

## Regions (Mission Areas) Amendment Ordinance 2013

### Explanatory Report

#### Purpose

1. The purpose this report is to explain changes proposed to be made to the constitution of regional councils and the election of their members through the use of Mission Areas instead of Area Deaneries. The report also explains a number of incidental or consequential changes proposed to be made to the Regions Ordinance 1995.

#### Recommendation

2. The Standing Committee recommends that the Synod pass the bill for the Regions (Mission Areas) Amendment Ordinance 2013 as an ordinance.

#### Background

3. At present there is a modified election process which ensures that at least one minister and at least one lay person from each area deanery in the region (with 2 extra ministers from any area deanery and 4 extra lay persons from any area deanery) are elected as members of each regional council during the Synod session. The modified process is set out in rule 8.1 of the Schedule to the Synod Elections Ordinance 2000.

4. In June 2011, a committee chaired by Bishop Robert Forsyth recommended that the Standing Committee disband the continued reliance on area deaneries in regional council elections (since they are not used for any other purpose).

5. In order to complete the “de-commissioning” of areas deaneries, the Standing Committee considers that any proposal for the reconstitution of regional councils should –

- (a) ensure that membership is drawn from across the entire region, and
- (b) fosters links between regional councils, mission areas and Mission Area Leaders.

6. The Standing Committee sought feedback from the regional councils on this matter and noted that most regional councils agreed that area deaneries should cease to be used as the means by which members of a regional council are elected from across the region and that Mission Areas should, in effect, replace area deaneries for this purpose.

#### Proposed amendments

7. Currently, regional councils are constituted as follows –

- the Regional Bishop
- the Regional Archdeacon
- 1 layperson from each area deanery in the Region elected by the Regional Electors of that Region
- 1 Minister from each area deanery in the Region elected by the Regional Electors of that Region
- 2 Ministers and 4 laypersons each of whom may come from any area deanery in the Region elected by the Regional Electors of that Region
- up to 2 persons elected by the Regional Council.

8. Clause 2(e) of the bill proposes that regional councils be reconstituted as follows –

- Regional Bishop
- 1 lay person from each Mission Area in the Region elected by the regional electors
- 1 minister from each Mission Area in the Region elected by the regional electors
- If the total number of lay persons and ministers whom the regional electors are entitled to elect is less than 12, an additional number of persons appointed by the regional council in order to bring the total number of members on the regional council to 12 (excluding the Regional Bishop).

9. A regional council constituted in this way would therefore usually have a total membership of 13 persons (including the Regional Bishop). The size of a regional council would increase if a Region were to have more than 6 Mission Areas. Currently, the largest number of Mission Areas in a Region is 6 in

both of the Western Sydney and Wollongong Regions. However if in the future a Region was to have, say, 7 Mission Areas, the total size of the membership of its regional council would be 15.

10. In view of the increasing use of Mission Areas, it is considered appropriate to include a brief definition of "Mission Areas" in the Interpretation Ordinance 1985 (clause 4).

11. The bill makes various consequential or minor amendments. In particular –

- (a) for clarity the existing definition for "parochial unit" has been replaced with a new definition for "parish" (clause 2(b)(i)),
- (b) removing the reference to the Regional Archdeacon as a Regional Elector (clause 2(b)(ii)(A)),
- (c) references to ordinances under which a regional council may exercise a function have been updated (clause 2(i)),
- (d) Regional Councils are given slightly expanded powers to invest their property pursuant to the Investment of Church Trust Property Ordinance 1990 (clause 2(j)),
- (e) the reference to Anglican Aid has been updated (clause (k)),
- (f) rule 8.1 of the Schedule to the Synod Elections Ordinance 2000 has been omitted since under the proposed reconstitution of regional councils these special provisions for electing regional councils at the Synod are no longer necessary (clause 3), and
- (g) the Area Deanery Conference Ordinance 1965 is repealed (clause 5).

12. The operative provisions of the bill are expressed to commence on the first day of the first ordinary session of the 50<sup>th</sup> Synod in 2014. This means that regional council elections at that session will be based on the reconstituted form of regional councils under the bill.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee

ROBERT WICKS  
*Diocesan Secretary*

29 August 2013