

Branch Membership – CMS SANT

This document gives an overview of membership of CMS SANT. Why would someone be a member? What do they become a part of? What is expected of members?

Why be a member of CMS SANT?

Membership of a CMS branch is different from being a shareholder of an organisation. The value proposition for a shareholder is that there are potential financial returns if the organisation is run effectively.

In contrast, as a member of a CMS branch, the value is in being in active fellowship with like-minded others, benefiting from opportunities to be engaged together in eternally enduring and globally significant work, and the joy of seeing lives changed for Christ around the world. Membership of CMS SANT is a personal investment that includes praying, caring, giving and going (or sending).

Membership enables participation and voting at members meetings (including the Annual General Meeting), through which members engage together in seeing the Objects of CMS-A effectively implemented, and at which board and management give account for the manner in which the branch is being run.

Anyone seeking to become a CMS missionary first needs to become a member of the Branch.

What is the CMS Fellowship and why are the Principles & Objects of CMS-A important?

The CMS Fellowship consists of 7 legal entities (6 branches plus CMS Australia) joined together by a common purpose. CMS Australia (CMS-A) serves a coordinating role both for governance and mission operations.

Among the various requirements that each branch establishes for membership is a requirement common to all, that all members of CMS branches must agree with the Principles and Objects of CMS-A.*

The Principles clarify the historical roots, priorities and structure of the CMS Fellowship; the Objects are the priorities shared by CMS-A and everyone connected via membership of a CMS branch. The Rules of Association of the SANT Branch contain an excerpt from the Constitution of CMS-A outlining the Principles and Objects.

If you become a member of CMS SANT, you commit to the sending of missionaries overseas, to a deepening commitment to evangelism with its social responsibilities, to supporting missionaries on location and on home assignment, to the priority of cross-cultural evangelism, and to educating others within the church in global mission.

CMS has roots in the Anglican church. However, we warmly welcome members from any denomination who can assent to our Statements of Faith[^] and the Principles & Objects of CMS-A, and is willing to abide by the Branch's Rules of Association.

What is expected of CMS SANT members?

There is no joining fee or annual subscription required. However, in line with the Objects of CMS-A, it is appropriate that Branch members be active in praying, caring, giving, and going (or sending).

Branch members usually take an interest in supporting the whole of the Branch's activity, not simply the work of one or two of its missionaries. However, it may still be appropriate to select particular missionaries on whose ministry to focus, especially through sustained committed praying and regular generous giving.

- A member may join (or form) a **mission prayer group** to gather regularly to pray either for all the Branch missionaries or select missionaries.
- A member may select to contribute any number of **\$50 monthly giving units**. Some will give 1 unit, others will give more than 15 units, depending on a person's financial means.
- A member may also ask to be included in the Branch's list of **Mission Advocates**, who work informally within their churches to support and encourage global mission engagement
- A member will usually attend CMS SANT **events** (eg conferences) and engage with **resources** (eg podcast, newsletter).

Attending members meetings is also an important part of engaging effectively, especially the **Annual General Meeting**. In addition to the legally required business of the meeting, this is where plans are shared, considered, discussed and prayed for, and where members gather in prayer for the work of CMS and share fellowship together. Each year there are budgets to approve and reports to receive, and there are important decisions to be voted on, including the appointment of board directors who will govern the operations and appoint the Executive Director.

Applications for membership can be submitted via our website to the board who will accept or not accept the application or may request further information. Each member is required to reaffirm their membership every five years. Our branch welcomes new, committed partners in mission!

* The Principles and Objects of CMS-A

Principles

- a. The Church Missionary Society was first established as the Church Missionary Society of Australia, an unincorporated association, in September 1916. This association was incorporated under the *Associations Incorporation Act* in 1996.
- b. The Church Missionary Society traces its roots back to the Church Missionary Society of the United Kingdom, founded in 1799.
- c. The Church Missionary Society is a fellowship of Christian people committed to take part together in world mission. It is a voluntary society of members of the Anglican Church of Australia and other churches, based upon those evangelical and protestant principles of the Church Missionary Society of the United Kingdom from its foundation.
- d. CMS-A is a company formed by the Branches to most effectively further their work.

Objects

The objects of CMS-A are to facilitate the work of the Church Missionary Society Branches for the coming of God's Kingdom through the proclamation of the gospel of Christ throughout the world in fellowship with local churches, and in particular:

- a. To send members of Branches as missionaries overseas and to North Australia;
- b. To deepen Christian commitment to evangelism and its attendant social responsibilities;
- c. To support Missionaries and their work by prayer, giving and pastoral care;
- d. To engage in cross-cultural evangelism;

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- e. To help educate the Australian Church in its responsibilities to this mission;
 - f. To act as trustee and to perform and discharge the duties and functions incidental thereto where this is incidental or conducive to the attainment of these Objects; and
 - g. To do such other things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of these Objects.

^ Statements of Faith

The Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

What We Believe About Mission

- God, the Creator, has made himself fully known in the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ and through the unchanging truth of his written word, the Bible.
- God commands all people everywhere to repent and believe the good news. In love and through the sacrificial, substitutionary death and bodily resurrection of his Son, God saves his elect people from his wrath and judgment and raises us to new life through the power of his Spirit.
- As God's people we are called to proclaim this message in all the world that people might put their trust in Jesus as Lord and Saviour and so be reconciled to God the Father, become members with us of his forgiven people and live by the Spirit under his rule, awaiting the coming restoration of all things.