

Standing Orders Ordinance 1968 Amendment Ordinance 1998

Explanatory Statement

Introduction

1. This bill proposes amending the Standing Orders Ordinance 1968 to implement a number of reforms concerning Synod procedure. Members of Synod are referred to the reports on the Future Form of Synod Meetings (published on pages 413 to 432 inclusive of the 1998 Yearbook) which provide a background to the bill and the reasons why these reforms are proposed.

Questions

2. It is proposed that notices of questions will no longer be given as a formal part of the Synod's Order of Business. Rather, a member will be able to give a notice of a question by delivering a written copy of the question to the Secretaries at any time after the business of a session has commenced and prior to 3.30 pm on the 3rd day of that session.

3. Under the proposed amendments, a reply to a question must be given as soon as possible. The President will not read replies to questions to the Synod. Rather, questions will be answered by handing a copy of the reply to the person asking the question and posting a copy of the reply on a notice board in a prominent position in or near the building in which the Synod is meeting. In addition, a copy of the question and the reply will be "made available" to each member on the day that the reply is first posted. It is intended that questions and replies will be "made available" by placing copies on the seats of members. It is not intended that copies be posted or otherwise sent to members.

Motions

4. It is proposed to include "Motions by request of a Regional Council" in the Synod's Order of Business after "Motions by request of the Synod or Standing Committee". This will give motions by request of a Regional Council a priority over motions from members of the Synod.

5. It is proposed that notices of motions will not be given as a formal part of the Synod's Order of Business. Rather, a member will be able to give a notice of motion by handing a copy of the motion (in duplicate) to the Secretaries. It is intended that a motion of which such notice has been given will be printed on the business paper for the next and subsequent days of the Synod until the motion is dealt with.

6. It is also proposed to amend the "call-over" system. Currently any member calling "object" can prevent a motion from being taken as a Formal Motion under Standing Order 12. It is proposed to amend Standing Order 12 to provide as follows -

- (a) Subject to (b), 10 members of the Synod must object to prevent a motion being taken as a Formal Motion;
- (b) On the first occasion that a motion is called under Standing Order 12, a member can call "Amendment" and if such a call is made, the motion is not taken as a Formal Motion. The person making the call must provide a copy of the amendment to the Secretaries and make himself or herself available to discuss the amendment with the mover of the motion. If on that same day the mover notifies the Secretaries that the amendment is agreed, the mover will be taken to have been given leave to amend the notice of motion. The Secretaries will amend the motion printed on the business paper accordingly.

7. It is also proposed to make procedural changes concerning the seconding of amendments. It is proposed to amend Standing Order 37 to require that 10 members second an amendment, rather than 1 as at present. However, before an amendment is seconded the President will be required to permit the mover of the Amendment to speak for 1 minute to explain the general nature of the Amendment, if requested by any other member. These changes to amendments do not apply to amendments moved in Committee: under Standing Order 37 such amendments do not have to be seconded.

Recommendation

8. The Standing Committee recommends that the Synod pass the bill as an ordinance.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee

MARK PAYNE
Diocesan Secretary

14 August 1998

Note - During the committee stage, the bill to which this Explanatory Statement relates was extensively amended. The points of principle referred to in paragraphs 2, 3, 5, 6(a) and 7 of the Explanatory Statement were not adopted by the Synod, and the bill was amended accordingly.