

**ITEM P.104
FOR ACTION**

| FOR PRESBYTERIAN MISSION AGENCY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE USE ONLY | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| | A. Finance | | E. Corporate Property, Legal, Finance | J. Board Nominating & Governance Subcommittee |
| | B. Justice | | F. PC(USA), A Corporation | X P. Plenary |
| | C. Leadership | | G. Audit | |
| | D. Worshiping Communities | | H. Executive Committee | |

Subject: Comments on the Report of the Committee to Review the Presbyterian Mission Agency and Overtures 018 and 021.

Recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve and forward to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) comments on the following:

- A. Recommendation 1 of the “Report of the Committee to Review the Presbyterian Mission Agency” (<https://pc-biz.org/#/search/6323>), Overture 018 (Item 04-07) “On Merging the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly into a Single Entity” (<https://pc-biz.org/#/search/6290>) and Overture 021 (Item 04-08) “On Authorizing the Hiring of a Consultant to Assess the Relationship of OGA and PMA and the Need for Their Continue Existence as two Separate Entities” (<https://pc-biz.org/#/search/6293>)**

Comment:

The Review Committee’s first Recommendation is to forgo the normally scheduled All Agency Review* and instead spend that time (and financial resource) to examine the possible merger of the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly. The All Agency Review was mandated by the General Assembly in 2008 as a way of ensuring that agencies worked cooperatively together and that there were no duplication of services by the national agencies of the PC(USA).

We support the goal of enhancing coordination and effective missional and ecclesiastical support for our denominational agencies, mid councils, and our congregations. The scheduled All-Agency Review would give an overarching view of the six agencies and reveal a range of possible approaches to restructuring or for more collaboration and sharing of resources. That review would also help ensure that we are moving together with a sense of unity of mission and ministry rather than proceeding in a piecemeal fashion.

For these reasons, we find the proposals for considering a Presbyterian Mission Agency/Office of the General Assembly merger presently pending before this Assembly to be premature and unduly narrow in scope. It is also without the benefit of having all our agency partners, GA commissioners and others at the table. Proposing that a different committee move directly to examining a structural merger of only two agencies prematurely forecloses the benefits of a wider, more careful analysis.

In a time of unprecedented and rapid change, our first step should be careful, prayerful and thoughtful discernment of how we can best serve God, our congregations, and global partners. We believe understanding contextual realities will inform a wider, careful assessment of the various needs and strengths of all the agencies of the denomination. It will help us identify the best structural, financial and staffing synergies with confidence that these proposals will help the PC(USA) be responsive to the challenges of our times at every level of the life of our denomination.

While a full exploration of the best approaches is wise, we recognize that structural changes for all agencies may not be needed or appropriate. Nonetheless, the perspective and experience of all six agencies would be valuable additions to a discernment process. Under the provisions of Agency Review Manual, the All Agency Review Committee is to be composed of a representative from each Assembly agency, commissioners to recent General Assemblies (representing mid councils) and at-large members. With the benefit of the established process of the All Agency Review, having all our agency partners, and others at the table will best inform such an important structural decision and its possibilities for the coordination of resources.

* In 2008, the General Assembly approved a recommendation from the last Presbyterian Mission Agency Review Committee to create an additional cycle in the six-year review process which provides for a review of the “service of the whole of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its six agencies in implementing the General Assembly’s mission directives” at the end of each cycle. Such a review occurred in 2010, and another is scheduled for 2016. In its rationale, the review committee wrote: “Such a review should focus broadly on the effectiveness of the six agencies and other governing bodies in implementing the General Assembly’s mission directives and should not duplicate the more detailed work of the individual agency review committees. Particular attention should be given to how or if these agencies work cooperatively and where or if there is duplication of services in the system.”

B. Recommendation 2 of the “Report of the Committee to Review the Presbyterian Mission Agency” (<https://pc-biz.org/#/search/6323>)

Comment:

We support the importance and timeliness of this recommendation to consider revisions to the structure, composition, and work of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (PMAB). In fact, in February 2016 the Board itself appointed a Governance Task Force with a similar charge to work intensively to propose changes in the structure and size of the Board and to clarify strategies for electing persons to the Board whose skills and experience will be helpful for its work. Clearly this action reflects the Board's priority for moving ahead immediately with adaptive changes to clarify our relationship with the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA). This PMAB Task Force also includes two at-large members who bring history and experience from the initial General Assembly Council (GAC) in 1983 formed following reunion and modifications to that structure in 2006. The Task Force has worked intensively in order to bring initial recommendations to the Board for action in April 2016 with the expectation that a complete reorganization requiring General Assembly action will be developed for 2018.

The interim model proposes substantive structural and procedural changes to the Board's current practices that will assure focused attention at every meeting to three primary tasks:

- generative discernment of God's calling for the energies of the PMA,
- Programmatic planning to implement its discernment through the use of ad hoc strategic teams, and
- oversight of fiduciary, missional, and corporate responsibilities of the Board through standing ministerial committees.

The model also assures more effective use of the current voting members of the Board as well as at-large and non-voting members and staff.

(A detailed description of the proposal is posted at:)

Because we believe it is wise to move ahead now, we propose that the General Assembly take advantage of the interim model and future work of the PMAB Task Force to respond to this recommendation. The Assembly could also consider appointing several additional at-large members to join the PMAB Governance Task Force.

C. Recommendation 3 of the “Report of the Committee to Review the Presbyterian Mission Agency” (<https://pc-biz.org/#/search/6323>)

Comment:

We affirm and support the value of interagency collaboration and thus support this recommendation for consultation among the Presbyterian Mission Agency, the Office of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, and the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program. We believe strategies for enhancing this collaboration could be achieved effectively as part of the All Agency review proposed in response to recommendation one.