

Synod Elections Amendment Ordinance 2003

Explanatory Statement

Introduction

1. On 3 November 2001, the Synod of the Diocese of Sydney resolved as follows (resolution 34/01) -

“Synod, noting -

- (a) that the election process for regional council members requires that at least one lay member and one clerical member be from each area deanery, but that
- (b) nonetheless, where only one such lay and/or clerical nomination is received for a deanery, this person is still included on the ballot paper, and so
- (c) Synod members still need to vote for some nominees who will in any event be ‘automatically’ elected,

requests that the Standing Committee consider reviewing the appropriate election ordinance(s) so that in these (and any similar circumstances) nominees would be declared elected and would so not need to be included on the ballot paper.”.

Requirements of the Regions Ordinance 1995

2. The election of the members of a regional council takes place at the 1st ordinary session of each Synod. Casual vacancies occurring between elections are filled by resolution of the remaining members of the regional council.

3. Clauses 4(1)(c), (d) and (e) of the Regions Ordinance 1995 provide for the election of lay persons and ministers to the regional council by the regional electors of that region. For this purpose, the regional electors of a region are -

- (a) the Regional Bishop and the Regional Archdeacon, and
- (b) each Minister licensed to a parochial unit in the Region and who is a member of the Synod, and
- (c) each person who is a member of the Synod as a representative of a parochial unit in that Region, and
- (d) each other person who resides in that Region and is a member of the Synod but is not a Regional Elector of another Region.

4. The pattern of election is similar for lay persons and ministers in that the regional council must include one lay person and one minister from each area deanery and, in addition, 4 lay persons and 2 ministers from any area deanery in the region.

5. The Regions Ordinance 1995 does not specify how the elections are to be conducted. In July 1996 and again in April 1997 the Standing Committee determined that there should be 2 elections for each regional council, one for the lay members and one for the clerical members. That procedure is now prescribed in clause 8.1 of the Schedule to the Synod Elections Ordinance 2000.

6. In 2002, the Synod received a report from the Standing Committee about the options for conducting elections for membership of the regional councils to address the issue identified in resolution 34/01. The report noted that the option suggested in resolution 34/01 seemed to be the best since there did not seem to be any inequities or disadvantages from the approach.

7. The proposed Synod Elections Amendment Ordinance 2003 seeks to amend the Synod Elections Ordinance 2000 for this purpose.

Recommendation

8. The Standing Committee recommends that the Synod pass the Synod Elections Amendment Ordinance 2003 as an ordinance.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee

MARK PAYNE
Diocesan Secretary

19 August 2003