

Registration of Ministries Committee speech — General Assembly 2023

Rev Hilary McDougall

Moderator,

Six years on from when the General Assembly approved the Registration of Ministries Act, the Registration of Ministries Committee has evolved, developed and changed, and much insight has been gained in relation to the practical outworking of the requirements of the Act. The committee have a better understanding of their role and of the responsibilities they have towards Presbyteries and the annual review of the Register.

The primary remit of the Committee is to consider a range of applications for a change, of, or extension to, the category of registration for ministers of word and sacrament and deacons. The Committee meets with applicants, seeking Category O registration which will allow them to apply for vacant charges; the Committee considers the applicant's knowledge and understanding of parish ministry, and whether that knowledge and that understanding are sufficient to meet the demands of parish ministry in our current context. Should this not be the case, the committee explores how the applicant might be supported in further developing such knowledge and understanding to appropriately equip them before applying for a vacant charge.

As indicated in the print, the Committee granted Category O registration to five applicants since the General Assembly of 2022.

The other major piece of work in the earlier part of 2023 was to engage with Presbyteries to learn something of their experience of working with the Registration of Ministries Act, particularly the way in which they conducted the required annual review of the Register. The encounter with a wide range of Presbyteries, large and small, was fruitful and the findings are as reported. The Committee is grateful to its members for their work, and to Presbyteries for their diligence in maintaining the Register.

Moderator, as I'm not a Commissioner, I would ask the Principal Clerk to move the deliverance.