



BOARD FOR LAY MINISTRY

Strategic Plan 2010 – 2015

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Strategic Plan has been developed through a workshop process backed up by extensive consultation with stakeholders. The Board for Lay Ministry (Board) intends that the Plan will provide a strategic framework for its own work over the next 5 years, and will also model a similar approach to intentional ministry planning in congregations and agencies across the LCA, so that pastors and lay workers work as teams with all God's people to be Christ in the world.

During the past 3 years the Board has worked with Australian Lutheran College and Delta Ministries to develop a framework for training lay workers and classifying lay work positions that is consistent with national vocational and higher education standards, and addresses the skills and knowledge that lay workers most need. The courses are now being offered across Australia.

An online survey of lay worker and employer views in June 2010 confirmed the expectation of continued growth in lay ministry across Australia, and ongoing need for training, pastoral care and guidance and advice for employers.

The Board's strategic planning workshops and stakeholder consultations identified the following key priority areas for action over the next 5 years:

- 1 Leading and influencing change across the church:** through ongoing interactions at LCA and District levels, collaboration with mission and other departments, and communication using all available technologies.
- 2 Promoting vocational pathways:** through congregations, schools, ALC, and Lay Worker Formation Officers.
- 3 Equipping and pastoral care of lay workers:** through ongoing roll-out of training packages, ongoing review of training needs, employment of district-based Lay Worker Formation Officers to address accreditation, pastoral, spiritual, personal and professional development needs of lay workers, and through further development of online resources and systems.
- 4 Fostering good employment and ministry practices:** through information resources and first line support from the Director for Lay Ministry and Lay Worker Formation Officers.
- 5 Governance and management:** by exploring alternative funding arrangements, reviewing accountabilities, undertaking Board and staff succession planning, ensuring pastoral care of staff.

Two key elements of this Plan will impact on its implementation:

1. A **lay worker** is redefined as a lay person who has been installed into a defined ministry position by a congregation or agency of the LCA. The position may be a paid one, or occupied on a voluntary basis.
2. Additional investment is required in people (ie Lay Worker Formation Officers).

The Board has identified key initiatives/projects within these key result areas that will be focused on to the end of 2011. These are highlighted in blue on pages 7-11.

2. INTRODUCTION

The Board for Lay Ministry (Board) was established to encourage, support and assist lay workers as they lead ministries, and to assist employing bodies with the processes to achieve their ministries through the employment of trained lay workers so that ultimately people's lives will be transformed in and through Christ Jesus.

In 2000 the Board, in conjunction with General Church Council (GCC), approved the creation of a new position called 'Director for Lay Ministry'. This position was filled in July 2001, when there were 70 lay workers employed across the LCA. Considerable growth has taken place in the past 9 years: in July 2010 there are 170 lay workers in paid roles. With this growth the complexity and diversity of lay ministry has increased greatly, as has the level of professionalism, experience and skills required, so the church and its lay workers can carry out its ministries more effectively.

During this time the Board has:

- developed resources to inform and support lay workers and their employers
- provided one-on-one pastoral care, coaching and support to lay workers
- met with employer support groups
- organised a bi-annual Lay Workers Conference to provide additional opportunities for networking and professional development

As we reflect back we thank and praise God for the growth that has taken place in lay ministry. The Board, primarily through the Office of the Director, has achieved a significant number of outcomes for lay workers and their employers, particularly over the last 4 years.

Based on the June 2010 survey of lay workers and their employers, growth in lay ministry will continue, and so too will the challenges. Turnover among lay workers is high, for a variety of reasons. The issues and challenges reported now are mainly the same as those reported in a 2000 survey: too much work, too few volunteers, mismatched expectations of the role, financial challenges, insecurity of tenure and personal ambitions etc.

The LCA and its constituent parts need a clear vision for lay ministry as part of its overarching goal to make disciples of all people. Every congregation has a relatively large proportion of potential ministry workers in their pews who are not actively engaged in any ministry program or activity. Often the same congregation will also have relatively few leaders busily burning themselves out. But God never intended that only a few should serve while the majority looked on. The Bible doesn't mention some or a few - God speaks of all and each!

Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's body. We are all parts of his one body, and each of us has different work to do. (Romans 12:4 NLT)

We need a leadership change characterised by a shift from an administration, organisational or maintenance model, to a vision-led model that shifts the lay worker's role from planning and organising ministry activities and programs to intentionally leading, mentoring, supervising, resourcing, and equipping others to do that; and as the ministry grows, showing them how to teach others likewise. Ministry structured this way multiplies and provides smaller and wider spread of opportunities for everyone in the congregation.

3. VISION, PURPOSE AND VALUES

Vision

The Board's vision is that all congregations and organisations of the LCA will have access to appropriately skilled lay workers to be involved in their ministries, and to equip and empower ministry partners as they build faith within their communities. As the Spirit works through these ministries, more people will experience Jesus' love for them, and commit to follow Him.

Purpose

The Board for Lay Ministry exists to promote and nurture lay ministry across the LCA, to advise congregations and church agencies as they seek to better utilise lay people in their ministries, and to encourage, support and assist lay workers and their employers as they carry out their ministries.

To achieve its purpose the Board's core activities include:

- developing a forward-looking vision and supporting policies for lay ministry;
- promoting a deeper understanding of the value of lay ministries and the role of lay workers in the ministry of the LCA;
- encouraging and supporting church agencies and their lay workers as they plan and implement the ministries God is leading them to do;
- establishing and communicating uniform standards for lay workers including accreditation requirements, mentoring and support arrangements, salary scales and other terms and conditions of employment;
- ensuring appropriate pre-service and in-service training programs are available to and undertaken by LCA lay workers;
- providing mediation services where necessary, to assist employers and lay workers resolve disputes in God-pleasing ways;
- supporting the Director in his administration of the lay worker program and overseeing wise management of the Board's human and financial resources.

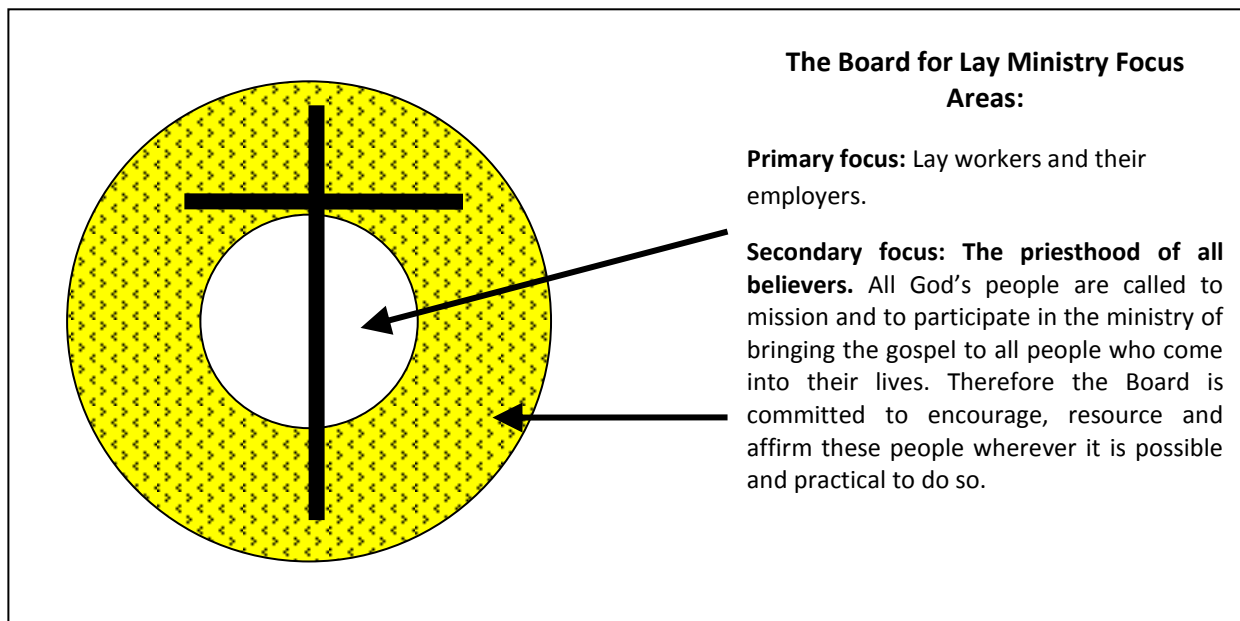
The term '**lay ministry**' refers to areas of ministry that are led by appropriately trained and equipped lay people, and are focused on showing Jesus' love to people, on caring for others, and on mentoring Christians in their faith.

A **lay worker** is a lay person who has been installed into a defined ministry position by a congregation or agency of the LCA. The position may be a paid one, or occupied on a voluntary basis.

The Office of the Director of Lay Ministry maintains a register of LCA lay workers. To be eligible for inclusion on the register a lay worker will:

- occupy a position that has a written position description which includes a definition of the ministry, ministry goals, and the specific responsibilities of the position;
- have signed an employment agreement or a volunteer's covenant agreement;
- have been publicly installed into their position;
- have completed lay worker accreditation requirements, or have committed to undertake those requirements;
- be a practising member of the LCA (unless an exception has been granted by the District president).

The diagram below illustrates the Board's primary focus of supporting lay workers and their employers, and its broader responsibility to encourage all God's people to be involved in ministry.



Values

The following values seek to shape the actions and behaviour of Board members and staff:

- Adherence to the doctrines and principles of the LCA
- A commitment to prayerfully seeking out God's purposes for lay ministry in the LCA, and humbly, faithfully and courageously promote that purpose across the church
- A passion for showing Christ's love to others, and encouraging others to do likewise
- A determination to follow the highest standards of honesty and integrity in all personal and professional relationships
- A commitment to work together, serve each other, forgive each other
- A deep respect for lay workers and the work they do, as well as a commitment to encourage all members of the church in their calling
- A commitment to the effective training of lay workers so that they are equipped to lead, mentor, supervise, resource, equip and disciple others.

4. KEY RESULT AREAS, OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Key Result Areas:	Objectives:	Performance Measures:
1. Leading and influencing change across the church	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To increase the recognition of lay ministry as a key vehicle in supporting and strengthening leadership and in growing local ministry and mission. To support the LCA as it seeks to foster a mission culture across its congregations and ministries. To foster a shift in the lay worker's role from planning and organising activities to intentionally leading, mentoring and equipping others in a missional culture of the LCA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased numbers of lay workers. Active involvement across LCA in leveraging lay ministry. Increased involvement of congregations in local mission.
2. Vocational pathways	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To encourage individuals across the LCA to explore their gifts and abilities and their vocational calling. To increase the level of involvement of people in lay ministry roles across the LCA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased numbers of lay workers. Increased numbers of individuals seeking guidance re vocational pathways.
3. Equipping and pastoral care of Lay Workers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To maximise participation in and achievement of lay worker accreditation. To ensure that lay workers are suitably equipped and competent in theological/spiritual development, leadership & character development and generic & ministry specific skills to fulfill the ministry at the position classification level agreed on with their employer. To ensure there is ongoing professional development for lay workers once they become accredited. To ensure that mechanisms are put in place to address the pastoral care needs of lay workers in sustainable ways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased levels of lay worker participation in training (including those in a voluntary capacity) Increased numbers of lay workers achieving accreditation Increased levels of lay worker satisfaction Reduction in lay worker turnover. Increased lay worker effectiveness at the coal face of ministry e.g. house church, church planting, pastoral care, outreach into the community.
4. Fostering good employment and ministry practices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To provide support and guidance to employers to enable them to adopt good employment and ministry practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved employment practices Reduction in lay worker turnover Increased levels of lay worker satisfaction
5. Governance and management	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that the Board and its management practices reflect contemporary good practice. To ensure that the decisions and activities of the Board actively contribute to the objects of the LCA and support and encourage mission & ministry across the LCA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequate resourcing to meet growth in lay ministry Staff satisfaction Meeting of objects & overall impact across LCA.

KRA 1. Leading and Influencing change across the Church	
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To increase the recognition of lay ministry as a key vehicle in supporting and strengthening leadership and in growing local ministry and mission. 2. To support the LCA as it seeks to foster a mission culture across the congregations and ministries. 3. To foster a shift in the lay worker's role from planning and organising activities to intentionally leading, mentoring and equipping others in a missional culture of the LCA.
Key Initiatives / Projects	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Communicate lay ministry vision, directions and importance across the LCA, e.g. through printed and electronic media; personal contacts; presentations at synods; etc. b. Interact with Districts, College of Presidents, General Church and other church agencies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reinforce the importance of lay ministry in the health and growth of our church • embed lay ministry into church planning and practice at all levels • help break down the stereotypes, barriers and the 'closed' culture of the church c. Collaborate with other church agencies to ensure that lay workers, pastors and local leaders are equipped to plan, implement & promote local mission d. Network with other ecumenical churches in the area of Lay Ministry e. Work with Lutheran media and other communication channels to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • share how people involved in lay ministry are impacting the life of the church and the community • promote a faith-sharing culture that reaches out with love, kindness and forgiveness to all people • encourage innovation - a willingness to explore different ways of being church, in strengthening ministry leadership and in building strong relationships with the local community
Board Representative	Dania Ahern
Budgetary Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrading of Lay Ministry web site and ongoing relevant content • Editor for publications to lay workers and employers and wider LCA • Development of training packages

KRA 2. Vocational Pathways	
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To encourage individuals across the LCA to explore their gifts and abilities and their vocational calling. 2. To increase the level of involvement of people in lay ministry roles across the LCA.
Key Initiatives / Projects	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Work with ALC to develop and promote integrated career development pathways for lay workers, pastors and other professional church workers, including pathways to ordained ministry and licensed ministries of word and sacrament. b. Offer a counseling service (via Lay Worker Formation Officer) to those individuals seeking to establish their vocational pathway within the LCA c. Encourage people to identify their gifts and live out their vocation in every aspect of their lives d. Increase high school student awareness of the diverse range of lay ministry and career path opportunities across the LCA e. Work with pastors, congregation leadership and ALC to identify ways of supporting individuals to discern their gifts and abilities and vocation. f. Actively encourage and support the involvement of youth and young adults in ministry & congregation leadership
Board Representative	Rev Kevin Spilsbury
Budgetary Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a new Lay Ministry promotional brochure • Lay Worker Formation Officers

KRA 3. Equipping and Pastoral Care of Lay Workers	
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To maximise participation in and achievement of lay worker accreditation. 2. To ensure that lay workers are suitably equipped and competent in theological/spiritual development, leadership & character development and generic & ministry specific skills to fulfill the ministry at the position classification level agreed on with their employer. 3. To ensure there is ongoing professional development for lay workers after they become accredited. 4. To ensure that mechanisms are put in place to address the pastoral care needs of lay workers.
Key Initiatives / Projects	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Employ Lay Worker Formation Officers as a first-line of support from the Board to address the accreditation, pastoral, spiritual, personal and professional development needs of lay workers b. Develop a 2 year national training calendar encompassing both accredited training and specialised training that responds to the needs of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lay workers (including those engaged on a voluntary basis) • employers • pastors (where relevant) • those involved in specialist ministry areas (Aboriginal ministry, lay worker supervisors, youth ministry) • counseling c. Utilise on-line technologies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • record the development plans of lay workers, document their progress, and compile evidence for competency and accreditation purposes • provide resources to assist lay workers in their ministry • enable effective communication, collaboration and support with lay workers and employers • promote training and employment opportunities d. Liaise with ALC to develop the VET Diploma in Theology and Christian Ministry, with the aim of implementing in 2011. e. Establish a mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness and relevancy of training currently on offer to lay workers. f. Build the expectation that accredited lay workers will undertake ongoing professional development into standards for remaining accredited g. Implement an exit survey process for lay workers to gather their feedback and perceptions about their role, their ministry and their employment. h. Collaborate with other church agencies to ensure that lay workers, pastors and local leaders are equipped to plan, implement & promote local mission (see KRA 1 a)
Board Representative	Rev Dale Gosden
Budgetary Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of on-line environment for records, resources and communication • Underwriting lay worker accreditation courses in areas where there isn't the critical mass of lay workers to deliver the course in a financially viable way • Lay Worker Formation Officers • Resources

KRA 4. Fostering Good Employment and Ministry Practices	
Objectives	1. To provide support and guidance to employers to enable them to adopt good ministry and employment practices.
Key Initiatives / Projects	<p>a. Utilise on-line technologies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide resources for employer associated with developing position descriptions, employment agreements, ministry planning, induction, review processes, exit processes, grievance procedures and other employment practice resources to assist lay workers in their ministry • enable effective communication, collaboration and support with lay workers and employers • promote training and employment opportunities <p>b. Employ Lay Worker Formation Officers as a first-line of support from the Board for employers to assist with the accreditation, pastoral, spiritual, personal and professional development needs of lay workers</p> <p>c. Provide support and advice to employers around the various aspects of good employment and ministry practice including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ministry planning • developing a job description • the recruitment process • employment terms and conditions • development and retention strategies • new salary and position classification structure • regular review processes with agreed outcomes and objectives linked to salary evaluation and advancement • support structures and pastoral care of lay workers • advice on conflict resolution and mediation services <p>d. Monitor workplace conditions of lay workers compared with good employment practice</p> <p>e. Support the development of leadership teams within congregations by offering a range of training opportunities. This includes encouraging pastors & employers to explore and implement team based ministry leadership models.</p> <p>f. Collaborate with other church agencies to ensure that lay workers, pastors and local leaders are equipped to plan, implement & promote local mission (see KRA 1 a)</p>
Board Representative	Dennis Canute
Budgetary Considerations	Resources

KRA 5. Governance and Management	
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To ensure that the Board and its management practices reflect contemporary good practice. 2. To ensure that the decisions and activities of the Board actively contribute to the objects of the LCA and support and encourage mission & ministry across the LCA.
Key Initiatives / Projects	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Explore alternative funding/resources options to resource the expected expansion of lay ministry and numbers of lay workers in the next 3-5 years and ensure that Board is adequately resourced b. Implement reporting and evaluation mechanisms for Board Strategic Plan c. Ensure adequate pastoral care and support for Director and other staff d. Review accountabilities of Board and staff, including staff responsibility for implementation of the Board's policies and decisions e. Undertake Board succession planning to maintain balance of representation and skills base f. Undertake staff succession planning, including consideration of Lay Worker Formation Officer roles
Board Representative	Anne Bartel
Budgetary Considerations	<p>Staffing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lay Worker Formation Officers in districts. Envisage up to 3 in part-time roles • Additional staff to fill the current void • Additional staff if lay worker numbers continue to grow