

Resolution Number: **A-25**

Subject: Amendment to the Constitution (Information Resources Committee)

Moved By: (Name) Hon. Ron Stevenson from the Diocese of Fredericton

Seconded By: (Name) Archdeacon Jim Boyles, General Secretary

Note: The mover and the seconder must be members of the General Synod and be present in the House when the resolution is before the synod for debate.

BE IT RESOLVED:

That Section 41 (g) of the Constitution be amended to read as follows:

(g) The Information Resources Committee shall consist of 17 members:

- i) 11 members shall be elected by the General Synod
- ii) at least 6 of the members elected by the General Synod shall be members of the General Synod and one of those shall be a member of the Council of the General Synod
- iii) 6 members shall be appointed by the Primate who, in making the appointments, shall consider expertise in aspects of the Committee's work.

EXPLANATORY NOTE/BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

(See also Resolution A-81 re: the committee's terms of reference, pp. 4-9)

On the recommendation of the Information Resources Committee, the Council of General Synod is proposing that this committee structure be adjusted. It is intended that the three Advisory Boards (Anglican Journal, Anglican Book Centre and Archives) be eliminated, and that four internal sub-committees of the Committee be formed: Anglican Journal, Information Services, Resource Production and Merchandising and Distribution.

This proposal is based on the experience of the Information Resources Committee and its advisory boards during the past three years. The proposed structure is one that enhances coordination, increases flexibility and resiliency, and maintains current advantages.

Coordination is enhanced by:

providing a structure in which all aspects of the Information Resources mandate are appropriately represented, thereby assisting IRC to obtain an effective overview;

providing a structure in which committee and staff structures coincide, thereby making it less likely for items to “fall through the cracks;”

meeting as committee and sub-committees during the same time period, thereby enabling information, plans and concerns to be shared across the board.

Flexibility is enhanced by lodging the sub-committee meetings within the larger meeting of the committee itself. This will not eliminate gaps caused by attendance, but it will permit the committee to respond without requiring meetings to be cancelled because of a lack of quorum.

Advantages of the current structure are retained by the presence of clear sub-committee mandates, which preserve the unique features of the advisory board functions.

The structure deserves a special word in relation to Anglican Journal. The Information Resources Committee was established as the publisher of the Anglican Journal by the 1995 General Synod. Committee members have struggled throughout this triennium to understand the practical meaning of this, particularly in relation to the Journal Advisory Board and the reaffirmation of the Journal’s editorial independence. Committee members came to the following understanding:

General Synod, ultimately, is the publisher of the Anglican Journal. General Synod makes the strategic decision that there will be an Anglican Journal, and that it will be editorially independent. These decisions, therefore, precede the Committee mandate.

The Advisory Board, on the other hand, involves itself in the “day to day” operations of the Journal, including oversight of its advertising, circulation and editorial policy. If the committee were directly responsible for editorial oversight, it could be in conflict between ensuring independence and coordinating communications. Lodging oversight of editorial policy with the advisory board (or, in the new proposal, the sub-committee) is the mechanism that preserves independence. The Committee has referred to this as “operational” oversight.

The Committee sees itself functioning between the over-arching responsibility of General Synod and the more hands-on responsibility of the Advisory Board. Committee responsibilities include review of the Journal’s function in relation to overall communications (as directed in the strategic plan), and ensuring appropriate financial management. Committee members used the phrase “strategic oversight” to describe these responsibilities.

Source: Council of General Synod

Submitted by: General Secretary