

ASSOCIATED BODIES IN AUSTRALIA YEARLY MEETING

A Review by Alan Clayton (Victoria Regional Meeting)

1. Introduction

At Yearly Meeting 2023, Minute 23.24, after confirming the recommendations of the QSA & AYM Relationship Working Group Report, went on to add:

“We note that there are associated bodies which use our name and to some of which we appoint members at YM. We note the Handbook section 5.2.3. We feel that there need to be ways for YM to be more involved in their governance, to make sure that this involvement is in right ordering.

We ask Alan Clayton to consult with other Friends and bring forward practical ways to ensure this happens, to Standing Committee or YM for consideration and discernment.”

The precipitant for the tail to this minute was a range of queries that I had raised, at successive Yearly Meetings, about serious governance issues in relation to both general and specific matters concerning the designation and treatment of ‘associated bodies’.

2. Associated Bodies – a case of Organisational Abiogenesis

In the beginning (if the beginning is the emergence of Australia Yearly Meeting as a Yearly Meeting in its own right, separate from what was then London Yearly Meeting, in 1964) there were no associated bodies.

2.1 Situation at the establishment of Australia Yearly Meeting

The first edition of the Handbook of Practice and Procedure (Handbook), under the heading of ‘The Yearly Meeting’, after a description of the nature and role of ‘Standing Committee of Yearly Meeting’, turns to a sub-heading of ‘Committees of Yearly Meeting’. This states:

In order to further the concerns and work of the Society, Yearly Meeting appoints committees or other bodies. These include the following:

1. The Board of Governors of The Friends School, Hobart
2. Quaker Service Council, Australia.
3. Australian Quaker Peace Committee.
4. Australian Friends Education Committee.

After noting some ‘General Provisions’ relating to these four committees (such as the Presiding Clerk being an ex-officio member), the Handbook provides a description of the nature and role of each of these bodies which were clearly and unambiguously described as Committees of Yearly Meeting.

For the first seven years of the operations of Australia Yearly Meeting (AYM) its committee arrangements remained highly stable. Along with the four committees enumerated in the first edition of the Handbook, there were a number of other committees, most of which were in existence at the time when it was Australia General Meeting under the ultimate authority of London Yearly Meeting. These included a Peace Committee, a Finance Committee, an

Extension Committee (involved with outreach), a Legislation Committee and an Editorial Committee for the Australian Friend.

2.2 Incremental Addition of AYM Committees (1971 – 1975)

The period between YM 1971 and YM 1975 saw a steady, incremental, addition of AYM Committees, in large part reflecting AYM's evolving organisational maturity, together with the beginning of the practice of the creation of AYM committees to provide the organisational structure to support emergent leadings and concerns among Australian Friends.

The employment of a paid Yearly Meeting Secretary, with Donald Groom taking up this role in April 1970, led to the establishment of a Secretary's Consultative Committee and the perceived need to make the profile of AYM and Australian Quakerism more widely known lay behind the formation of a Public Relations Committee in 1971. Similarly, the entrenchment of the Backhouse Lecture as an established feature of AYM was reflected in the creation, in 1971, of the James Backhouse Lecture Committee.

At YM 1973 a Nominations Committee was established to bring greater rigour to the process of Yearly Meeting nominations. As well, at YM 1973, a Race Relations Committee was created "to stand with Aboriginal people, to hear their proposals and to forward these wherever possible", an initiative championed by Barry Pittock and strongly supported by Cyril and Elsie Gare and others.

The tragic death of Donald Groom in an aircraft crash in India, in August 1972, led to consideration as to how his legacy could be best memorialised in an ongoing manner within AYM. The result was the establishment of the Donald Groom Memorial Committee (with a major responsibility of overseeing the Donald Groom Fellowship Fund) at YM 1974.

2.3 Growing Pace of New AYM Committees

The pace of establishing new AYM Committees quickened at and after YM 1975.

Following an in-principle decision, at the August 1974 meeting of Standing Committee, that Friends Book Supplies operated by Leo Menka in Sydney should be the responsibility of Yearly Meeting, YM 1975 confirmed this decision and created the Friends Books Supply Committee as a YM committee with membership recommended by Sydney Regional Meeting and confirmed by AYM.

Very late in the history of Australia General Meeting a committee was established to produce the Handbook of Practice and Procedure for the new AYM (the first edition of which appeared in 1967). While this Committee appears not to have been formally laid down, at Yearly Meeting 1975, a Handbook Revision Committee was established to oversee ongoing revisions to the Handbook. Also at YM 1975, it was decided to lay down the Adult section of the Education Committee and morph it into a committee "to act in co-ordinating Friends' interest in the field of children's meetings and isolated children by contact with correspondents in each Regional Meeting." It became known as the Children's Committee. In terms of Friends' concerns, YM 1975 saw the creation of a Quaker World Social Order Committee in response

to strong leadings within Perth Regional Meeting led by members of the Wilkinson and Gare families.

It is not necessary for this exercise to chart the evolving development of AYM committees over the succeeding decades. Suffice to say that this process generally fell under the established forms of buttressing AYM's organisational capacity or that of organisational support for Friends' leadings and concerns, with the creation of the Thanksgiving Fund Committee at YM 1979 being something of a bridge between these two roads.

Perhaps the only additional matter to be noted is the affiliation with AYM, as AYM Committees, of bodies whose role was to oversee or manage properties or bequests.

At Yearly Meeting 1975, AYM noted with great appreciation the intention of Rudi and Hanna Lemberg to bequeath their property, at 57 Boundary Road, Wahroonga, to AYM and appointed a Wahroonga Property Committee comprised of the Presiding Clerk, AYM Secretary, AYM Treasurer and three Friends nominated by Sydney Regional Meeting. Over time, and the crystallisation of the bequest, this committee morphed into The Sanctuary Management Committee.

There is also a Lemberg connection with AYM's initial connection with the Werona property at Kangaroo Valley. At Standing Committee in June 1976 it was agreed that 8 shares belonging to Hanna Lemberg should be bought by AYM at a cost of \$100 each, \$800 in total. Over time, the connection with Kangaroo Valley deepened with the affiliation of the Werona Kangaroo Valley Committee as an AYM committee.

At Standing Committee in August 1974 there was a report on a proposed legacy from the estate of a Miss Morrow, over which her sister (Miss A. E Morrow) had control with an intention to transfer the funds to AYM on the death of Miss A. E. Morrow and another beneficiary as a capital fund, the interest of which was to be used for the purposes of the encouragement of Aboriginal culture in Western Australia. Standing Committee expressed itself willing to accept the responsibility of this legacy. At Standing Committee in September 1977, Perth Regional Meeting was asked to appoint a committee of three to act as advisers in cooperation with the Presiding Clerk and the YM Treasurer, YM Secretary and the Finance Committee on the use of the funds. This became AYM's Morrow Bequest Committee.

2.4 DiA to DiR 2005 – Abiogenesis achieved

In Documents in Advance for YM 2005 there were 37 bodies listed as Yearly Meeting Committees (although this included some specific-purpose, short-term, committees such as the Three-fifty years Exhibition and the Faith and Practice Committees along with some Working Groups such as the Insurance and Sexual Abuse and Misconduct Working Groups). Included in this list of YM Committees were:

- Australia-Wide Quaker Fellowship;
- Australian Campaign Against the Arms Trade;
- Alternatives to Violence Project;

- Australian Friends Fellowship of Healing;
- Friends on The Friends School Board;
- Werona Kangaroo Valley;
- Morrow Bequest Committee;
- Quaker Service Australia Management Committee; and
- The Sanctuary Management Committee.

The corresponding list in Documents in Retrospect for YM 2005 had a new category in the listing, that of ‘Associated Bodies’, alongside the listing of Yearly Meeting Committees. The four bodies listed under this heading were:

- Alternatives to Violence Project;
- Australian Friends Fellowship of Healing;
- Friends on The Friends School Board; and
- Werona Users Group, Kangaroo Valley.

This appears to have been simply a matter of a more nuanced layout presentation of the various entities within the AYM universe that were either explicitly connected to AYM or implicitly so by overwhelming Quaker connection. As is discussed in section 4, below, I think that a recognition that there are differences in the degree of connection with AYM between particular bodies within the AYM universe is an uncontroversial proposition. However, the fact that this change was effected by way of tabular layout, rather than as a deliberative process of discernment at Yearly Meeting, created a governance vacuum that led, as detailed in the next sections, to confusion and even farce.

Over time, the tabular list of ‘Associated Bodies’ has been expanded with the latest list of such bodies (as set out in DiR 2023) being:

- Australian Friends Fellowship of Healing;
- AFFH Charitable Trust;
- Friends Peace Teams;
- The Friends’ School Board of Governors;
- The Friends School Quaker Values Committee;
- FWCC AWPS;
- QSA Company Management Committee;
- Silver Wattle Quaker Centre Ltd;
- Silver Wattle Quaker Centre Advisory Committee; and
- Kangaroo Valley Friends Properties Pty Ltd (known as Werona).

3. The Strange Tale of Associated Bodies in the Handbook

3.1 Introduction

The *Handbook of Practice and Procedure* (which since the seventh edition is known as the *Handbook of Quaker Practice and Procedure in Australia*) (the Handbook) is the ‘book of discipline’ that operates in relation to Australian Quakers. It is part of a history of books of discipline extending back to 1738. More particularly, its historical antecedents go back to great revision of the Rules of Discipline of 1861 in which there was a separation into three separate chapters: *Christian Doctrine* (concerning the Christian theology and beliefs of Friends), *Christian Practice* (concerning the lives and testimonies of Friends) and *Church Government* (concerning the organisation, structure and government of the Religious Society of Friends).

Things have changed over the more than a century and a half since the great revision of 1861. In the United Kingdom, these chapters have gone through various stages of change in content and nomenclature, culminating in *Quaker Faith and Practice: The book of Christian discipline of the Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends in Britain*, now in its fifth edition, with a completed, totally revised, edition due for presentation to Britain Yearly Meeting 2027. In Australia we have *this we can say: Australian Quaker Life, Faith and Thought* as our book of Friends’ doctrines (beliefs) and practice (Friends’ lives and testimonies) sitting together with the Handbook as our rendering of ‘church government’.

I would not ordinarily feel led, or indeed compelled, to provide such an introduction to our ‘books of discipline’. However, given the prevalence of a view – almost a modern ranterism – that the Handbook is purely advisory and can almost be departed from at will when a personal whim whispers contrary to its provisions, it seemed necessary to provide some such background. While the Handbook is not akin to a legislative statute, in terms of prescriptive force, and is a living and evolving document, the nature, form and authority of such evolution is mediated by the discernment and deliberations of Yearly Meeting and, to a lesser extent, Standing Committee. It is completely beyond ‘right ordering’ for there to be pre-emptive action outside of that form of mediated authority. Indeed, it was in order to combat a variety of such organisational ranterism, in the emerging Quaker movement of the late seventeenth century, that George Fox and others moved to institute a form of ‘gospel order’ that crystallised in the deliberative processes of collective discernment that characterise our business meetings and became formalised in our books of discipline.

3.2 Emergence of Associated Bodies in the Handbook

It is emblematic of the subterranean story of ‘associated bodies’ in the history of AYM that the term makes no appearance in the first six editions of the Handbook. In fact its first entrance into the Handbook does not occur for almost a decade and a half after the separate listing of bodies first emerges in DiA and DiR. Similarly emblematic of this history is that such an emergence was effected by a single, indirect rather than any direct and substantive, entry in the Handbook. Additionally emblematic, is that fact that the one attempt to provide a substantive provision was by way of a bizarre and quixotic escapade without the imprimatur of Yearly Meeting.

The initial reference to ‘associated bodies’ occurred by way of the omnibus Handbook Revision Draft which appeared as a separate volume of DiA 2019 which ran to 161 pages in length. However, as already mentioned, this was by way of a single indirect reference rather than any substantive entry. As part of this revision, the Draft excised the section on Documents in Advance and Documents in Retrospect from its previous placement within the section related to AYM Publications and placed it into the section relating to the YM Secretary. This excised section read:

Documents in Advance consists of reports by AYM officeholders, AYM committees and Regional Meetings, for consideration by the next Yearly Meeting gathering (6.2.5). Section B of each report points out where a decision is sought from Yearly Meeting.

It was reproduced verbatim in its new placement apart from the addition of the words “working groups, associated bodies” after the reference to “AYM committees”.

From this time, the term ‘associated bodies’ was customarily used, in the minutes of Standing Committee and Yearly Meeting, where there was a compendious reference to AYM entities (officeholders, committees, Regional Meetings and now associated bodies). From DiA 2021 the reports from associated bodies are nested together under the heading ‘Reports from Associated Bodies’.

3.3 Changes to the Handbook

The Handbook, itself, is very clear as to the process of changing its provisions. This is articulated at the very beginning (in its Preface) with unambiguous clarity, stating that “[t]he handbook can only be amended after Yearly Meeting discernment, i.e. after a YM Minute.”

The change process was set out in a flow chart that was first adopted at YM 2017 with a substituted chart being approved at YM 2018. The change in the flow chart (between the graphic adopted at YM 2018 as against that at YM 2017) was essentially stylistic without substantive change to the processes outlined. In essence, unless a change is minor (such as a spelling correction) then it needs to go through the established AYM process of being profiled in DiA with a Part B statement, being available for Regional Meeting discernment and then considered at Yearly Meeting through the Preparatory Session consideration and any other steps for YM discernment. Even minor changes (whereby the change can be independently made in the online version of the Handbook) are required to be reported to Yearly Meeting (through DiA or – where the change is made after the publication of DiA – to the Preparatory Session at AYM).

As well, the Handbook itself is completely clear and unambiguous that this change process for amendment of entries is the SAME for ‘associated bodies’ as that for AYM officeholders, AYM committees, working groups and Regional Meetings. The insertion of “associated bodies” in the omnibus Handbook Revision package at YM 2019 (see section 3.2 above) is simply indicative of this fact.

3.4 The events of 2021

In December 2020, following a recommendation from Standing Committee, a working group was established to consider the relationship between Quaker Service Australia and AYM. This was, in fact, the fourth review of this type, pursuant to a mandate decision taken at YM 2000 that “a regular review policy should be adopted under which AYM will appoint an independent QSA Review Committee every five years to carry out a comprehensive review and report to AYM.”

During the course of its information gathering processes, the 2021 Working Group discovered that there had been very significant changes to the entry on QSA in the Handbook between its 6th and 7th editions. These are set out in the Report of the 2021 Working Group - www.quakersaustralia.info/sites/aym-members/files/pages/files/QSA_AYM%20Report.pdf – and it is not necessary to provide an exposition here, except perhaps to note that among those changes was to remove any mention of the various mechanisms and processes for monitoring, oversight and evaluation of the operations of QSA by AYM, including the five yearly review, contained in the 6th edition.

These changes were made in 2019 in a manner contrary to the mandated processes set out in by the Handbook and summarised at section 3.3 above. These were very clearly MAJOR changes and should have gone through the DiA Section B process with an ability to be considered by Regional Meetings, followed by the discernment processes at Yearly Meeting.

The Working Group, as a matter of courtesy, sent its draft final report to the (then) Convenor of the QSA Management Committee on 23 October 2021. This report included the analysis that the changed Handbook entry was not in accordance with the established practices of Australia Yearly Meeting and that the entry in the 6th edition of the Handbook should be reinstated.

Then, suddenly, less than week later, there is a new version of the flow chart produced which was uploaded to, and formed part of, the online Handbook from late 2021. This new flow chart introduced an expressway process that allowed ‘associated bodies’ to make any changes, no matter how major and consequential, to its Handbook entry without any scrutiny, input or comment from Regional Meetings or Australia Yearly Meeting. These changes would be instantly recognised in the online Handbook and simply reported to AYM as a fait accompli via Documents in Advance.

It is difficult to imagine a more egregious example of organisational ranterism and dismissive disregard of Quaker ‘right ordering’ and proper governance processes. A massive change to Quaker processes, which has not been canvassed in any AYM document, nor received a single syllable or a nanosecond’s consideration by Yearly Meeting, is, without notice to any AYM officeholder, peremptorily imposed upon AYM operations. This was done unilaterally and without any authorising authority (a minute from Yearly Meeting).

If the purpose of this exercise was to retrospectively validate the major changes to the QSA entry in the move from the 6th to 7th editions of the Handbook, on the basis that QSA was an ‘associated body’ - and hence any changes could be made without any outside scrutiny from

Yearly Meeting - it misses a very crucial fact: at the time that these changes were made QSA was not an ‘associated body’ but *still an AYM committee*.

3.5 Postscript

At YM 2023 the Handbook Revision Committee brought what was essentially the October 2021 flow chart to Yearly Meeting – properly through the Part B process – for consideration. In relation to this the Report from the Preparatory Session stated:

There was considerable discussion, in particular relating to Associated Bodies on the flowchart. The section relating to Associated Bodies has been removed from the amended Proposed flowchart. We hope that this will be accepted at YM23. We have amended the flowchart – deleting all reference to ‘Associated Bodies’.

4. Associated bodies – potential ways forward

4.1 Introduction

While the emergence of ‘associated bodies’ as a separately-designated category of organisations within AYM seems to have been purely a matter of happenstance in the compilation of DiR for YM 2005, there is an inherent and intuitive logic for making such a distinction. I believe that there is an overwhelming case for some form of separate designation. However, the gravamen of my position is that this should have been effected with the open imprimatur of a decision of Yearly Meeting, made after a deliberative consideration of the various issues surrounding such a separate designation. This would have included an articulation of the basis of the separate designation of particular bodies that bear the Australian Quaker name (either explicitly or implicitly by overwhelming Quaker connection) and especially a formulation – to use the words of Minute 23.24 of YM 2023 – of the ongoing governance relationship between AYM and these separately designated bodies in order that this involvement is in right ordering. Such an articulated process would have avoided the farce of elements of the treatment of ‘associated bodies’ in the Handbook in recent years as related in section 3.4 above. While, in some respects, this recent history may be simply seen as a storm in a Quaker teacup, it, nevertheless, does highlight the important, nay essential, issue of clarity and transparency in our governance arrangements.

4.2 Recognition of new category/ies

On the basis of common knowledge, it is obvious that there is a continuum or spectrum of bodies in terms of their connection (direct and indirect) with AYM. At one end of this continuum are entities intrinsically tied and related to the operations of AYM (eg Nominations Committee). Next on this spectrum are bodies that support concerns internal to AYM and its constituent Regional Meetings (eg Childrens and JYF Committee), together with entities that are focused upon concerns more generally in the community and body politic that are important to Friends (eg First Nations Peoples Concerns Committee). The membership of such bodies is overwhelmingly by appointments made or endorsed at Yearly Meeting or, sometimes, Standing Committee. In relation to these bodies with a quite direct connection with AYM, Yearly

Meeting has already discerned a classificatory typology: namely, representative committees, expert committees and working groups, and hosted committees.

At the other end of the AYM-connection spectrum are bodies that bear the Quaker name (either ‘Quaker’ or ‘Friends’) but are totally or substantially autonomous from AYM in terms of the appointment of members to their governing structures and in relation to reporting and oversight of their operations. This is the group to which ‘associated body’ status has been accorded. However, what has never been considered, to any real extent, is the basis upon which a different, or more than one different, classification can be made in relation to these, often disparate, bodies.

4.2.1 Appointments not made by AYM

The original classificatory distinction made in DiR 2005 appears to have been a largely intuitive judgment with no (at least overtly) expressed basis. With DiR 2007 there was appended to the title of ‘Associated Bodies’ the tag, in relation to the officeholders named, that “[t]hese positions are not appointed by AYM”. It is not entirely clear, if this is the distinguishing characteristic, why the Friends’ School Board, after two years being listed as an associated body, in DiA 2007, was designated as an AYM committee and remained as such until DiA 2018 at which time it reverted back to being listed as an associated body.

With regard to the Friends’ School Board – and the Friends’ School is probably seen as the archetype of an ‘independent’ Quaker body – an assertion that the Friends’ School Board positions being ‘not appointed by AYM’ is not entirely unproblematic. In regulatory theory there is a distinction made between de facto control and the right to control. While the argument may appear to some as somewhat obtuse, Friends may be surprised to learn that AYM is actually ensconced, in a right to control governance sense, in the appointment process of the membership of the Friends School Board as Directors of the governing Association.

Apart from the Principal of the School and the AYM Presiding Clerk, there are 8 to 12 Elective Directors. Four of the Elective Directors are nominees of Tasmania Regional Meeting. Of the remaining (up to eight) Elective Directors the names are a discernment of the Board itself but must then be approved by a General Meeting of the Association AND by AYM. In the Rules of the Friends’ School Incorporated (as last amended in May 2023) it is clearly stated, in the last sentence of Rule 8(b), that “Yearly Meeting shall determine which of the nominees shall be appointed as Elective Directors.” Now, having been through a discernment process by the Friends’ School Board itself and a General Meeting of the Association, it would be quite extraordinary for Yearly Meeting to overturn the appointment of a recommended Elective Director. One would hope that any action to that effect would be exercised with enormous care and only in exceptional circumstances. However, that reserve power remains vested in Yearly Meeting.

4.2.2 Coverage under the Ansvar Insurance policies

One element that underpins much of AYM operations is perhaps little known, and, if known, understood outside of the AYM Treasurer and AYM Finance Committee; namely, the umbrella insurance coverage that is afforded under the Ansvar Insurance Public Liability Policy and the

Ansvar Insurance Personal Accident Policy. This is a ‘master’ insurance policy taken out by Quakers Australia (QA) that provides public liability and personal accident coverage for AYM (in the form of The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia Inc), the seven Regional Meetings, Young Friends, Kangaroo Valley Friends Properties Pty Ltd and Quaker Service Australia Limited. Such master policies are now relatively uncommon, outside of body corporates and similar arrangements, and the fact that QA has been able to preserve this shared coverage facility speaks very highly to the excellent ongoing relationship between QA and Ansvar Insurance Limited (part of the Benefact Group) and of the overall maintenance of an historical low-risk profile and relatively-minimal claims history under this arrangement.

Such an insurance arrangement requires a two-way street of mutual communication and transparency between those covered under the master policy and QA and between QA and Ansvar, given the fundamental doctrine in insurance law of *uberrimae fidei* (the doctrine of utmost good faith). This requires those bodies covered under the master policy to strictly adhere to a range of QA policies including the QA Child Protection Policy and Procedures and the Safe Quaker Community Policy and the attendant record keeping and other requirements under these policies.

I would also note that the accession by Quakers to the National Redress Scheme as ‘Australia Yearly Meeting Participating Group’ in 2020 was undertaken on behalf of AYM, all Regional Meetings, Australian Friends Fellowship of Healing Charitable Trust, Quaker Service Australia Limited, Silver Wattle Quaker Centre Ltd and Kangaroo Valley Friends Properties Pty Ltd (Werona).

4.2.3 Quaker-inspired or Quaker-infused bodies

There are many organisations in which the founding membership and ethos either predominantly, or at least significantly, came from Quakers. Many Australian Friends are well aware of the origins of Amnesty International (in which the prominent British peace activist, Eric Baker, joined with the non-Quaker Peter Benenson), Greenpeace, Oxfam and other examples of Quaker-influenced initiatives that went on to gain influence and significance well beyond the Quaker community.

Another exemplar is the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) which grew out of a request, in 1975, from inmates at Greenhaven Prison in New York State to local Quakers to assist them in keeping young offenders from spending much of their life within the prison system. The response came from men and women involved in the Quaker Project on Community Conflict, a body under the care of New York Yearly Meeting. AVP has spread internationally and has long operated in Australia as a Quaker-inspired and Quaker-infused body and initiative.

It is a mark of success when such leadings and initiatives take on a wider life, grow and become more generally established outside of a specific Quaker context and community.

This trajectory is exemplified in the relationship of AVP with YM. AVP is listed in DiR 2005 as one of the four recognised ‘associated bodies’ and remained as such until it disappeared from mention in the listing of bodies, in any capacity, with DiR 2016. From a stronger, earlier, association with AYM, including funding from the Thanksgiving Fund in 2002 to bring AVP

to the community of Rockhampton in Queensland, later involvement of AVP at YM was generally to provide verbal reports at the Peace Concerns preparatory sessions – along with the Peace and Social Justice Committee and the Regional Meeting Peace and Social Justice Committees and Networks. During the period of its listing as an ‘associated body’, AVP never supplied a written report for DiA.

4.3 A potential new schema or typology

The purpose of attempting to refine and define the relationship of AYM with bodies with which AYM is in some symbiotic connection, but which are not AYM committees or working groups, is not some abstruse exercise in Quaker organisational-Linnaean classification. It is to, again, quote YM 2023 Minute 23.24 which commissioned this paper, to meet the need, in relation to “associated bodies which use our name and to some of which we appoint members. . . [for] ways for YM to be more involved in their governance, to make sure that this involvement is in right ordering.”

Against the background of the discussion in the earlier parts of this section of the paper, I am proposing a potential three-fold new typology which attempts a distinction based upon a more nuanced understanding of the real nature of the relationship between the particular body, including the level of functional independence, and AYM. In the light of such an understanding, it is possible to discern and craft an appropriate governance framework which mediates this relationship, in a transparent fashion, that reflects right ordering.

This organisational-relationship tryptch involves:

- affiliated bodies;
- associated bodies; and
- allied bodies.

There follows a very brief sketch as to the rationale for the particular categorisation and what the governance relationship with AYM for such a categorisation could/should be. It must be stressed that this is a first attempt, with the aim of stimulating discussion and discernment, and not a fully-formulated model.

4.3.1 Affiliated Bodies

Affiliated bodies are ones that serve a Quaker-aligned function, with a significant degree of independence from direct QA oversight, yet still maintain a close connection with AYM. Perhaps the most powerful indicium of such close connection is being a named entity within the coverage of the QA master insurance policies with Ansvar Insurance Limited.

With respect to the list of ‘associated bodies’ in DiR 2023, the entities which best fit the categorisation of an ‘affiliated body’ are:

QSA Australia Limited; and

Kangaroo Valley Friends Properties Pty Ltd.

As a preliminary point, I think that the relevant terminology for the listing with respect to QSA is the organisation itself rather than, as was in DiR 2023, that of the QSA Company Management Committee. That is, we are speaking of entities in their entirety rather than just their committee of management.

Given the closeness of the connection with AYM – particularly with respect to the requisite record-keeping and other requirements mandated for adherence to AYM policies (particularly Child Protection and Safe Quaker Community) as part of its insurance obligations – it is suggested that the overriding governance relationship for these bodies (with allowance for specific characteristics) with AYM/QA should mirror that for AYM committees and working groups. This would include the requirements and obligations set out in the current section 5.2.3 of the Handbook.

4.3.2 Associated Bodies

Associated bodies are those which bear the Quaker name ('Quaker' or 'Friends') but whose organisational and operational structures demonstrate a significant degree of independence from those of AYM/ QA. Indicia of this independence may include being incorporated bodies; having a board of management that exclusively, or at least overwhelmingly, controls appointments, both to the board and constituent committees of the organisation; and having responsibility for dealing with its risk environment through insurance and other means.

These indicia will be fully present for larger, well-established, entities. For smaller bodies, the dominant features will be that appointment to controlling positions within the organisation is largely in the hands of the body itself with no, or relatively little, involvement from AYM. For some, the involvement of AYM in the appointment process will be one shared with other bodies, often Yearly Meetings in other countries.

Again, looking at the DiR 2023 list, the entities that are seemingly the best fit for this categorisation are:

The Friends' School Incorporated;

Silver Wattle Quaker Centre Limited;

Australian Friends Fellowship of Healing;

Friends Peace Teams; and

Friends World Committee for Consultation, Asia-West Pacific Section.

Similarly, as alluded to in the previous section, I think that the listing should that of *The Friends' School Incorporated* rather than The Friends' School Board of Governors. In like vein, I do not see it necessary or appropriate to list The Friends School Quaker Values Committee as a separate 'associated body' as in DiR 2023. Also, in relation to the Australian Friends Fellowship of Healing, I see that this listing can be seen as encompassing that of the AFFH Charitable Trust.

The Friends' School and Silver Wattle Quaker Centre Ltd (SWQC) are both well established institutions in the life of Australian Quakers, with strong connections with, but largely

independent of, AYM. Both are incorporated entities; the former whose governing conditions (appointment, responsibilities etc) are laid out in the Rules of the Friends' School Incorporated (made under the *Associations Incorporation Act 1964* (Tas)) and the latter as a public company limited by guarantee under the federal *Corporations Act 2001*.

The appointment of directors of SWQC is in the hands of the board of directors following a recommendation from the SWQC Advisory Committee. The formal connection with AYM is that YM appoints a representative to the SWQC Advisory Committee. Notwithstanding the comments at section 4.2.1 above, the Friends' School Board effectively (in de facto sense) controls the appointment of a majority of the Elective Members of the Board. Finally, both the Friends' School and SWQC undertake the full responsibility of dealing with their risk environments including the organisation of insurance coverage.

The Australian Friends Fellowship of Healing (AFFH) describes itself as a Quaker interest group. It began in 1971 as a leading of Olaf Hodgkin which gained traction among Friends in a number of Regional Meetings and also in Aotearoa/ New Zealand. The Australian Friends Fellowship of Healing Charitable Trust (AFFHCT) was set up in Western Australia in 1986 to provide respite to people in need of rest and creative renewal to regain health and wholeness. Trustees of the AFFHCT are appointed at the Annual General Meeting of the AFFH which is held during the period of the AYM gathering.

Friends Peace Teams (FPT) were formed in 1993 by several North American Yearly Meetings. Australian Quakers became involved around 2005 and several Australian Friends are actively involved in the FPT's Asia West Pacific Initiative. The governing body for FPT is the Friends Peace Teams Council, with which some Australian Quakers had been connected even prior to the decision, at YM 2014, for AYM to formally join this Council.

Friends World Committee for Consultation, Asia-West Pacific Section (FWCC-AWPS) was established in 1985 as one the last of the four sections of the FWCC. It involves representatives from AYM, from Aotearoa/New Zealand and Japan Yearly Meetings, from four Yearly Meetings on the Indian subcontinent, along with representatives from Worshipping Groups in other countries within the region. Australian Friends holding office in FWCC or FWCC-AWPS are ex officio members of the AYM Quaker World Connections Committee (QWCC).

Given the relative independence, at least in a governance sense, of these 'associated bodies' from AYM, it is appropriate that they be allowed the opportunity to report to YM in DiA, but that, in relation to changes that they effect in relation to their operations, they can elect as to whether or not this includes a Part B discernment process.

4.3.3 Allied Bodies

Allied bodies are those that have had an historical connection with AYM, but that, notwithstanding that this direct connection has diminished over time, there is a desire to maintain an acknowledged ongoing link.

As mentioned earlier, an exemplar of this situation is AVP. AVP still remains as a strong and vital presence in many Regional Meetings and still infuses some of the operational directions

of many AYM committees and associated bodies, including Friends Peace Teams. I feel that it would be appropriate, providing that this would be their wish, that AVP be so recognised as an ‘allied body’.

4.4 Legacy issue

As related in section 3.4 above, the 2021 Working Group to consider the relationship between QSA and AYM, because of the flawed processes at YM 2019, recommended that the Handbook entry for QSA be restored to that of the 6th edition of the Handbook. When the Working Group report was brought to YM 2022, there was some division at the Preparatory Session and these differences were not resolved at the Formal Sessions of YM. A QSA & AYM Working Group was then established which brought a report to YM 2023. However, this latter Working Group essentially only addressed itself to the issues relating to the Linkages Committee and the recommendations of the 2021 Working Group as to QSA returning to a ‘committee of the whole’. It did not address itself at all to the Handbook issues.

The report of the 2021 Working Group, in surveying the history of QSA reviews, drew attention to the number of occasions where the recommendations of these prior reviews had been ignored or shelved by YM. At YM 2000, after considered deliberation, there was a decision that “AYM will appoint an independent QSA Review Committee every five years to carry out a comprehensive review and report to AYM.” The result of the flawed processes at YM 2019 meant that this overt decision of AYM in 2000 was swept away with no notice and not a single second of consideration by AYM. Quakers proudly assert the role of their Testimonies in founding their presence and actions in the world. To turn a blind eye to the Testimony to Integrity and the right ordering of our processes in the interest of conflict avoidance is a travesty of our history and processes.

We are now almost a quarter of the way into the twenty first century. The world has changed greatly since AYM made its decision in 2000. I, for one, am of the view that these changes, together with that of the attendant organisational maturity of QSA, means that we should revisit and potentially overturn the position taken at YM 2000. However, that result should emerge through the proper application of our processes and not through a sleight of hand; that is, it should be effected through a properly considered decision of Yearly Meeting.

5. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- (a) AYM consider the basis of recognising closely related bodies which are not AYM committees or working groups, drawing on the issues traversed in section 4.3 of this paper, together with the attendant governance arrangements that should accompany such recognition; and
- (b) AYM address the legacy issue from YM 2022 that is considered in section 4.4 of this paper.