

AS OF 11.5.22
REGIONAL MEETING RESPONSES TO DOCUMENTS IN ADVANCE 2022--PART Bs

Handbook Revision Committee

PART B: ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

That the proposed five revisions (**DAI22 APPENDIX 3**) are accepted.

4.3.2 Planning a wedding or celebration of commitment

CRQ: We note the confusion between the second and third last passages. We are advised that under the Marriage Act, Registering Officers are not authorized to perform marriages or commitment ceremonies other than for Quakers. Otherwise, we support the changes.

NSWRM: We ask the Handbook revision committee to combine the following two paragraphs to make the meaning clearer.

A Quaker Registering Officer may only conduct marriages for couples of whom at least one partner is a member or attender, and with the permission of the Regional Meeting. Couples who have a less significant link to Quakers may be married by the Quaker Registering Officer with the permission of the Regional Meeting.

QRM: Roger Sawkins has considered these in detail at Queensland Regional Meeting's request. *Revision 1: Weddings in Meeting Houses.* We accept this change without comment.

SANTRM: SANTRM accepts the changes proposed in regard to weddings and celebrations of commitment (4.3.2).

TRM: TRM regards the Handbook as descriptive, not prescriptive.

TRM accepts the proposed changes to the Handbook on weddings and celebrations of commitment

VRM: We note that feedback has already been received by the committee and is included on the website. We look forward to further discussion at the preparatory session. We agree that the proposed five revisions should be accepted.

WARM: We are concerned that there seems to be some conflict in meaning regarding the next to last two paragraphs on the conduct of marriage (4.3.2). We suggest this wording: Marriages conducted by the Quaker Registering Officer are normally for a couple of whom at least one partner is a Member or Attender. Couples who have a less significant link to Quakers may be married by the Quaker Registering Officer. All marriages conducted by the Quaker Registering Officer need to have the permission of the Regional Meeting. We accept the other four revisions.

4.5 Sojourners

CRQ: We accept these changes to the Handbook.

NSWRM: We accept these changes.

QRM: Roger Sawkins has considered these in detail at Queensland Regional Meeting's request. *Revision 2: Sojourners.* We accept this change without comment.

SANTRM: ?

TRM: TRM supports the proposed Handbook additions to 4.5 Sojourners

VRM: We agree that the proposed five revisions should be accepted.

WARM: We accept this revision.

4.6.4 Testimonies to the Grace of God

CRQ: We accept these changes to the Handbook.

NSWRM: We ask the Handbook committee to consider the following alternative text:

a Member or regular Attender of a RM dies, that Meeting initially minutes that death in its next MfWfB. The minute may be brief and factual and is a record of that death. The Meeting also discerns whether to write a 'Testimony to the Grace of God' in the life of the deceased Friend. If agreed upon, it needs to ensure that the Friends appointed to do so fully understand what is involved.

QRM: Roger Sawkins has considered these in detail at Queensland Regional Meeting's request. *Revision 3: Testimonies.* We accept this change without comment.

SANTRM: We offer minor amendments to section 4.6.4, which is in Appendix 1. We wish to keep the following text in 4.6.4: "It is a response from the Meeting to the spiritual value of the life lived."

TRM: TRM supports the proposed new guideline to 4.6.4 Testimonies to the Grace of God in the Handbook, but would prefer to have the deleted paragraph restored. We also would suggest the following:

- We encourage the practice of specifically appointing one or two Friends (not closely involved in the bereavement) to take notes at the funeral or memorial Meeting – those notes to be given to the Friends appointed to write the Testimony.
- We agree strongly that the testimony is best written or at least finalised after the Meeting for Thanksgiving or funeral – where much significant material may arise.
- We heard that some believe that the Testimony may not be accepted by the business meeting or may need addition or amendment before its acceptance.

VRM: We agree that the proposed five revisions should be accepted.

WARM: We accept this revision.

5.2.7 AYM archivist

CRQ: We will seek the endorsement of our archivist for these changes to the Handbook.

NSWRM: We accept these changes and note that these words meet our legal requirements.

QRM: Roger Sawkins has considered these in detail at Queensland Regional Meeting's request. *Revision 4: AYM Archivist Role.* We accept the changes suggested by our Friend Saadia Thomson-Dwyer, which are technical in nature.

SANTRM: We endorse the amendments in regard to the YM Archivist (5.2.7) in their entirety.

TRM: TRM is grateful for the clarity of this statement on the role of the Archivist and supports the proposed amendments to the Handbook

VRM: We agree that the proposed five revisions should be accepted.

WARM: We accept this revision.

e. Australian Friend:

CRQ: We hear concerns that this is not the usual use of the words ‘in the care of’, as AYM does not have the same pastoral care arrangements as regional meetings. We acknowledge that this is a

practical matter that needs to be resolved and there appears to be no alternative at the moment.

We note that the committee itself is supportive of the proposal.

We support this proposal.

NSWRM: i. We are happy for the Australian Friend committee to have members from different Regional Meetings. The names of the committee members could be brought forward by AYM or by RM nominations committees.

ii. We note that all committees are in the care of AYM, including the Australian Friend Committee which has now become (per the handbook) an “expert” committee. The name “expert” committee has been used to distinguish committees which are neither “hosted” nor “representative”. We ask the Handbook Revision Committee to find a better term than “expert” to clarify this distinction.

QRM: Roger Sawkins has considered these in detail at Queensland Regional Meeting’s request. Revision 5: *Changes to the classification of AYM committees*. We accept the proposed change. We ask whether this means that committees “under the care of AYM” are the same as “expert committees.”

SANTRM: SANTRM supports updating the Handbook to acknowledge the Australian Friend committee (5.3.7.3) as a Yearly Meeting rather than hosted committee.

TRM: TRM supports amending the Handbook to acknowledge the *Australian Friend* Committee as a committee of Australia Yearly Meeting, rather than as a committee hosted by a Regional Meeting. We were not in unity about an alternate name but hope that one may be found for this type of committee.

VRM: We agree that the proposed five revisions should be accepted.

WARM: We accept this revision.