

## GENERAL SYNOD ASSESSMENTS TASK FORCE

At its April 2020 meeting the Standing Committee considered a recommendation from the Diocese of Sydney that the General Synod assessments model be reviewed. The Diocese of Sydney presented a draft bill proposing amendments to Rule XV but agreed to set aside the proposed bill if a solution could be agreed to before the next session of General Synod.

The Standing Committee established the General Synod Assessments Task Force to investigate equitable ways to distribute the costs of the Anglican Church of Australia between dioceses that are consistent with the provisions of the Constitution and asked it to bring a report and recommendations to its April 2021 meeting. At the same meeting the Standing Committee requested this task force to investigate whether the assessment model could accommodate ongoing funding for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Bishops.

### MEMBERSHIP AS AT 17 APRIL 2021

<i>Position</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Current term</i>
Chair	Mr Keith Stephens (Honorary General Synod Treasurer)	18 April 2020 – 17 April 2021
Member	The Rt Rev'd Denise Ferguson	18 April 2020 – 17 April 2021
Member	Ms Naomi Fountain	18 April 2020 – February 2021 <sup>^</sup>
Member	Ms Coralie Nichols	18 April 2020 – 17 April 2021
Member	Mr Timothy Reid	18 April 2020 – 17 April 2021
Member	Dr Laurie Scandrett	18 April 2020 – 17 April 2021
Member	Ms Nicola Warwick-Mayo	18 April 2020 – 17 April 2021
Member	Ms Leeanne Zamagias	18 April 2020 – 17 April 2021
Member	Mr Malcolm Tadgell	14 November 2020 – 17 April 2021 <sup>^</sup>

<sup>^</sup>Mr Malcolm Tadgell was appointed November 2020 and Ms Naomi Fountain resigned February 2021.

### ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

The General Synod Assessments Task Force met on:

- 28 May 2020
- 12 June 2020
- 2 July 2020
- 29 September 2020

Attendance at meetings (all meetings were by video conference)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Eligible to attend</i>	<i>Attended</i>
Mr Keith Stephens	4	4
The Rt Rev'd Denise Ferguson	4	3
Ms Naomi Fountain	4	3
Ms Coralie Nichols	4	3
Mr Timothy Reid	4	3
Dr Laurie Scandrett	4	4
Mr Malcolm Tadgell	4	3
Ms Nicola Warwick-Mayo	4	4
Ms Leeanne Zamagias	4	4

Multiple email conversations took place outside of formal meetings throughout the operational period of the taskforce.

### **ACHIEVEMENTS AND ACTIVITY**

As part of the task force's work a review of all General Synod expenditure was undertaken with respect to the budget allocation and whether expenditure conformed to the provisions of the Constitution (s32) and Rule XV. With the exception of one item of expenditure all items of expenditure were consistent with the provisions of the Constitution and the Rules. The exception was an allocation of funds within the Statutory Assessment Account budget in 2020 to support a proposed visit by the Archbishop of Canterbury which did not go ahead.

With regards to consideration to alternate models of assessment the task force identified and considered the following options:

- a. Allocate assessment by the total membership of General Synod, including diocesan bishops.
- b. Categories dioceses into three tiers with each tier paying the same assessment amount and having the same representation at General Synod.
- c. Spread fixed costs evenly across dioceses, with potential exemptions for small dioceses.
- d. Use independently sourced data, either single data sources, or multiple data sources in combination, as the basis for allocations (such as population by diocese and or identified Anglicans as per the census).
- e. Cap assessments and General Synod representation.

These ideas were the primary options considered by the task force, however it formed the view that unless there was a change to the representation model of General Synod any change in assessment allocation would be unpalatable.

Link between assessment and General Synod representation:

- a. Representation at General Synod sessions is governed by Chapter IV of the Constitution and is largely determined by the number of clergy licensed in each diocese (s17(4)).
- b. General Synod assessments are calculated according to Rule XV where, for the most part, assessment is apportioned to each diocese according to the number of General Synod representatives each diocese may elect (s3D(1)). Essentially this creates an assessment framework which is intrinsically linked to representation.
- c. If the assumption is that the general quantum of assessments raised is within the general levels of acceptance, in that there is limited capacity to substantially reduce the overall General Synod budget, then any moves to reallocate the apportionment of assessments from those dioceses paying higher amounts to other dioceses without changing the methodology of representation are likely to be resisted.
- d. While changing the rules of apportionment of assessment is somewhat easier to achieve through General Synod governance arrangements, to alter how representation is calculated is more complex as it requires constitutional change. Even if General Synod did pass a bill to bring into effect this change, the canon would not come into effect until three-quarters of diocesan synods including all the metropolitan sees assent (s67(1)(c)).
- e. Following the task force's report to the 14 November 2020 Standing Committee meeting it was resolved that the task force should not consider any proposals altering assessment allocation which also altered the representation model.

This left the taskforce with limited options, however it eventually settled on a preferred model to include diocesan bishops in the calculation of General Synod members thereby distributing assessment by one additional member per diocese. This would have, on the whole, resulted in larger dioceses benefiting from slight reduction in their assessment and smaller dioceses seeing a slight increase.

With regards to the funding options of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Bishop, the task force proposed that should General Synod wish to fund such a position, such expense would become an expense of General Synod and assessment levels would be adjusted accordingly in line with the assessment allocation framework.

These two proposals were circulated to all dioceses in January 2021 for feedback. Of the eight responses received, three were from metropolitan dioceses and five from regional and rural dioceses. It was not a substantive response rate to indicate a general diocesan position one way or the other and the responses received were generally evenly positioned. The potential impact for smaller dioceses was an acknowledged issue.

With regard to the funding the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Bishops through assessment, only two dioceses expressed a firm view that they would be prepared to see the costs of these positions funded through assessment and four dioceses did not provide comment on this issue. One diocese provided feedback on the issue but did not express a particular view.

The task force presented a report to the April 2021 meeting of Standing Committee highlighting the issues encountered, and consequently made no recommendation to pursue change to either the assessment allocation model and the funding of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Bishops through assessment. The Standing Committee resolved to suspend the task force pending any further developments.

## **APPENDICES**

1. Terms of Reference – May 2020
2. Standing Committee resolutions

**APPENDIX 1 – TERMS OF REFERENCE – MAY 2020****Anglican Church of Australia****General Synod****GENERAL SYNOD ASSESSMENTS TASK FORCE****TERMS OF REFERENCE****Approved May 2020 by Executive Committee resolution EC2020/4/1****ESTABLISHMENT**

1. The General Synod Assessments Task Force is established in accordance with Part III, s6 of the Strategic Issues, Commissions, Task Force and Networks Canon 1998.

**MEMBERSHIP**

2. The Primate appointed the following persons to the General Synod Assessment Task Force on the recommendation of the General Synod Standing Committee:

Chair and Convenor

- Keith Stephens, General Synod Treasurer, Diocesan Secretary, Diocese of Perth

Members

- Bishop Denise Ferguson, Assistant Bishop of Adelaide, Diocese of Adelaide
- Naomi Fountain, Registrar, Diocese of Bendigo
- Coralie Nichols, Diocesan Chief Executive, Diocese of Newcastle
- Timothy Reid, Registrar, Diocese of Brisbane
- Laurie Scandrett, Diocese of Sydney
- Nicola Warwick-Mayo, Executive Director of School Services, St Andrew's Cathedral School, Diocese of Sydney
- Leeanne Zamagias, Registrar, Diocese of the Northern Territory.

(SC2020/1/14)

3. The General Secretary and the Finance and Operations Manager shall attend task force meetings.

**MEETINGS**

4. A quorum shall be five members.
5. The task force will meet as required to fulfil its reporting obligations to the Standing Committee.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

6. The Executive Committee will deal with matters relating to the structure of the General Synod budget and the model of General Synod assessments as referred to it by the Standing Committee for advice or action.
7. At its 18 April 2020 meeting the Standing Committee asked the task force to:
  - a. investigate equitable ways to distribute between dioceses the costs of the Anglican Church of Australia that arise under the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia (SC2020/1/14)
  - b. provide for national shared funding of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander bishops for future budgets (SC2020/1/38).
8. In responding to this request the task force will review:
  - a. the costs, charges and expenses as outlined in paragraphs (a) to (f) of s32 of the Constitution
  - b. the allocation of costs between the Statutory and Special Assessment accounts in the General Synod budget
  - c. changes in Statutory and Special Assessment both in real value and activities funded
  - d. the model of determining a diocese's financial liability in accordance of Rule XV.
9. The task force is authorised to liaise with dioceses to invite submissions on issues and consult on proposals.
10. In responding to this request the task force will prepare recommendations on:
  - a. the allocation of costs between the Statutory and Special Assessment accounts in the General Synod budget
  - b. provision for national shared funding of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Bishops
  - c. any revisions to the model of determining a diocese's financial liability in accordance of Rule XV
  - d. possible legislative amendments to the Constitution and/or Rule XV to bring a revised model into effect.

**REPORTING**

11. The task force will comply with its reporting obligations as outlined in the Strategic Issues, Commissions, Task Force and Networks Canon 1998.
12. The task force will provide:
  - a. an interim report to the November 2020 Standing Committee meeting
  - b. a draft report to the first Executive Committee meeting in 2021
  - c. a final report to the first Standing Committee meeting in 2021

and will report at other times as determined by Standing Committee resolution.

## APPENDIX 2 – STANDING COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS

### General Synod Assessments Review

SC2020/1/14

18 April 2020

The Standing Committee:

1. received the report of the General Secretary dated 14 April 2020 and the proposal from Dr Robert Tong, Diocese of Sydney to review the General Synod assessment model
2. noted the 2021 forecasts for Statutory Assessments (\$1.819M) and Special Assessments (\$358K)
3. noted that the allocation of the Statutory Assessment between dioceses is determined by Rule XV, which has remained largely unchanged in the past 50 years
4. noted that in 1986 the Statutory Assessment was \$397,000, and that the Statutory Assessment has risen in significantly excess of CPI between 1986 and 2020
5. noted that a Bill to amend Rule XV in respect to allocation for payment of the Statutory Assessment has been distributed to members
6. appointed a task force to investigate equitable ways to distribute between dioceses the costs of the Anglican Church of Australia that arise under the Constitution, with terms of reference, approved by the Executive Committee, and asked it to bring a report and recommendations to the first meeting of the Standing Committee in 2021
7. recommended to the Primate that he appoint the following persons to the task force to be convened and chaired by the Treasurer:
  - Bishop Denise Ferguson, Assistant Bishop of Adelaide, Diocese of Adelaide
  - Naomi Fountain, Registrar, Diocese of Bendigo
  - Coralie Nichols, Diocesan Chief Executive, Diocese of Newcastle
  - Timothy Reid, Registrar, Diocese of Brisbane
  - Laurie Scandrett, Diocese of Sydney
  - Nicola Warwick-Mayo, Executive Director of School Services, St Andrew's Cathedral School, Diocese of Sydney
  - Leeanne Zamagias, Registrar, Diocese of the Northern Territory.

### National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council (NATSIAC) – Aboriginal Bishop – Funding

SC2020/1/38

18 April 2020

The Standing Committee:

1. received the report of the Finance and Operations Manager dated 8 April 2020
2. noted the resolutions of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council (NATSIAC) Gathering in 2019 calling for:
  - a. an increase in the General Synod grant to NATSIAC in accordance with CPI over the next triennium
  - b. General Synod to fully fund and resource a National Aboriginal Bishop and a National Torres Strait Islander Bishop, both of whom would be licensed by the Primate
  - c. General Synod to fund any shortfall in the provision of funding from the endowment fund in recognition that Bishop Chris McLeod is a National Bishop
3. resolved that additional funding for the National Aboriginal Bishop role cannot be accommodated in the 2020 budget and asked the General Synod Assessments Task Force to provide for national shared funding of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander bishops for future budgets
4. asked the Church Law Commission to advise on what legislative change would be required for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander bishops to be licensed by the Primate and the implications and consequences of doing so.

**General Synod Assessments Task Force – Interim Report****SC2020/2/13****14 November 2020**

The Standing Committee:

1. received the report of the General Synod Assessments Task Force dated 28 October 2020
2. confirmed the task force should not consider revision of the model of determining diocesan representation at General Synod as part of its report and recommendations to the Standing Committee on the diocesan assessment model
3. recommended to the Primate that he appoint Malcolm Tadgell, Registrar, Diocese of Melbourne to the General Synod Assessments Task Force with a term to start 14 November 2020 and end at the first Standing Committee meeting after the Eighteenth Session of General Synod
4. noted there is no information to report on Malcolm Tadgell under section 20 of the Protocol for Access to and Disclosure of Information under the National Register Canon 2007.

**General Synod Assessments Task Force – Final Report****SC2021/2/16****16–17 April 2021**

The Standing Committee:

1. received the report of the General Synod Assessments Task Force dated 12 April 2021
2. noted the outcome of January 2021 diocesan consultation on a proposed assessment model
3. resolved to suspend the work of the task force.