

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN ASSEMBLIES CO-ORDINATING CONFERENCE

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

A. Vision

The Christian Brethren Assemblies Co-ordinating Conference of New South Wales exists to encourage conferencing among assemblies and para-assembly activities within the Christian Brethren tradition. Its vision is to encourage the spread of evangelism, the growth of assemblies and to facilitate unity of purpose and spirit amongst believers in that tradition.

The Co-ordinating Conference is a meeting and not an organisation.

It is a gathering of representatives from assemblies and para-assembly activities in New South Wales. The meeting has been convened for over 4 decades and has been known by other names such as “Combined Meeting of Elders and Responsible Brethren”.

B. Principles

The Co-ordinating Conference has adopted these principles in an attempt to document its position and purpose and to assist in regulating its activities.

Those attending the meeting are expected to adhere to these principles.

C. Objects

The Co-ordinating Conference has the following objects:

1. to promote and further the spread of Christianity, the welfare and interests of assemblies, assembly workers and of para-assembly activities;
2. to consider and discuss matters of common interest to, or affecting or likely to affect, assemblies and para-assembly activities generally;
3. to promote co-operation between assemblies and para-assembly activities, and co-ordination of their activities;
4. to facilitate united action by assemblies and para-assembly activities;
5. to provide a regular opportunity for the giving of information on the activities of assemblies and para-assembly activities, and to bring to notice the needs of the Lord's work and workers, particularly in New South Wales;
6. to assist in arranging special or united meetings, including meetings by believers from interstate or overseas;
7. to consider, with the assistance of the Home Workers Advisory Council, the qualifications and suitability of persons desiring to engage in full-time service for the Lord, with a view to publicising, when thought fit, the general acceptance and support by assemblies, of persons commended for such service;

8. facilitate conferencing amongst assemblies and para-assembly activities.
9. To provide directions to the Home Workers Treasurers as to which persons in fulltime service shall participate in receiving undesignated funds from time to time;
10. exercise any legal authority vested in the Co-ordinating Conference; and
11. to receive for consideration reports from assemblies or para-assembly activities.

D. Committees

The Co-ordinating Conference may from time to time establish committees to further its objects.

The following committees currently operate:

- Home Workers Treasurers;
- Home Workers Advisory Council;
- Mens' Conference Committee, and
- Strength in Unity.

Each committee should endeavour to produce a report of its activities to each meeting.

E. Authority

The Co-ordinating Conference has no formal or legal authority in itself. The only authority it has is that recognised by others. For example, the constitutions of some Christian Brethren organisations stipulate that certain issues are to be determined by the meeting in the event of a constitutional deadlock. The Co-ordinating Conference also has authority to appoint marriage celebrants to operate within assemblies and to liaise with the educational authorities in matters relating to scripture and religious education.

Any authority given to the meeting can only be exercised during the conduct of the meeting.

The Co-ordinating Conference does not possess any executive authority and recognises that the autonomy of assemblies and para-assembly activities is paramount.

The meeting:

- (a) does not possess any executive power – it is merely a consultative or advisory body, whose recommendations, to be effective, must be implemented by the various assemblies or para-assembly activities;
- (b) cannot bind any assembly or para-assembly activity to any course of action;
- (c) cannot interfere in the internal affairs of any assembly or para-assembly activity;
- (d) will not discuss any matter affecting one assembly or para-assembly activity only, except with the consent of that body.

F. Office Bearers

The Meeting shall have a Chairman and a Secretary. The meeting may have a Deputy Chairman.

These office bearers have no formal or legal authority apart from the meeting.

The Chairman and any Deputy Chairman shall be appointed at the first meeting of a calendar year and, unless removed earlier, shall hold office until the first meeting in the second calendar year following at which he must retire. The retiring Chairman and any Deputy Chairman are eligible to stand for re-election.

The Secretary shall be appointed by the meeting and shall hold office until removed in accordance with these principles.

An office bearer shall cease to hold office upon the occurring of one of the following events:

- his resignation;
- his ceasing to be a member of an assembly or a para-assembly activity;
- his suffering a loss of mental capacity;
- the meeting determining that he has acted in a manner prejudicial to the interests of assemblies or para-assembly activities; or
- where removed by a two third majority of those who cast a vote provided that at least 21 days notice of a motion to remove the office bearer shall have been given to the office bearer and provided that the office bearer shall have a reasonable opportunity to speak against the motion

A person shall only be eligible for nomination for appointment as an office bearer provided that that person is a member or a regular participant at an assembly and provided that any nomination must be received at least 30 days prior to a meeting. Any nomination must be in writing and must be signed by two persons on behalf of the eldership of his assembly or the managing body of the para-assembly activity he represents, as the case may.

The Secretary shall provide secretarial services to the meeting before during and after the meeting. The secretary is ultimately accountable to the meeting but between meetings has operational accountability to the Chairman. The meeting may authorise the Secretary to act in any way it sees fit to further the objects of the Co-ordinating Conference and may provide a job description for the Secretary in this executive role.

G. Frequency and venue of meetings

The meeting shall be held on a quarterly basis. Ideally, the dates should be given a year in advance.

The venue for the meeting should be determined by the Co-ordinating Conference from time to time.

H. Meeting procedure

The meeting shall be chaired by the Chairman, and in the absence of the Chairman, by any Deputy Chairman. If at a meeting neither the Chairman nor Deputy Chairman are willing or able to act, then the attendees shall be able to appoint a person to chair that meeting.

Procedural matters at a meeting shall be determined by the chairman at the meeting.

I. Eligibility to attend and vote

Any member of an assembly or a representative of a para-assembly activity may attend and take part in any discussions.

Two representatives, in the case of an assembly, and the chairman and chief executive, in the case of a para-assembly activity, shall be formally invited to attend each meeting.

Decision making at the meeting should be by way of consensus and formal voting should only be resorted to when it is apparent that a consensus won't be reached.

Where formal voting is required, each assembly and para-assembly activity shall be entitled to two votes. Where multiple representatives of a body are in attendance they shall determine which persons shall vote on behalf of that body.

J. Notice of Meeting

Notice of each meeting shall be sent to each assembly or para-assembly activity. Attendees shall be given reasonable notice of a meeting. Notice of each meeting shall be given at least 21 days before each meeting.

K. Proxies

There is no right for a person to appoint a proxy to attend or vote on his or her behalf at a meeting.

L. Minutes of Meeting

Draft minutes of the meeting should be prepared by the Secretary and submitted to the Chairman for review prior to issue in a reasonable time.

Draft minutes of a meeting should be submitted for adoption by the following meeting.

M. Technical breaches

A technical breach of these principles in relation to the conduct of any meeting shall not invalidate that meeting, unless that technical breach causes a substantial injustice.

N. Changing the Principles

These principles may be changed at a meeting by a 75% majority approval, provided that notice of a motion to so alter the principles has been given at least 21 days prior to the meeting at which the motion is considered.