they are resigning forthwith from all positions within the CRC Churches International, its Executives, Councils, CRC Churches, Affiliate Churches, etc.

6. MOVEMENT OF MINISTERS

6.1. Relocation of Ministers

When a recognised National Minister, State Minister, Trainee Minister, Specialist Minister, or Affiliate Minister proposes to re-establish in a new location or Ministry function, then it is **strongly recommended** that such a move should be made in consultation and harmony with:

- The respective State Chairman/ Chairmen and the State Council or its nominated officers
- The Oversight/s of the respective Local Churches that may be affected

6.2. Former Crusade Ministers

In the event of a formerly CRC Credentialed Minister who is invited to Minister in a CRC Church OR a currently Credentialed CRC Minister who may be invited to Minister in a Church that was previously affiliated with the CRC Churches International, it is **strongly recommended** that contact be made with the State Chairman/Executive by the CRC Minister or party concerned. This is to ensure that appropriate principles of fellowship and Ministerial ethics are clearly understood and adhered to.

7. THE APPOINTMENT OF A NEW SENIOR MINISTER

While it is recognised that the appointment of a new Senior Minister to any affiliate Local Church of the CRC Churches International is the responsibility of the relevant local oversight, it is **strongly recommended**, in the interests of cooperation and fellowship, that such a move should be made in consultation with the relevant State Chairman and the State Council or its nominated officers.

8. PARA-CHURCH ORGANISATIONS AND MINISTERS.

8.1. Ministerial Standards

While it is understood that any para-church organisation, ie. one that operates alongside churches as a servant, but is itself not a Local Church, should be working with and alongside Local Churches for the mutual benefit and advancement of all concerned, it is nevertheless recognised that there are certain standards that must be established and maintained;

8.2. Acceptance by the relevant State Councils

For the purpose of these guidelines it is deemed necessary that all para-church organisations seeking association with the CRC Churches International be accepted by the relevant State Council;

8.3. The suitability of the organisation

This acceptance is to be based on the nature and viability of each para-church organisation's Ministry and function and the suitability of their constitution;

8.4. Ministers working in Para Church Ministries

Acceptance of Ministers from para-church organisations shall be based on their ability to meet the same Credential requirements as those applying to Ministers of Local Churches affiliate with the CRC Churches International.

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