



AUSTRALIAN CHURCHES  
REFUGEE TASKFORCE

## Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce

### *Guiding Document*

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## Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce

Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce (ACRT) is a program of the National Council of Churches in Australia (NCCA). The ACRT is governed by the NCCA Board and managed by the General Secretary of the NCCA. The ACRT is subject to the policies and procedures of the NCCA.

The NCCA Board delegates certain responsibilities, as set out below, to the ACRT Executive and the ACRT Steering Committee. The ACRT Executive and the ACRT Steering Committee will be supported by an ACRT National Coordinator.

### Mandate

The mandate of the Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce is to offer leadership to the member churches of the NCCA to promote a shared Christian vision of compassion and hospitality for asylum seekers and refugees, particularly those subject to the direct control of the Australian Government.

The ACRT seeks to:

- engage and communicate with churches (NCCA members and others where possible) and church agencies on issues relating to refugees and people seeking asylum
- facilitate the NCCA and its member churches to have a strong moral voice in the domestic debate around refugees and people seeking asylum
- assist with communication and information sharing across churches in Australia
- lead Australian churches in coordinated campaigning and advocacy activities in support of refugees and people seeking asylum
- collaborate with existing and emerging networks of stakeholders in the Australian refugee sector.

### ACRT Executive

The purpose of the ACRT Executive is to ensure the voice and focus of ACRT and the NCCA on the issues of refugees and asylum seekers is appropriate.

The ACRT Executive is composed of; the Chair of the ACRT Steering Committee; the NCCA General Secretary, the National Coordinator of the Taskforce and two other people appointed by the NCCA Board.

The ACRT Executive is responsible for:

1. [NCCA Strategic Roadmap 2019-22](https://www.ncca.org.au/strategic-roadmap) – insofar as the ACRT policy statements and program action fit within the priority focus areas of the four Strategic Objectives that comprise the three-year Strategic Roadmap.



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2. ACRT strategy – taking note of the input from the Steering Committee and the NCCA Board.
3. Program – ensuring appropriate engagement with government, media, the sector and with member churches. This will include developing and reviewing key messaging and ensuring advocacy and communication are appropriate and timely.
4. Financial – assisting the NCCA as required in setting, reviewing and monitoring the ACRT budget.
5. Monitoring compliance - monitoring the objectives, purposes and values of the ACRT strategic plan within the constitution and policies of the NCCA
6. Risk management – Identifying and reporting to NCCA Board on any emerging risks
7. Reporting to the NCCA Board through the General Secretary.

### Steering Committee

#### *Purpose of the Steering Committee*

The role of the Steering Committee is to:

- Contribute to and promote the ACRT's strategic objectives including messaging and wider engagement
- Connect the ACRT with member churches
- Offer support and connection between people within the member churches actively engaged in advocacy and support for asylum seekers and refugees.

#### *Membership of the Steering Committee*

1. The Steering Committee is appointed by the NCCA Board and shall consist of no more than 10 members including:
  - The ACRT Chair
  - The NCCA General Secretary
  - Up to 8 members from NCCA member churches
  - The Taskforce National Coordinator will support the function of the Steering Committee and attend all meetings.
  - Expert guests may be invited to attend or contribute to meetings where required.
2. Members of the Steering Committee will serve on a voluntary basis.
3. There is no time limit on members serving but the NCCA Board will seek to stagger appointments and refresh the Taskforce membership at regular intervals.
4. The Taskforce Chair will be elected biannually by Steering Committee members.
5. An invitation to Taskforce members and churches to nominate Taskforce members will occur when required.
6. Applications for membership will consider;



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- Membership diversity of church background
- Gender diversity and other diverse representation
- Skill and experience in refugee and asylum work
- Networks nationally within justice organisations ecumenically or within their own church.

### *Meetings*

1. The Steering Committee will meet by teleconference at least bimonthly.
2. The Steering Committee may meet face to face annually or biannually at the discretion of the ACRT Executive.
3. The Executive Officer in collaboration with the Steering Committee Chair will be responsible for setting meeting agendas, preparing relevant briefing papers, minutes and confirming meeting arrangements.
4. Steering Committee members will be required to abide by NCCA policies and may be required to undertake police and working with children checks if the NCCA Board feels it is necessary.

### **Public Voice and Media Comment**

1. Media comment will be determined by the following three people in conversation:
  - Chair
  - National Coordinator
  - NCCA General Secretary.
2. The spokesperson will be nominated as one or two of the President of NCCA, the Chair, the National Coordinator or the General Secretary.
3. Steering Committee members may be approached to provide media comment by the Chair or General Secretary.
4. Members are free to make public or media comment on behalf of their own church or personal opinion but may not use the position of ACRT without permission from the Chair or the General Secretary.
5. Member Churches may act in their own name but will not represent the ACRT without consultation

### **Related NCCA Documents:**

- NCCA [Constitution](#)
- [NCCA Strategic Roadmap 2019-22](#)
- [NCCA Roadmap Guide](#)
- [NCCA Operational Structure \(as of Jan 2020\)](#)
- Code of Conduct
- Child Safeguarding Policy



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## Document Review Schedule

Version #	Endorsed by (title/name) and Date	Responsible officer (Title/name)	Date of next review
1	NCCA Board – 29 Jan 2020	General Secretary	As required.