

THE BUSH CHURCH AID SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA



HISTORY AND PURPOSE

The Bush Church Aid Society (BCA) is a voluntary association working primarily in partnership with the Bishops, Dioceses, and people of the Anglican Church of Australia. Founded in 1919, it has a priority in mission to people living in regional, rural and remote areas of Australia. BCA'S current statement of purpose is:

- to proclaim Christ so that people may respond to Him
- to nurture Christians in their faith and ministry
- to strengthen local Christian communities in their mission
- to provide services of Christian care and advocacy
- to develop an understanding of Christ's mission, and
- to promote active partnership through the church.

BCA fulfils its mission as the people of Australia are given the opportunity to know and love the Lord Jesus Christ, trust in His promises, respond to Him in obedience, reflect His character in their lives, be committed to His Church and work for His purpose in the world.

The primary way BCA seeks to carry out its mission is by selecting, sending and supporting men and women to serve God's mission in fellowship with other Christians. Some serve as parish clergy, church planters, chaplains, youth workers, evangelists or as lay people seeking to be salt and light in their community. They are supported by a pastoral care network, the prayers of thousands of supporters, and by an appropriate level of funding that is negotiated between BCA and the receiving diocese or institution.

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS AND LEADERSHIP CHANGE

Two significant events have occurred within the BCA community since the last General Synod. Firstly, it was with great thanks that BCA celebrated its centenary in 2019. Numerous celebrations and services of thanksgiving took place across the nation, from small country churches to metropolitan cathedrals. Many celebrations were held on Sunday May 26 2019, 100 years to the day when, on a cold and wet night, a group of 19 men and women met at St Andrew's Cathedral Sydney to discuss and pray about bringing the gospel to the isolated areas of Australia. Could they have ever imagined what would eventuate from that meeting?

Secondly, in our centenary year, BCA said farewell to National Director The Right Reverend Dr Mark Short who was consecrated and installed as the eleventh Bishop of Canberra and Goulburn on April 6, 2019. On the evening of August 12 2019, BCA welcomed and commissioned its twelfth National Director, The Reverend Canon Greg Harris who joined BCA from the Diocese of Bendigo.

MINISTRY LOCATIONS AND FOCUS

At the time of writing BCA is committed to supporting ministry in 45 locations in 16 dioceses across all states and territories. In conjunction with the National Team based in Sydney, there are 7 Senior Officers with some support staff to facilitate this work at the state and territory level.

A new initiative for BCA in recent years is a focus on Indigenous ministry and a priority to raise up Indigenous Christian leaders and support them in theological training. This is so that Indigenous Christians are not just a mission focus but may become a mission force. Key to this was the appointment of an Indigenous Ministry Officer, The Reverend Neville Naden, who is a member of the senior leadership of BCA. A biblically and culturally sensitive Acknowledgement of Country, a Reconciliation Action Plan and a Strategic Plan are other products of this focus.

A further example of the commitment to Indigenous Ministry is BCA's partnership with the Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship (AEF). This partnership allows for the equipping and raising up of Indigenous Christian leaders through the AEF's First Nations Ministry Training Initiative.

BCA's focus in the immediate future is to continue to explore new opportunities. One such example occurred in 2021 when BCA and the Diocese of The Murray agreed to initiate a partnership. This partnership and similar other new commitments with the Dioceses of Bathurst and Central Queensland were made possible by generous supporters in the current climate.

SUPPORTER BASE

The Society continues to publicise its ministry through its quarterly Real Australian magazine, in print and online, which reaches tens of thousands of supporters. BCA's online and social media presence continues to grow, as do the speaking engagements at churches and other gatherings.

A cornerstone of the Society is the network of prayer support undertaken by faithful supporters. The quarterly Prayer Notes, in print and various electronic forms, are used daily across Australia to uphold BCA Staff in prayer as they seek to 'go the distance' in sharing the Gospel across regional, rural and remote Australia.

STRUCTURE

BCA is a company limited by guarantee and the governing body is the National Council.

The 2021 office bearers are as follows:

The Rt Revd Dr Glenn Davies	President
The Revd David Crain	Vice President
The Revd Tom Morgan	Vice President Emeritus
Mr Fred Chilton	Chairman
The Revd Canon Greg Harris	National Director
Mr Richard Host	Honorary Treasurer

The 2021 National Council Members are as follows:

Dr Bill Anscombe
Mrs Mellita Bate
Mrs Leonie Burgess
Mrs Jodi Chapman
Mr Martin Drevikovsky
Ms Shemira Jeevaratnam

Mr Terry Keith
Mrs Gemma Kleywegt
Mrs Jane (Eleanor) Lamont
Mr Michael Maude
The Revd Stephen May
The Revd Tom Melbourne
Mr Peter Michalke
The Revd Richard Minol
The Revd Rod Morris
The Revd Peter Palmer
Mr Henry Schafing
The Revd Michael Stuart
Dr Roslyn Symons
Mr Geoff Williams

The 2021 Patrons of the Society are as follows:

The Most Revd Geoff Smith
The Most Revd Dr Philip Freier
The Most Revd Kanishka Raffel

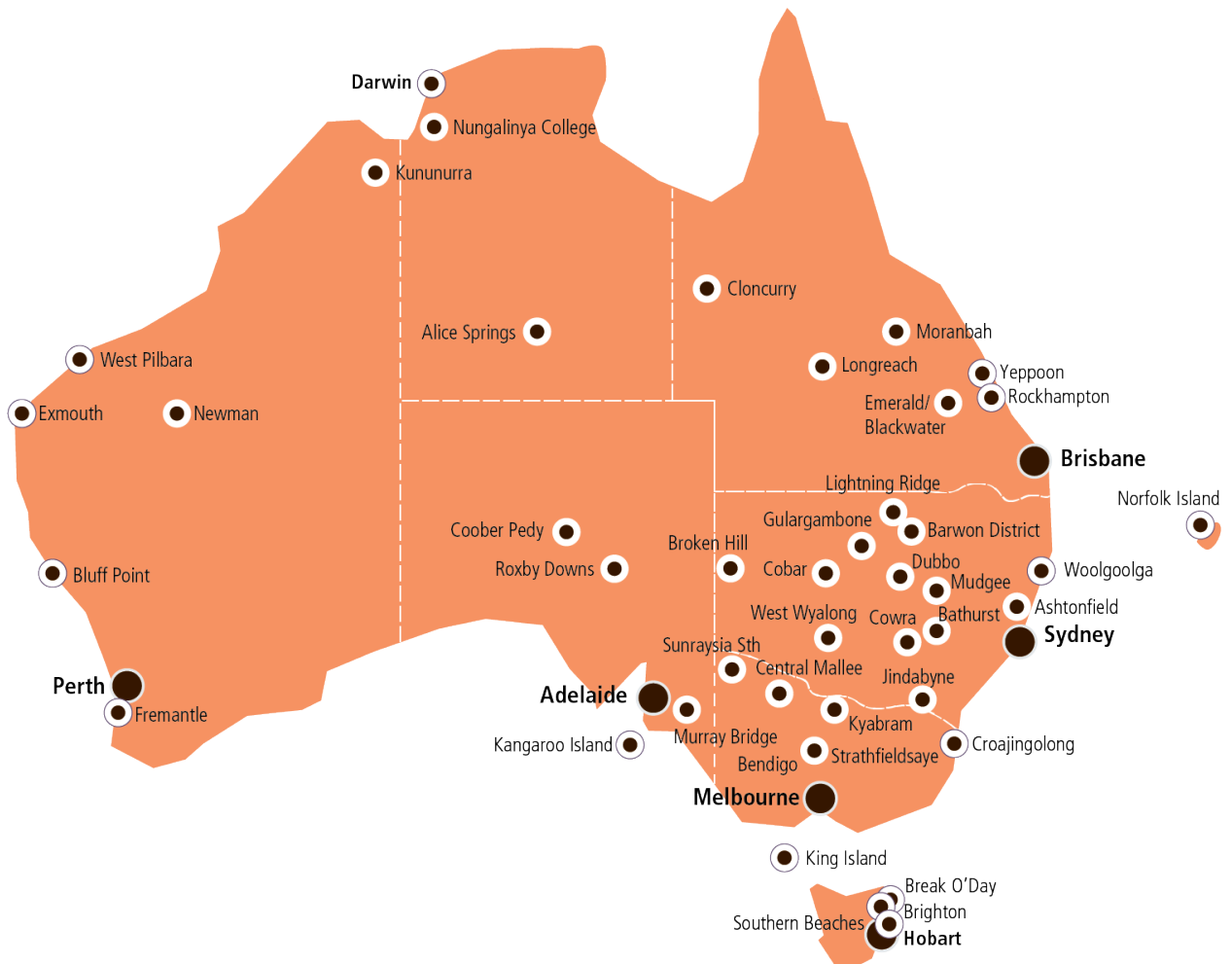


FIGURE: CURRENT BCA FIELD LOCATIONS