



Uniting Church in Australia  
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

# PROTOCOLS, POLICIES AND GUIDELINES FOR PLACEMENTS COMMITTEE

## 1: JNC Information



**PROTOCOLS, POLICIES AND GUIDELINES FOR PLACEMENTS COMMITTEE**

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The documents in this folder are in the public domain, and may be copied for use in presbyteries.

Members of the Placements Committee are reminded that the agenda papers and minutes of the Placements Committee and the discussions within the Placements Committee are strictly confidential.

**1.1 Six Steps:  
Filling a Ministerial Vacancy in a Congregational Placement**

Details can be found in UCA Regulations 2.6.2-2.6.8, 2.7.1-2.7.3 and the National Handbook of Procedures for the Placement of Ministers

<b>STEP ONE: Mission Study</b>	<p><b>1.1</b> The Presbytery and the Congregation/s jointly conduct a consultation/mission study to identify the congregation’s mission and ministry emphases and goals for the next 3-5 years (regulations 2.6.6; 3.1.4) The mission study is often led by those who will later be Presbytery representatives on the Joint Nominating Committee (JNC).</p> <p><b>1.2</b> The mission study recommends whether a placement should be filled, and if so:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The primary purpose of the Placement</li> <li>• The gifts, qualities and skills sought in a minister</li> <li>• Whether the Placement is appropriate for a Minister or the Word, Deacon, Lay Person, and/or Ordinand (Exit placement)</li> <li>• Whether the Placement is to be filled by a call of the congregation(s) or by the Presbytery (for which see further details in the National Handbook of Procedures for the Placement of Ministers)</li> <li>• The viability of the Placement for the next 3-5 years</li> <li>• The Terms of Placement</li> </ul>
<b>STEP TWO: Profile</b>	<p><b>2.1</b> Those who have conducted the consultation/mission study prepare a placement profile using the Synod form.</p> <p><b>2.2</b> The profile is submitted to the Church Council for approval.</p> <p><b>2.3</b> The Church Council sends the profile to Presbytery for consideration by the PRC. The PRC may meet with members of the Church Council/Mission Study group. The profile may be referred back to the Church Council for revision.</p> <p><b>2.4</b> When the PRC approves the profile, it completes the Presbytery pages and forwards the full profile to the Placements Committee for listing.</p>
<b>STEP THREE: Joint Nominating Committee</b>	<p><b>3.1</b> A Joint Nominating Committee (JNC) is established. For a Placement to be filled by the call of the congregation, the JNC consists of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. at least two persons appointed by the Presbytery, one of whom shall be appointed by the Presbytery as chairperson, and preferably at least one of whom shall be a member of the PRC;</li> <li>ii. two to six persons appointed by the Congregation/s to represent the placement;*</li> <li>iii. in circumstances where the Presbytery consider a larger JNC advisable, up to four additional persons appointed by the Congregation/s (Reg. 2.6.6(c))</li> </ol>

STEP THREE: Joint Nominating Committee	<p>For a Placement to be filled by the call of the Presbytery, the JNC consists of a maximum of 8 members appointed by the Presbytery, the majority of whom are Presbytery members; other persons with involvement in interest in the particular ministry may be included (Reg. 2.6.6(e)).</p> <p>* It may be wise for the Congregational Meeting to delegate authority to the Church Council to appoint its members to the JNC. Alternatively, the Church Council may bring recommended names to the Congregation/s.</p> <p><b>3.2</b> The JNC meets to familiarise itself with its responsibilities and processes, and to work through the JNC training kit.</p> <p><b>3.3</b> The PRC and/or the JNC may suggest to the Placements Committee ministers they would like to consider for the placement. A list of ministers available for placement can be obtained from the Placements Secretary.</p> <p><b>NOTE 1:</b> Quorum for JNC meetings is half the members, with at least one from the presbytery and at least one from the congregation.</p> <p><b>NOTE 2:</b> The JNC operates in a confidential way until there is agreement with a minister as to when confidentiality is no longer required.</p> <p><b>NOTE 3:</b> More information can be found in “Document 1: JNC Information” in the Resources section of the Placements website, <a href="https://victas.uca.org.au/ministry-mission/placements/#resources">https://victas.uca.org.au/ministry-mission/placements/#resources</a></p>
STEP FOUR: Names	<p><b>4.1</b> The Placements Committee, at its meeting, may provide the names of up to three ministers for conversation at a time, which may or may not include any of those suggested in step 3.3 (though all will be considered). Within 48 hours of the meeting a member of the Placements Committee will communicate a proposed placement to the minister named. Soon after this, the JNC Chairperson will be notified by their presbytery representative.</p> <p><b>4.2</b> Within 7 days of the meeting, the Secretary of the Placements Committee will write to both minister and JNC outlining the Placements Committee’s reasons for proposing names and make copies of profiles of minister and placement available to the other party. Copies of profiles of the proposed minister(s) should be circulated to all members of JNC but not copied further. Profiles must be destroyed when conversations conclude.</p> <p><b>NOTE 1:</b> It is important that names be kept <b>confidential</b> to the JNC only (and to the Presbytery PRC, in the case of proceeding beyond a first conversation). The primary (but not the only) reason for this is to prevent unnecessary disruption to a minister’s present placement.</p>
STEP FIVE: Conversations	<p><b>5.1</b> The JNC Chairperson arranges a first conversation between any minister named and the JNC. It is important to recognise that the minister may not have sought this conversation; this is not an interview. The conversation is an opportunity for the minister and the JNC to begin to listen for the possibility of God’s calling. As such, the conversation should be surrounded with hospitality, to provide the opportunity for sharing and exploration. While there is no expectation about whether a minister’s spouse might attend any given conversation, mutual consideration should be given to whether and to what degree the minister’s spouse may be involved in these conversations. Resources are available on the website (as above) for conversations with intercultural awareness, sensitive conversations, conversations with exit candidates, and other particular situations.</p>

**STEP FIVE: Conversations**

**5.2** After conversations with the recommended minister/s, the JNC discerns together whether they would like to proceed with another conversation. If more than one minister's name has been provided, the JNC should have a first conversation with both/all before discerning whether to proceed to a second conversation with one or more of them. Decisions must only be made by the JNC with a quorum as described in Step 3.

**5.3** If the decision is made to proceed with second conversation with a minister, the Presbytery PRC should be informed and invited to make a confidential comment indicative of their support and/or of matters they believe important to address. Depending on the timing of meetings, the advice may or may not be ready before a second conversation takes place, but must be considered before making a recommendation to proceed to call. The PRC **may** indicate that their approval may be assumed if both the JNC and the minister agree to proceed to call after further conversation (see 6.1).

**5.4** If a decision is made to conclude the conversation without proceeding to call, both the minister and the JNC must submit a brief comment to the Placements Committee outlining the reason for the end of the conversation, so the Placements Committee may be well informed regarding future proposals for conversations.

**5.5** When conversations lead towards the discernment that a Call is appropriate, the JNC and the minister will negotiate any points of concern, and also the commencement date for the new placement.\* The minister and the JNC may agree that it would be appropriate for the minister to meet other members of the ministry team, or a wider group of members, prior to a decision to proceed to Call.

\* Placements normally date from the first day of a month, but removal leave is granted so responsibilities are normally taken up by the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month (or the 21<sup>st</sup> day if an inter-state removal is involved)

**STEP SIX: Issuing a Call**

**6.1** When the JNC and the minister agree to proceed to Call, the JNC seeks the approval of the Presbytery, the authority of which is usually delegated to the PRC (Regulation 2.6.6(m)). Approval may have been given in advance at step 5.3, however if there have been subsequent changes to the Terms of Placement approval to the changes will need to be sought.

**6.2** Following the approval of the PRC, a meeting of the Congregation is convened, to which the JNC puts its recommendation that a Call be issued. See Notes below.

**6.3** Within three days of the decision to issue a Call, a letter of Call is sent by the body issuing the Call. There is a nationally agreed statement which needs to be included (see Document 1.7, in the document "1 JNC Information" in the Resources section of the Placements website, <https://victas.uca.org.au/ministry-mission/placements/#resources>)

**6.4** The minister responds in writing within fourteen days and informs his/her current presbytery.

**6.5** The JNC Chairperson ensures that the presbytery is informed (see Placement Acceptance Advice to Presbytery Form in the Resources section of the Placements website, <https://victas.uca.org.au/ministry-mission/placements/#resources>).

**6.6** The Presbytery Chairperson, in consultation with the minister and the congregation, sets the date of the Induction service and informs the placements committee of those details including the date of commencement of the placement.

**Note 1:** A congregational decision should be by written ballot (2/3 majority preferred).

**Note 2:** **For presbytery placements** the JNC recommends to a presbytery meeting that a Call be issued, though prior to the presbytery meeting each congregation involved shall have an opportunity to express their mind on the recommendation. If the presbytery placement is to provide the primary ministry in particular Congregations, those Congregations are given opportunity to express their approval of the recommendation prior to any Presbytery decision to issue a call.

**Note 3:** **For priority placements, exit placements, partner church arrangements through UnitingWorld and overseas ministers**, the Call is issued by the Placements Committee but only after the congregation involved has had an opportunity to provide advice on the appropriateness of the Call.

*Approved 09 Aug 2003  
Adopted 21 February 2018  
Revised January 2020*

**1.2 Notes in Regard to the Terms of Placement schedule**  
**[to be read in conjunction with the UCA Handbook Ministerial Provisions and Charges]**

Ministers of the Word, Deacons, Pastors, and Specified Ministry of Youth Workers are normally called for an undefined term [Reg 2.7.3 (a)], subject to a minimum of five years (or in the case of a first placement after ordination, three years) and a maximum of ten years [Reg 2.6.2 (c)]. Procedures necessary for the extension of a placement beyond the tenth year are found in Reg. 2.6.8. (Lay Pastors are appointed initially for up to three years, and then extensions can be made by the Presbytery up to ten years. [Reg 2.7.5])

Terms of Placement must be approved by the Church Council or other appointing body and the Presbytery, and tabled with the Placements Committee before the Placement is listed by the Placements Committee.

**Stipend**

The Synod approves a minimum stipend figure each year. This figure is subject to adjustment by the Standing Committee of the Synod.

**Additional percentage loading**

Some congregations pay a loading on the minimum stipend. This requires the approval of, and public justification by, the Presbytery. The Placements Committee will list all above-minimum stipends in its annual report to the Synod.

**Other Payments**

Beneficiary Fund, Long Service Leave contributions, Work Care contributions etc. are advised by Synod on an annual basis.

**Car Allowance**

Synod determines each year the appropriate rate per 1,000 kms for running costs. The Congregation, with the approval of the Presbytery, determines the appropriate level of travelling expressed in thousands of kms.

**Study Leave**

The Guidelines provide as follows:

1. A minimum of fourteen days Study Leave shall be available each year to Ministers of the Word, Deacons, Pastors, Lay Pastors and Youth Workers in placement within the Synod. The Terms of Placement or conditions of call approved by the Presbytery may specify a more precise figure.
2. Study Leave shall normally be taken each year. The programs of study (whether set courses or self directed study) shall be planned by the Minister in conjunction with the Church Council (or other responsible body) and the Presbytery.
3. When a more substantial period of study is planned, the Minister may negotiate with the Church Council or other responsible body for study leave to be accumulated up to the entitlement of five years' service and the results of such negotiation shall be brought to the Presbytery for approval and reported by the Presbytery to the Commission on Education for Ministry.
4. Ministers are expected on return from study leave to report to the Placement on the study leave experience and its value to themselves and the Placement.

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5. In the administration of study leave, consideration shall be given to the needs of the placement as well as the needs of the Minister and occasions most acceptable to both. Normally attention will be given to the following:
  - (a) Entitlement to study leave shall be taken during the current placement unless for special reasons and with the approval of a new placement such entitlement to leave is carried over into the next placement.
  - (b) The taking of accumulated study leave in the same year as long service leave shall require the approval of both the Church Council and the Presbytery.
  - (c) Ministers and Church Councils will be aware of and seek to minimise potential difficulties if desired study leave provisions include too many programs involving absence from a Congregation on Sunday.

### **Financial Assistance for Study Leave**

There is no specific requirement on Congregations. However, some Congregations offer financial assistance towards the cost of course fees, travelling etc.

### **Supply Ministry**

Details on the arrangements for supply ministry are to be found in the Handbook of Ministerial Provisions and Charges.

### ***Additional notes re Terms of Placement.***

1. In approving Terms of Placement for a congregational placement the presbytery will satisfy itself as to the financial viability of the placement for a minimum period of three years.
2. The Placements Committee may question the appropriateness of any of the Terms of Placement.
3. A Minister will sign the Terms of Placement form at the time the call is accepted, as an indication that the Terms of Placement are understood and accepted.
4. Changes to Terms of Placement may be made only after consultation with and agreement of the church council, the Minister and the presbytery. Approved changes shall be advised to the Placements Committee.
5. The Synod has published a comprehensive Handbook of Ministerial Provisions and Charges, with detailed information on stipends, other allowances, housing arrangements, leave provisions and retirement benefits. The implications for part-time placements are spelled out in detail.

*Latest Amendment Nov 2007*

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## 1.3 Congregation Joint Nominating Committee Training Resource\*

This document shall be used in conjunction with the *National Handbook of Procedures for the Placement of Ministers*:

### Placement Handbook 2006

#### Role of the Joint Nominating Committee Chairperson

A Presbytery (usually the PRC) appoints two people (Presbytery Liaison persons – PLPs) to the congregation's Joint Nominating Committee (JNC). The Placements Handbook states that one of these representatives will be appointed as the JNC chairperson. Four members of the JNC constitute a quorum which is the minimum number you need to have a meeting; this must include at least one of the PLPs. The JNC cannot meet without at least one of the PLPs being present.

The role of the JNC chairperson is very important. The chairperson is responsible for ensuring that correct procedures are followed, that all members of the JNC are aware of their responsibilities, and that clear guidelines for communication and confidentiality are established. The Chair also plays a leadership role in ensuring that the JNC acts with sensitivity and awareness in relation to conversations with ministers who may not come from the dominant ethnic group participating in the JNC, or of the congregation as a whole:

[Document 1.5](#)

When a conversation with an exit student takes place the JNC Chair should also ensure that the Committee is aware of particular steps related to this process:

[Document 5.4](#)

The chairperson shall ensure that he/she is familiar with the "20 steps - filling a ministerial vacancy in a congregational placement" ("Twenty Steps") document and process:

[Document 1.1](#)

The JNC chairperson will preferably convene the meetings (or at least be involved in some) of the Mission Study oversight group and work through the process as set out in "Twenty Steps". After the completion of the mission study process, either of the PLPs will assume the role of chairperson of the JNC. The mission study will form the basis of the placement's profile, which is then prepared.

Therefore, it is the role of the JNC chairperson to:

- Guide the process – not determine the outcome;
- Be informed;
- Accept the responsibility of making sure the correct process is followed;
- See that the process moves along, taking the care needed, but without undue delays;
- Represent the wider church and have an eye to its interests in this placement and minister/s with who the JNC is in conversation.

#### Joint Nominating Committee Conversations with Ministers

The Joint Nominating Committee (JNC) shall have conversations only with those minister/s whose name/s are recommended to it by the Placements Committee. Similarly, ministers shall have conversations only with those Joint Nominating Committees recommended to them by the Placements Committee. (There is some variation to this process if permission to advertise a congregation placement is given by the Placements Committee.)

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- i. Conversations may include formal and informal discussions, mutual visits and informal gatherings. While there is no expectation that a minister's spouse will attend, mutual consideration should be given to whether and to what degree the minister's spouse may be involved in these conversations.
- ii. While there is no obligation on either the JNC or a minister to proceed to call, each is to take into account that the recommendations emerge from the collective wisdom of the Church, represented in the Placements Committee, and at least an initial conversation is expected to take place.
- iii. The JNC Chair makes contact as soon as possible with each recommended minister. The JNC may have conversations with each recommended minister before making a decision on any; similarly, ministers may have conversations with each JNC before making a decision regarding proceeding to a call.
- iv. Good communication and common courtesy require that a JNC keep each recommended minister informed about their progress at all stages of their deliberations. While names are not revealed, it is important to indicate if other conversations are underway.
- v. At any subsequent time after the initial contact a minister or a JNC may decline to proceed with a conversation and shall advise the Placements Committee in writing of the reasons for doing so.
- vi. JNCs should not discriminate on grounds such as gender, marital status, ethnic background, age, and disability.
- vii. If a minister has to travel or stay overnight, it is the responsibility of the placement to meet the travel costs and provide motel/hotel accommodation. If the minister is in conversation with another JNC in a similar location, it is possible to negotiate the sharing of costs between the two placements.
- viii. If a minister from another Synod is called to a placement, the JNC should ensure that comprehensive briefing is provided to that minister to assist in her/his understanding of the VicTas Synod, and the particular presbytery into which she/he is called.

The JNC has the important task of 'getting to know' a minister well and to have a good understanding of the minister in her/his current or previous ministry experiences so a clear picture can be given to the congregation at the point of presenting the minister's name in relation to a decision to call. It is going to be easier to paint a picture for others if we are able to present clear understandings rather than impressions.

### **Where conversations relate to a Ministry Team context**

- i. When the JNC considers there is a serious possibility of moving towards a call, the JNC Chairperson is encouraged to facilitate conversations between all potential colleagues. The JNC Chairperson will ensure that sufficient time is spent to share and discern together each one's sense of ministry style, team cooperation, potential hopes for ministry in the Placement, etc. The JNC Chairperson will receive individual feedback from each potential colleague and report back to the JNC.
- ii. The JNC will ensure that discernment conversations between potential colleagues have been dealt with satisfactorily prior to proceeding to the negotiation stage of the conversation.
- iii. The JNC is encouraged to remind potential colleagues that the Church Council will consider ministry team arrangements as per Regulation 2.11.3.

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## Possible process/questions for a JNC conversation with a minister

### Preparation – prior to a conversation with a minister

- Hold a meeting of the JNC prior to your conversation with a minister
- Agree on the approx. five primary areas of ministry you want to explore with the minister. This will usually be the five top priorities listed in your profile.
- As a JNC agree on how you understand those priorities. Clarify your thinking, e.g. what do we mean by 'leadership of worship'.
- Prepare some questions. In your conversation with ministers it is very important that questions explore what a minister has done. Engage with the stories of ministry so you learn what outcomes the minister brought about. That will better help a JNC in its discernment for recommending a minister to the congregation. To facilitate conversations, it can be helpful for the JNC to send questions to the minister, and invite ministers to send questions to the JNC, before the conversation. (Please note: to ensure that shared discernment processes take place, if a JNC decides to send questions to a minister prior to a conversation, the minister should be invited to do likewise.)
- Review the minister's profile so you are clear about her/his priorities in ministry.
- If appropriate arrange a 'tour' around the area.
- At the second conversation stage, or when appropriate, arrange an inspection of the manse if it is to be provided. If the manse is currently leased, then an arrangement will need to be made with the estate agents for an inspection, and it may be necessary to give the current tenants notice to absent themselves for the duration of the inspection.

### Conversation Introduction

- Provide hospitality. Model God's welcoming grace.
- Gather together and meet in a prayerful attitude.
- Ensure that the JNC is conscious of any particular cultural awareness that will assist the conversation to develop.
- Make sure the setting assures confidentiality; that others won't wander in unexpectedly.
- JNC members introduce themselves to the minister, saying why they are part of/what they appreciate about, etc the congregation.
- Outline the proposed shape of the conversation. Include time for the minister to share her/his faith story and passion for ministry; and to ask questions of the JNC.
- Set a time limit to your time together in the conversation.
- At the end of the conversation be clear about the next steps that you and the minister are going to take.
- Offer to cover the minister's costs of the visit.

### Some helpful exploration questions/ideas

- Tell me more about that.
- What exactly did you do as part of the....?
- Can you take us through the steps you took?
- What feedback did you get?
- What was the outcome?
- What did you learn?
- What would you do differently next time?
- How did you feel about it?

### Some helpful questions for referees

- How does the minister do ... (as per the key priorities)?
- From your knowledge, what experience does the minister have with ... (as per the key priorities)?
- The minister told us about ... Can you tell us what their role was? What was the outcome?
- Where you did not get a clear picture from the minister in your conversation you may want to ask: What experience do you have of the minister's ... (as per the issue you are exploring)?
- What are the areas that you think the minister might work on (i.e. develop)?
- How does the minister deal with conflict situations (i.e. in the placement, in relation to others, and in relation to him or herself)?
- Is there anything else do you think it would be helpful for the JNC to be aware of about 'the minister'?

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- **For further assistance**, please contact your presbytery's Pastoral Relations Committee and/or Presbytery Minister – Pastoral Care.

\* The VicTas Placements Committee is thankful for the use of material provided by the Presbytery of Port Phillip West in the development of this resource.

*Adopted 14 September 2012*

## 1.4 JNC Guidelines for Korean Congregations

### 신임목사 청빙절차(Preparing for a new Placement)

#### 1. 사임 및 작별 (Conclusion)

- 사임 및 송별예배  
(Service to Mark the Conclusion of a Placement)
- 공석상태 (vacancy period)

#### 2. 공동청빙위원회(Partnership)

- 교회와 노회가 함께 협력한다  
(Presbytery and congregation work and cooperate together)
- 노회의 목회관계위원회에서 2명의 대표(1명은 위원중)를 선임한다  
(2 presbytery representatives appointed by the Pastoral Relations Committee of the Presbytery [PRC]; one person should be a member of PRC)
- 공동청빙위원회의 구성은, 위원장은 노회선임된 중 한 사람이 맡되, 6명은 교회에서 선임하고, 2명은 노회에서 선임한다  
(A Joint Nominating Committee [JNC] is later formed including 6 members representing the congregation and 2 from the Presbytery. The chairperson of the JNC should be a person representing the PRC)

#### 3. 공동작업에 참여 (Participation)

- 모든 교인이 목회및선교 연구조사에 참여케 한다  
(All members of the congregation to be involved in a Mission Study)
- 지난 기간에 대한 회고 (Reflecting on congregation's history)
- 교회의 미래를 위한 기도와 분별기간 (Praying and discerning)
- 소망 및 목적 (Visioning)
- 현재 우리의 모습...교회로서 우리는 누구인가?  
(Who are we? ... Who are we becoming as a congregation?)
- 현재 우리의 모습...지역과 관련하여 우리 교회는 무엇인가?  
(Who are we? ... Who are we becoming as a community?)
- 현재 우리가 전도 및 선교를 통해 봉사할 사람들은 누구인가?  
(Who do we serve/who will we serve in the mission for the community?)
- 미래에 위의 내용들을 위해 어떤 지도자가 필요한가?  
(What kind of ministry leadership will help us be/to do this in the future?)

#### 4. 공동청빙위원회를 구성한다 (Joint Nominating Committee formed)

공동청빙위원회는 한인노회에서 선정한 2명과 교회 혹은 해당 청빙기관에서 2~6명의 위원을 선정할 수 있다. 노회에서 선정한 두명 중 한명이 공동청빙 위원회 위원장이 된다. 혹시 교회에서 선정된 청빙위원들이 사정에 의해 참석할 수 없을 수도 있기에 최대한의 범위내에서 청빙위원을 선정하는 것이 바람직하다. 혹시 공동청빙위원회에 속한 목회자가 청빙심의

대상이 될 경우 공동청빙위원회에 참여할 수 없다.

교회에서 선정될 청빙위원의 대상은 나이와 남녀의 균형을 고려해야 하고, 교회의 목회와 선교방향을 잘 이해하는 사람으로 구성되어야 한다. 교회에서 선정할 위원들에 대해서는 노회와의 사전 대화가 필요하다.

(Joint Nominating Committees comprise at least two persons appointed by the Presbytery and two to six persons appointed by the congregation or other body, and will be chaired by a Presbytery nominee. Because, some congregational representatives may be absent from time to time, it is suggested that congregations opt for a number of representatives at the higher end of this scale.

The minister whose replacement is under consideration shall not be a member of the JNC and take no part in placement procedures. It is suggested that the congregation representatives reflect the age, gender balance and ethos of the congregation and be familiar with the mission planning goals of the congregation. Congregational representatives should be chosen on a basis agreed by the congregation(s) in consultation with the Presbytery).

- 5) 목회 및 선교 연구 조사 결과에 따라 새 목회자에 요구되는 목회 은사와 기술에 따른 목회자 프로파일을 작성한다  
(Profile of the congregation and gifts/skills required for the new Minister based on the results of the Mission Study).
- 6) 신임 목회자를 청빙하는 교회의 시무 조건 내용을 노회 PRC에 신청한다  
(Profile submitted for approval by the PRC)
- 7) 노회의 PRC(목회 관계 위원회)로부터 인준 받는다  
(Approval to fill the Placement given)
- 8) 노회가 주총회 임직 위원회에 보고 및 제출한다  
(Profile submitted to the Placements Committee.)
- 9) 주총회 임직 위원회가 공동 청빙 위원회에 가능한 목회자 명단을 추천한다  
(Placements Committee issues JNC with List of Ministers)  
인터뷰를 위해 공동 청빙 위원회에 3명까지 소개할 수 있다  
(Up to three names offered to the JNC for conversation)  
인터뷰 중 필요하면 서로의 이해와 협력을 통해 시무 조건의 재수정을 논할 수 있다  
(Conversation leads to negotiation [Terms of Placement])
- 10) 공동 청빙 위원회는 선정된 목회자 이름을 목회 관계 위원회에 제출하여 승인을 받는다. (The JNC presents the name to the PRC for approval.)
- 11) 공동 청빙 위원회가 추천한 목회자 이름을 예의상 교회의 회에 알리고 그리고 난 후에 그 이름을 공동의회 모임에 가져가서 투표하도록 한다.  
(Name recommended by JNC to church council as a courtesy; then taken by the JNC to a congregation meeting for voting).
- 12) 결정된 목회자에게 청빙서를 발송한다. (Call to the Minister is issued)
- 13) 임직 (Placement)
  - 신임 목회자의 임직 예배를 드린다  
(Induction Service for the new Minister)

Approved: 9 November 2012

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## 1.5 Conducting JNC Conversations with Intercultural Awareness

That there are as many different cultures as there are nations and races in the world, and that different customs, behaviors, and patterns of thought have evolved in each of these environments is easy to understand on a theoretical level. But when one meets a person from another culture in real life, trying to see how that person's attitudes and behavior relate to his or her cultural background is an activity that is fraught with difficulties. And because of our human tendency to make instantaneous judgments of others, there is ample opportunity for misinterpretations to arise.

Joint Nominating Committee (JNC) conversations can be stressful experiences. So when you're a member of a JNC involved in having conversations, it's important to be sensitive to the feelings of the person with whom you are having the conversations. You want to put the person at ease as you mutually engage in the process of discerning the will of God.

Representing one's true self in a conversation is not easy for anyone. There are even further dynamics at play, however, when the majority of JNC members of the JNC belong to one ethno- cultural group and the person you are having the conversation with belongs to another.

### Try to Put Yourself in the Other Person's Shoes.

An interculturally aware JNC will try to look at the process from the perspective of the other person, as in this composite example:

*I am a minister originally from Indonesia having conversations with a JNC from an Anglo congregation. In attempting to communicate who I am in English, which is my third language, I am aware that some members of the JNC might have difficulties with my accent, as much as I have difficulties with some of theirs.*

*I am trying my best not to be anxious at the thought of talking about myself with a group of individuals with whom I have no prior relationship, but I will accommodate this Western practice and hope that I will not be perceived as being evasive or vague. I am also aware that I don't do eye contact easily. We have been taught by our parents not to have eye contact too much while having conversation. It is related to politeness and respect. When we talk to the one whose status is higher than us (for example parents, here parents are considered as having higher status than their children), it is better for us not to have too much eye contact. It will be considered as challenging. But I am aware that it's important for the Anglo-Australians and nowadays I am more comfortable with eye contact.*

*I have learned not to cringe when a man in the circle crosses his legs and shows me the soles of his shoes or to be offended by the apparent disinterest of a woman who knits while I am speaking. I am in their culture, and I will accommodate to what they do and need.*

### Understanding and Accommodating Host

A culturally aware JNC is committed to the principle of mutual understanding and accommodating. As the group in control of the conversation process and format, it's good to do whatever possible to narrow the cultural gap so that the person is less anxious and intimidated, and more able to accurately communicate his/her character and gifts and graces. It's helpful and sensible to try to know about the culture of the person with whom you are having the conversation.

However it's important to know for example that no two Chinese are alike. A Chinese from Singapore is very different from a Chinese from China. They might look alike or share some common cultural values but their outlooks and approach to life are very different. Or a second generation Tongan is different from a first generation Tongan, and therefore has a different way of relating to you as a JNC than a recent migrant from Tonga.

A commitment to mutual accommodation and understanding requires an adaptive and flexible approach to conversations rather than adherence to a formulaic, rigid model. And a Church that has declared to be a Multicultural Church needs to be culturally sensitive and aware of its diversity.

Here are some suggestions that the JNC could use to build bridges across the cultural divide and to empower the person you are having conversation with and help him/her to be less anxious:

### **Preparation**

- Ensure that as many members of the JNC as possible know about the culture of the person you are having conversation with.<sup>1</sup> For example culture-specific sensitivities like:
  - o formal greeting
  - o eye contact
  - o the meanings of silence and pause
  - o posture toward hierarchy and authority
  - o the meaning of gift-giving
  - o the meaning of intonation in speech
  - o how agreement and disagreement is expressed
  - o gestures to avoid
- Be careful and sensitive about the kind of personal questions that would put the person “on the spot” regarding, for example, their personal circumstances or feelings.
- It might be helpful to provide some of the questions that will be asked in advance so the person is less pressured to think on the spot in a language that is not their first language.

### **Representation in JNC**

- If possible ensure that the interviewing group is also racially and culturally diverse.
- Again if possible the JNC chairperson should ensure that at least one person present at the conversation is from the same ethno-linguistic community of the person the JNC is having conversation with.

### **Language and Accent**

- Members of the JNC might need to speak slowly and plainly for conversations with those who may not have advanced English fluency.
- Communicate that you consider the person's ability to speak more than one language to be a valuable asset.
- Differently accented English is not a problem to be overcome. It should be obvious that in a multicultural church there will be multiple accents. The person's accent does not nullify the gifts and graces that the person has.

### **Conversation Process<sup>2</sup>**

- Begin the conversation with an informal social time for personal connection. Providing a cuppa before the official conversation begins might help to ease nerves and begins to build relationship.

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<sup>1</sup> If you need some help please feel free to contact the Cross-cultural Mission and Ministry Unit of the Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania

<sup>2</sup> If the JNC is having conversation with a person from a non-Anglo background it might be useful for the members to read and discuss this article before the conversation.



- Acknowledge at the beginning of the conversation your awareness that this is an intercultural encounter, and that both parties should feel free to ask questions for clarification, if needed.
- Confirm the conversation as a “space” that seeks to honour cultural differences by inviting a member of the group to open with prayer in a language other than English, and/or by offering a prayer in English that asks God to bless their intercultural time together.
- Proceed in a fashion that facilitates deep listening in a safe space: be attentive to the other person, don’t rush, communicate a comfort with silence and pauses, communicate affirmation and encouragement with your body language, show interest but don’t pry, laugh together as much as possible (but never at anyone else’s expense).

### **Guidelines for Asking Questions**

There is a tendency in Western way of thinking to view the gathering of information as the primary purpose of a conversation.

While some of this information is “personal” in nature, all of it is “of the person.” Hence, what and how a person thinks, believes, functions, relates, and knows speaks of their very heart and soul. This heart is something a multicultural church seeks to honour and to protect. It recognizes that for the person coming from a non-Western culture, the conversation may not primarily be about information gathering as it is about establishing a relationship.

A JNC member may ask a question that is intended to give information that will help them “get to know” the person but meanwhile, he/she may be pulling away from the JNC because he/she is experiencing those questions as too direct, too personal, or too prying.

### **When Asking Questions, You Might Want to Consider the Following:**

- Be aware that the issue of “saving face” is always present, regardless of the person’s cultural heritage. Do whatever you can to avoid making the person feel overly self-conscious or put on the spot to answer questions that would embarrass him/her.
- Be aware that too broad an opening question can not only make it difficult to know where to start, but may immediately cross the uncomfortable boundary of sharing personal information. “Tell us about yourself” is too broad. “Tell us about your experience as it relates to this ministry” would be an improvement.
- Similarly, as the final question of an interview, it is common to ask, “Do you have any questions you’d like to ask us?” In many cultures, to ask questions is to be seen to not know what one should know. “Is there anything you would like to say to us before the interview ends?” would be an improvement.
- Generally speaking, Western thought patterns tend to be abstract in nature. This is not the case in many other cultural traditions, which employ concrete images and are story-based. It is always a good idea, hence, to include “scenario” or case study questions that will help the person connect to his/her lived experience and lived expertise.
- Be aware that some familiar questions such as “What you are reading these days?”, “What do you do when you aren’t working?” or “What do you do for self-care?” can carry with them some unintended freight of cultural judgment based on assumptions about what kind of books make for worthwhile reading, the appropriate balance between work and recreation, or what constitutes adequate self-care.

### **One Last Thought**

Often at the Placement meetings we have heard feedback from JNCs that the person that they had conversation with wasn't "engaging enough". It seems that the person did not ask too many questions and thus interpreted as not "interested" or "engaging". This may be a misinterpretation of the situation. In some cultures again asking a lot of question is regarded as pushy and rude.

It's useful to learn from generalizations about other cultures, but be careful not to use those generalizations to stereotype. Use them rather to understand better and appreciate other multifaceted human beings. Remember that cultural norms may not apply to the behavior of any particular individual. We are all more complicated than any cultural norm could suggest.

### **Acknowledgement:**

This article is inspired by another article written by Steve Willey, Intercultural and Diverse Communities in Ministry from The United Church of Canada. I have borrowed and contextualized many of his ideas.  
*Rev Swee-Ann Koh*

*Approved by Placements Committee 10 February 2012*

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## **1.6 Notes for when an Exit Candidate is Proposed**

The Placements Committee takes great care in making proposals relating to those men and women who are exiting the Theological College and are ready for their first placement. Therefore, when an exit candidate is proposed for a placement the JNC is expected to receive the proposal as one arising from the collective wisdom of the church as discerned by the Placements Committee. Proposals are made only after the Theological College has advised that it is highly likely that the candidate will receive a certificate of satisfactory completion of the Second phase of theological education and ministry formation, and after the candidate's presbytery has affirmed readiness for ordination.

When JNCs meet with an exit candidate they are asked to be mindful of the following:

- The placement is dependent on the candidate receiving the certificate of satisfactory completion of the core phase of theological education and ministry formation. This certificate is usually issued in mid-December;
- Ordination cannot take place until that certificate is received, and the candidate has received and accepted a Call to a placement;
- Upon taking up their first placement the minister enters the "Third Phase of Ministerial Education" – a three year period of sustained and intentional mentoring and support for newly ordained ministers, designed to assist the minister to make a smooth transition from a primarily educational context to a primarily ministry setting, and to develop lifelong habits of engagement in professional development activities such as professional supervision and continuing education.
- During this Third Phase of Ministerial Education the minister fulfils normal ministerial duties in the placement. Those in the third phase have all the rights, privileges and responsibilities of other ministers, and standard terms of placement apply.
- Members of a minister's first placement have the opportunity to assist the minister during the Third Phase of Ministerial Education through prayer, encouragement, support and feedback. A particular contribution which the placement makes is providing suitable members to join a Transition to Ministry Reflection Group which meets with the minister on approximately seven occasions during the first year.
- A minister in the Third Phase of Ministerial Education will, in conjunction with the presbytery, develop a three-year plan for continuing education. JNCs need to recognise that a time commitment is involved in this requirement.
- The Presbytery has primary responsibility for oversight of newly ordained ministers, and the minister will be accountable to the presbytery for:
  - i. The practice of ministry
  - ii. Engagement in professional supervision
  - iii. Engagement in continuing education;
  - iv. Participation in the life of the presbytery
  - v. Regular reporting to the presbytery as determined in consultation with the presbytery.
- During the Third Phase of Ministerial Education the minister is required to meet with others in the same phase together with some Synod leaders, for reflection on ministry practice. This will occur three times in the first year, and less often in subsequent years. Where there are substantial travel costs this is usually shared between the synod and either the placement or the presbytery.

In testing the proposed placement the exit candidate and the JNC enter a process of discernment of the will and purpose of God. This may be completed in one visit, but further conversation may be requested by either the candidate or the JNC, and either may suggest that opportunity be given for the candidate to meet with a wider group of people on a subsequent date.

When an exit candidate (and partner and/or family) visit, the members of the JNC will provide appropriate hospitality, provide opportunity to inspect the properties (especially the manse) and arrange orientation to the local area.

When the JNC and the candidate are agreed that it is appropriate to proceed to Call, the JNC should invite the congregation to express its support of the proposal. Both the candidate and the JNC then advise the Secretary of the Placements Committee that they wish to proceed to Call. The resolution of the congregation should be “to request the Placements Committee to issue a Call to NN”.

When the Placements Committee receives advice that the JNC and the candidate wish to proceed the Placements Committee will resolve that a Call be issued. The Secretary of the Placements Committee will then write a letter of Call, and the candidate has 14 days in which to respond.

The Secretary of the Placements Committee will advise the placement of the candidate’s response.

*Approved 10 September 2010  
Last Amendment 13 September 2013*

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## **1.7 Statement which must be included in Letter of Call**

*(Assembly Standing Committee)*

In issuing this call, the Congregation is acting under the Constitution and Regulations of the Uniting Church in Australia. "A call to a placement gives effect to the perceived will of God as expressed by a decision of a council or councils of the Church and by the response of the Minister concerned."  
[Reg. 2.6.3 (c)]

It is an invitation into covenant between God, the congregation(s) and the Minister.

If you accept this call, it is the Presbytery which will induct you into this ministry and you will be responsible to the Presbytery for the exercise of your ministry. (Constitution 15)

The terms of placement included in this letter of call are those approved by the Presbytery and are not able to be altered without the authority of the Presbytery.

[NB These principles apply to those called to placements of a presbytery, a synod or the Assembly.]

*Issued by Assembly Standing Committee ...?2001  
Regulation re-numbered 2012*

## **1.8 The Deacon as Sole Ministry Agent in Placement with a Congregation**

This is based on a paper prepared by the National Executive of Diakonia UCA following a resolution of the 2002 Diakonia National Conference. It was prepared as a guide to Joint Nominating Committees, Deacons, PRC's, Placements Committees and all those responsible for the education of Deacons.

### **Minister of the Word and Ministry of Deacon**

These specified ministries are distinct, yet inter-related. They should not be seen as separate. Specified ministry provides leadership and facilitates the ministry and mission of the church. While the Ministry of Deacon has a primary focus on the community beyond the gathered congregation, and that of Minister of the Word on building the life of the gathered congregation, there is a two-way relationship as the congregation takes the Gospel to the world and as the Gospel in the world builds up the congregation.

Some Deacons are in congregation placements where they are the sole specified ministry agent. A Deacon in such a placement has to be able to bridge and balance each focus. It requires particular skills and may require the congregation to have a different expectation of ministry if the placement is to be fruitful for both Minister and congregation.

### **Training**

There is an element in the training of all Deacons that helps them to prepare for the possibility of such a placement, including field education or orientation experiences.

### **Should a Deacon be considered for a particular placement?**

Due to difficulties in forward and strategic planning by Placements Committees, Deacons are sometimes called to congregational placements when there are no outreach community placements available. Conversely, there are at times placements specifically diaconal in ministry emphasis for which no Deacon is currently available, and for which a Minister of the Word may be discerned as having the appropriate gifts.

### **Important criteria**

1. Does the congregation have a strong sense of call to be involved in social welfare needs or social justice issues in the community?
2. Is there already in place a mission plan and/or program in these areas?
3. Is there a mission team already at work, or willing to work in this plan or program?
4. Is the leadership of a suitable Deacon essential or highly desirable to further this mission plan/program through particular ways? These may include:
  - Special skills and experience to offer
  - Pastoral support for mission team and "client group"
  - Ability to interpret the Gospel to the wider community
  - Ability to reflect theologically with the congregation on their welfare and justice mission

Presbytery representatives on the JNC have a responsibility to explain to congregational representatives the differences between the specified ministries. We encourage you to invite a Deacon to visit a meeting of JNC to assist in this.

## Some particular situations where a Deacon placement could be suitable

This is not an exhaustive list, because the church is always called to a ministry of service and this should not be seen as an optional extra. Congregations located in situations such as the following could well consider whether the leadership of a Deacon will enhance their mission to their community.

- Multi-cultural communities, multi-faith communities and congregations sharing properties cross-culturally.
- Communities where there is a significant number of indigenous people.
- Urban and rural communities where there are a significant number of low income people.
- Congregations in inner-city areas and ones located in larger shopping centres, where there is a desire to make significant contacts.
- Locations with a significant number of marginalised people (e.g. people with drug and alcohol problems, mental health problems, single parent families) or where the congregation has a ministry with institutions such as a hospital, a prison, a detention centre or boarding houses.

## Considerations in a conversation with Deacon Exit Students

- whether their call to ministry includes the normal duties of Minister of the Word (preaching, presiding at sacraments, leading worship, pastoral care, Christian Education, involvement with congregation administration – i.e. with nurturing, encouraging and building up the people of God and preparing them for mission);
- whether a rewarding and fruitful ministry may be ahead in this setting, taking the above criteria into consideration;
- that the student is encouraged to speak plainly to the JNC about her/his understanding of his/her ministry and how it may be exercised in the placement.
- exploring issues such as time balance, particular ministry focus, and how this might differ from the congregation's previous experience in ministry;
- that the work of a full-time Minister of the Word plus a full-time Deacon cannot be accomplished - so what is to be the balance? There must be a plan in place for a lay team to share in some of the responsibilities of Minister of the Word (e.g. preaching, leading worship, pastoral visitation) and/or of the diaconal ministry;
- a written statement about the Deacon's experience and call and about the local situation should be presented to the meeting of the congregation in the event that JNC decides to recommend that a Deacon be called.

*Original paper received 2002  
Latest amendment Nov 2007*

## **1.9 Guidelines for Discussions Related to Candidature, Placements and Sexuality**

### **Part One: The purpose of this document**

1. Since 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly resolution re sexuality and leadership many congregations and presbyteries have sought help in understanding how to handle this issue in the practical setting of speaking with applicants, candidates or Ministers seeking a placement.
2. The aim of this document is:
  - to ensure that congregations and presbyteries, should they wish to take into account the way in which a person expresses their sexuality, are able to make that inquiry in an appropriate way, that reflects the church's understanding of anti discrimination legislation;
  - to protect Ministers and candidates from disrespectful, inappropriate and harmful types of inquiry
3. This document is offered as a guide to assist JNC's, presbyteries and others to fulfil these aims. It is not compulsory to use the suggested questions but it is expected the principles present in the document will be applied.
4. These guidelines are related to a very small part of the total placement process and conversations. The placement process is seeking to discern whether there is a call upon the life of a person to serve in a particular ministry at a particular time. Any discussion around the way a person expresses their sexuality should be placed within the broader discussions that assist in discerning a call.
5. These guidelines are to be read in conjunction with the church's policy on vilification and harassment. <https://assembly.uca.org.au/policies/item/169-policy-on-the-prevention-of-vilification-and-harassment-within-the-uca>

### **Part Two: preparing for the conversation**

1. The relevant committee should meet prior to the conversation and think about the layout of the room, how to make people feel welcome and comfortable and who will ask which questions.
2. The person chairing the meeting needs to be aware of when any comments harass a person; or are made or done in a way that intends, or even may, leave a person feeling harassed or vilified. The chairperson should halt the meeting/discussion/interview/ process and address the matter.
3. The purpose of these guidelines is to assist a church body, if it wishes, to discuss with an applicant for candidature, a candidate or a person seeking placement, how the expression of their sexuality may be relevant to the candidature or call under consideration.
4. Placement discussions will cover a wide range of issues including the compatibility of a Minister with a congregation. However the general suitability of a Minister is expressed in their ordination and where the Minister remains in good standing then the nature of the questions raised cannot be in a direction that attempts to prove that the theology of a person makes them unsuitable to be a Minister in the UCA.
5. The questioning cannot be such as to imply that the placement depends upon the Minister accepting or adhering to the stated position of the presbytery or congregation on same gender relationships.

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### **Part Three: the conversation**

1. The applicant, candidate or Minister holding a conversation is not required to answer any question that is put to them. This is true for questions in any area of the conversation.
2. Even though the issue of how a person expresses their sexuality might be seen as an important consideration it should not be the only question. The full range of matters relevant to the conversation about ministry should be raised in all situations.
3. A person should be only asked a question once, and is not required to justify their answer. Therefore if a question is asked and the person responds then, apart from a consequential question, the matter should be left to rest.
4. Possible ways to raise the issue of how a person expresses their sexuality:
  - Within the UCA many congregations do not agree with persons in committed same gender relationships being Ministers. Would the way in which you express your sexuality introduce a difficulty for the range of situations in which you might be able to exercise ministry?
  - This congregation has had a number of discussions about sexuality and ministry. Through these discussions it has, at this time, come to this view (quote it). In the light of that view do you believe that your practice of the Christian life will be acceptable within this ministry context?
  - While a previously stated position of a presbytery is not a binding policy we share with you that in the past the presbytery has expressed this opinion (quote it). If the presbytery were to consider a proposal for you to be placed here, and continued to hold its stated position, would this create difficulties for you being accepted for placement by the presbytery?
5. If a Minister who is holding conversations about the possibility of a placement visits a congregation or groups within it, it is not appropriate for that person to be asked about their sexuality in that context. Such questions should be asked in a safe and respectful environment such as the JNC, or in settings that have already been negotiated with, and agreed to by, the Minister; eg the Church Council.
6. If a candidate is in attendance at a meeting of the presbytery then the Candidates Committee (or PRC as the case may be) report will be the basis for the presentation of the candidate's application. If there is the potential that personal and contentious matters might be canvassed then so far as possible the Committee should field those questions, in the light of its conversations with the applicant. A presbytery should engage in all its processes in a way that does not harass or vilify persons (or leave them feeling harassed or vilified) who come before it. It should not be too difficult for members of presbytery to advise the Secretary ahead of time of questions that they may wish to ask.

### **Part Four: the responsibility of committees**

1. In the case of candidates the presbytery and Synod Selection Panel is to give consideration to the spiritual maturity and motivation of the applicant and the character and personality of the applicant. [Regulations 2.3.2.3 (b) (iii) & (iv) and 2.3.2.4 (c) (i) & (v)].
2. In the case of a placement discussion the JNC and the PRC (if it has delegated authority from the presbytery) can bring the consideration of a particular person to a close by deciding that the name not be forwarded to the congregation for consideration for a placement. [Regulation 2.6.6 (m)]

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3. In coming to their decision the JNC or PRC may take into account a general statement made by a congregation or presbytery on the issue of sexuality and ministry. However notwithstanding the existence of such a statement the JNC or PRC must make its own decision on the suitability of the particular person who is before it for consideration.
4. It is prudent for JNC's and PRC's to keep minutes of their decisions – even in the most basic of terms - in order to make it very clear that they have made a decision on the particular situation before them.
5. There may be pastoral reasons why some feedback should be provided. The amount of detail required will vary in different circumstances. However notwithstanding this valid reason for providing feedback, the committees of the church are not required to publish the reasons for their decisions and should be very circumspect when revealing the factors that were significant in their decision making.

#### **Part Five: the reporting and decision making**

1. The recommendation of a Minister to a congregation for a Call requires a clear presentation of the reasons behind the recommendation. This will include the Minister's relevant experience and the points where the needs of the congregation and gifts of the Minister meet. A complete report will also indicate where there is not a neat fit between what the Minister has to bring and the needs of the congregation.
2. If the JNC considers that it is relevant to raise the issue of how a Minister expresses their sexuality at the time a congregation is making its decision then it should raise it in exactly the same terms as the matter was raised and responded to in the conversation.
3. Many congregations choose to vote upon the Call of a Minister by secret ballot. This process is fair to all participants and should generally be encouraged. It is appropriate for a Minister who is considering a Call to receive information on the strength of support, if it is sought.
4. Minutes of the meeting should not record any reasons for the decision but only the outcome of the ballot / decision.

*Issued by the Assembly Standing Committee 28 Jan 2005  
Latest amendment Nov 2007*

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