



Summary of NATIONAL COUNCIL DELIBERATIONS FROM THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT JUNE 2024

SUMMARY OF DELIBERATIONS – JUNE 2024

On 12 May 2024 we were informed of the passing of our NSW State President, Paul Burton. Paul dedicated much of his life to the good works of the St Vincent de Paul Society and even in his term as State President, struggling with health issues, he never forgot the vulnerable, marginalised and disadvantaged. Often, he put the people we assist before his own wellbeing and was selfless in his service of others. We continue to hold Paul's wife, Jennifer, and his four children – Alicia, Joanne, Rachael and Sean and his extended family in our thoughts and prayers.

Dame Beverley Kerr was welcomed to the National Council Meeting of 15 June 2024 as the Caretaker SVdP-NSW State Council Representative. Below is a summary of matters discussed.

National Council met via videoconference on 15 June 2024. Below is a summary of matters discussed.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR THE SOCIETY TO BE A LAY CATHOLIC ORGANISATION

At our retreat in early May 2024, we explored what it means for the Society to be a lay Catholic organisation. National Council left the retreat with an agreed commitment to explore how the meaning of being a lay Catholic organisation could be shared across the Society.

The June Meeting considered a brief prepared by the Secretariate with input from the National Membership, Mission and Spirituality Standing Committee and National Mission Network that explored how National Council and State and Territory Councils could draw on existing resources and materials to develop an educative program based on Catholic Social Teaching. Central to the proposal was recognition of the role key leadership stakeholders have in the development and delivery of messages to the Members and the Society's workforce in a way that is inclusive and respectful of diversity.

Members of National Council unanimously agreed that it, inclusive of all State and Territory Presidents, agreed to adopt a single framework upon which an educative program focussing on what it means for the Society to be a lay Catholic organisation can be developed for the Society in Australia.

They also requested that a formation framework be established for a Society Leadership Program and, that a refresh of the Society *Ethos* booklet be undertaken.

STANDING COMMITTEE UPDATES

A new segment was added to the National Council Agenda that provides National Council with line of sight over activities undertaken by the nine Standing Committees. The intent here is for National Council to formally note and to consider recommendations that come to National Council via a Standing Committee.

REVISION OF NATIONAL COUNCIL GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

The [National Council Governance Framework](#) has been revised. The revision sees the Overseas Partnership Program as a National Council Standing Committee. This recognises the depth of the relationship, policy and operational work conducted by the Society's Members who manage the Overseas Partnership Program. National Council acknowledges the level of advice and recommendations it receives from this Standing Committee and the recommendations it makes about the internal and overseas management of the Twinning and Assist A Student initiatives.

As well, the current CGI relationships involving the National President, the ITVP, representative to CIAD and the Oceania Partnership Program are now illustrated in the governance framework.

SAFEGUARDING

National Council unanimously reconfirmed its preference to act as the 'Church Authority' for the Society in Australia in regard to giving assurances to Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd that all the Society's bodies corporate will comply with the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards.

UPDATE ON REVIEW OF THE RULE PART III

Mr Warwick Fulton, Deputy President and Chair of the Rule Review Drafting Group, expressed his personal thanks to members of the Drafting Group for the enthusiasm and all the hours of commitment that each member gave to the task of drafting the second round of amendments for Part III of The Rule. National Council agreed the proposed 2nd amendments have been an extraordinarily large piece of work.

It is proposed Part III consist of three components: The Articles, The Procedures and The Appendices. The summary of the approach underpinning the 2nd amendments comes from a new Introduction to Part III which reads as follows.

"The 2024 draft edition has divided The Articles into three sections. The Articles in Section One cover matters that have to do with Conferences and Members.

The Articles in Section Two cover those matters that have to do with aspects of Councils and how they function, Council position holders, elections of Council Presidents, managing complaints involving Members and Special Works.

The Articles in Section Three cover general governance matters.

The Procedures attach to some of the Articles. The Procedures provide details and protocols to assist Members and Councils to better understand or to assist implement aspects that attach to an Article.

A third component introduces a set of Appendices that provide a source of corporate knowledge about decisions taken by National Councils past and current. It contains a library of procedures and protocols that provide instructions and references for subsidiary Councils to follow or to consider. Details of how Councils are to take note of information contained in a particular Appendix is outlined in the Preamble to The Appendices.

The Appendices provide a reference point or 'source of truth' for future generations of the Society's leaders in Australia."

National Council noted the proposed 2nd amendments are set out in The Articles, The Procedures and The Appendices and that the latter hold a library of governance-related documents approved by, and in many instances adopted by, National Council in its day-to-day operations as Australia's superior council.

The National Council unanimously agreed to a consultation period which will conclude on **Monday, 30 September 2024**. These materials have been forwarded to State and Territory Councils and national networks.

OVERSEAS PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The National Council received a comprehensive update on the Overseas Partnership Program activities which included planning for the SSVP Oceania Partnership Meeting bringing together all National Presidents later this year to agree and progress regional and national priorities and working with CGI on setting up role-based -emails for office bearers in Oceania. I have recently presented to the CGI Board in Goa, India, on the SSVP Oceania Partnership Program. CGI determined to draw on this initiative as a model for other CGI Regions across the world.