



Recognitions of Fields & Ministry Credentials

CRC CHURCHES INTERNATIONAL

International Office:
CRC Churches International Australia
185 Frederick Road
Seaton SA 5023
churches@crcchurches.org

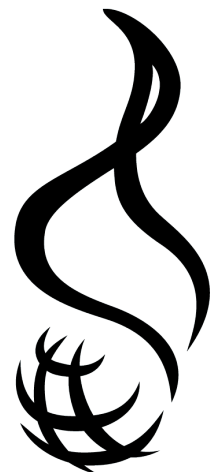


Table of Contents

1. SUMMARY OF RECOGNITION OF FIELDS	2
2. EXPLANATION OF RECOGNITION OF FIELDS	2
2.1. Types of Fields	2
2.1.1. CRC Member Church/Field	2
2.1.2. CRC Affiliated Church/Field	2
2.1.3. CRC Partner Church/Field	3
2.2. Process of Recognition of a Field	3
2.2.1. Partner Church/Field	3
2.2.2. Affiliate Church/Field	4
2.2.3. Member Church	4
2.2.4. Member Field	5
3. MINISTRY CREDENTIALS	7
3.1. No ministry credentials will be issued to Pastors of Partner churches/fields.	7
3.2. Affiliate churches/fields	7
3.3. Member church/fields	8
3.4. Credential Competencies	8
3.5. Ordination	8



1. SUMMARY OF RECOGNITION OF FIELDS

As our international vision is very embracing, and we have varying degrees of identification with, and responsibility toward different fields, it is needful to identify several main categories of fields.

Recognition is given by CRC Churches International to 3 types of churches/fields, namely:

- CRC Member church/field — with all privileges and responsibilities of being a part of CRC Churches International.
- CRC Affiliated church/field — a church/field in the anticipated process of becoming a Member of CRC Churches International and, in the meantime, working with a sponsoring minister/church as a local church/field.
- CRC Partner church/field — is a church/field where a CRC person is working together with a non-CRC church/ministry where there is no intention of that church/ministry becoming a part of CRC Churches International.

2. EXPLANATION OF RECOGNITION OF FIELDS

2.1. Types of Fields

2.1.1. CRC Member Church/Field

A CRC Member church/field is a church/field that is fully recognised as a CRC church/field and has all privileges and responsibilities of being a part of CRC Churches International.

2.1.2. CRC Affiliated Church/Field

An Affiliated CRC church/field is a church/field working in co-operation with an existing CRC minister/church (the sponsoring church) as a local church field with the intention of becoming a CRC Member church/field.

As such it may refer to:

- A CRC recognised minister/missionary pioneering and leading a new church/field in another country with the intention of it becoming a CRC Member church/field.
- A CRC recognised minister/church pioneering with national leaders, a new church/field in another country, where this church/field would initially be a local church/field of the pioneering church, but with the intention that in due time it would become a CRC Member church/field.
- An established church/field in another nation that is wishing to become a part of CRC Churches International. The leadership of such a church/field will initially build relationships with an established CRC church/minister (the sponsoring church) in Australia or other nation with an existing CRC Member movement. Then on the basis of established relationships, good local governance and commitment to the vision and values of CRC Churches International, they may apply and be recognised as a Member church/field of CRC Churches

International. Such application should be made to the National Executive of the country where the sponsoring church is located via their Mission Board.

2.1.3. CRC Partner Church/Field

A CRC Partner church/field is a church/field where a CRC person is working together with, or seconded to, a non CRC church/ministry where there is no intention, nor expectation, of that church/ministry becoming part of CRC.

As such it may refer to:

A CRC minister/missionary/church working in a co-operative venture with a non CRC church/ministry and making an active contribution to that church/ministry. From a CRC viewpoint, this may be considered a Partner church/ministry.

Comment: it must be appreciated that some of our Partner and Affiliate fields will come and go. Some are only appropriate for a season. In some cases, integrity and credibility issues may be revealed over time, such that we cannot continue in the relationship. It is best to sort out these issues while they are still a local church/field of a sponsoring church.

It would be expected that once a church/field is recognised as a Member church/field, it would remain that permanently.

2.2. Process of Recognition of a Field

In order to fulfil our International Vision of “A presence in every nation by 2045”, we must be capable of a positive and efficient process for recognising new churches/fields with CRC Churches International, as well as working co-operatively with non CRC churches/ministries.

At the same time, we need sufficient time to do due diligence and clearly establish the credibility and integrity of the new minister/church before the movement accepts responsibility of it being a member of CRC Churches International.

Consequently, a two stage process of recognition is recommended for those ministers/churches/fields wishing to become recognised as members of CRC Churches International. This is not relevant for Partner fields.

All Partner and Affiliate church/fields will be connected to the movement via a CRC local church — the sponsoring church or via a fully credentialed CRC minister. They may be known as local church/field ‘x’ country i.e. SECC field-Cambodia or Family Centre field – Leste Timor.

2.2.1. Partner Church/Field

A Partner church/field may be recognised by the sponsoring local church leadership/credentialed minister after satisfying themselves of the appropriateness and suitability of the partnership. The full responsibility for the relationship with the partner church/field is with the sponsoring local church/minister. A Partner church/field would not use the name CRC Churches International.

2.2.2. Affiliate Church/Field

A CRC Affiliate church/field is connected to the movement via a relationship with a sponsoring CRC local church/fully credentialed minister. For this to take place, the sponsoring local church leadership/minister must satisfy themselves as to the:

- Process of building appropriate relationships and the commitment from both sides to do this.
- Due diligence on matters such as moral and financial integrity, and a credible local leadership structure.
- Commitment of the new church/field to the CRC Vision, Values, Beliefs and Processes.
- Commitment of the new church/field to the CRC Charter and relevant Constitutions.
- The new church/field should then be invited to make written application to the leadership of the sponsoring church to become an Affiliate field of CRC Churches International. This application is to be referred by the Sponsoring Church/Minister to the National Missions Director then recommended to the National Executive of the home country of the Sponsoring Church/Minister, OR their delegated representative (eg. State Executive in Australia), for final endorsement. This approval or otherwise must be given within 3 months from the date of receiving the application.

On acceptance of this, the sponsoring local CRC church/minister will accept responsibility for the relationship with the Affiliate church/field. Furthermore, it will be responsible, not only to assist the new church/field in whatever ways are mutually agreed upon, but also to take steps to connect the new church/field with the CRC Churches International movement. This would include supplying CRC literature, bringing in other CRC ministry to contribute to the church/field, inviting the leaders to the Australian CRC National Conference, International Convention or National Conferences in other nations.

An Affiliate church/field is accountable to the senior minister, or other delegated pastor, of the sponsoring church, and to the national leadership of the home country of the sponsoring church for the issuing of credentials.

Where for some reason the sponsoring local church/minister is no longer able to support or resource that church, approaches can be made by the sponsoring local church to another local church to take up that role, or via the Missions Department to see if they can help find a local church willing to take up the support and development of that church.

2.2.3. Member Church

A new church may only become a Member church of CRC Churches International after establishing credibility as an Affiliate church connected to a sponsoring CRC local church.

The senior minister of the sponsoring church may invite the leader of the Affiliate church to make application, to the Mission Board of the home country of the sponsor church, for recognition as a Member church of CRC Churches International upon satisfactory completion of the following requirements:

- iv. The application must be signed by the applicant and by the senior minister of the sponsoring church and seconded by 2 independent CRC Nationally credentialed ministers. (See attached application form).
- v. The local church must have a stable, credible local leadership structure.
- vi. Accurate financial records must be maintained and an annual financial report submitted.
- vii. The new Member church leadership must accept and endorse the charter of CRC Churches International, and not be a part of any other denomination or movement.
- v. Upon receiving the application the Mission Board must follow due diligence to ensure the credibility and integrity of the local church leadership.
- vi. Once officially endorsed, the national CRC church should clearly identify on advertising material, website , etc., that they are part of “CRC Churches International Inc.” and show the CRC logo.

Any other local names may continue to be used.

- i. The Member church may have a Field Supporter and an Assistant Field Supporter appointed to that church. This person may be the senior minister of the sponsoring local church or another suitably qualified person mutually agreed upon.
- ii. The process to become a CRC Member church must allow sufficient time to substantiate viability, integrity, credibility and commitment to CRC vision, values, beliefs and processes. Diligence in this is essential to maintain the integrity of the movement.
- iii. As a single member CRC church in a nation, it would need to relate to the movement in another country for accountability and issuing of credentials. This may be the home country of the sponsoring church or the CRC movement in a neighbouring country.

Where for some reason the sponsoring local church is no longer able to support or resource that church, if the church has become a CRC Member church, then the appropriate Missions Director will ensure that a new Field Supporter be appointed to facilitate the support and development of that church.

2.2.4. Member Field

A Member field is where a national CRC Churches International movement is recognised in that country.

The Senior Minister of the main sponsoring church may invite the leaders of a CRC Affiliate field to make application to the Missions Board of the home country of that sponsoring church, for recognition as a Member field (a national CRC Churches International movement in that country) upon completion of the following requirements.

1. Requirements

For a national CRC movement to be registered in a nation the following requirements are to be met:

- i. All items as listed for a Member church to be recognised are to be fulfilled

- ii. There must be at least 5 viable Affiliate or Member local churches wishing to become part of a CRC Churches International, national movement. Any variation to this requirement is at the discretion of the National Executive of the home country of the main sponsoring church, only after giving consideration to the ongoing viability of the national field concerned.
- iii. At least 5 Pastors must hold a current CRC Minister (Country...).
- iv. These churches must have established a good record with high integrity and credibility as CRCAffiliated or Member churches
- v. A viable national leadership team consisting of Pastors who have completed the competencies for a Minister (Country...) credential at the level required for their country
- vi. A proposed National Constitution, fitting to the laws of the country concerned and basically aligned to the Australian National CRC Constitution. A recommended draft International Constitution is available.
- vii. The National leadership team should be ready to legally register CRC Churches International in the country (if permissible), once approval has been given.
- viii. Once officially endorsed, the national CRC field should clearly identify on advertising material, website , etc., that they are part of “CRC Churches International Inc” and show the CRC logo. Any other local names may continue to be used.
- ix. The national field may have a Field Supporter and an Assistant Field Supporter appointed to that field. This person may be the senior minister of the main sponsoring local church or another suitably qualified person mutually agreed upon.
- x. The process to become a CRC Member field must allow sufficient time to substantiate viability, integrity, credibility and commitment to CRC vision, values, beliefs and processes. Diligence in this is essential to maintain the integrity of the movement

2. Process

The process for recognising a CRC Churches International movement in a new nation (Member field) is as follows:

- i. When the above requirements have been completed and the national leadership is desirous of becoming recognised as a national CRC Churches International movement in their country, application, supported by the Senior Minister of the main sponsoring church, must be made to the Missions Board of the home country of this sponsoring church. Upon receiving the application at least one member of the relevant Missions Board, or a CRC National Chairman is to visit the field within 6 months of the date of the application to give a final endorsement for recognition of the field as a CRC field. The relevant Missions Board will then make recommendations to their National Executive for recognition of the new national movement.

- ii. The relevant National Executive, in the process of due diligence in reaching their decision will correspond with all other CRC National Executives by email or letter advising of the proposed recognition. If no objections are raised from the other National Executives within 3 months from the date of sending the advice, the National Executive concerned shall finalise their decision regarding recognition of the new CRC Churches International movement in the country concerned.
- iii. If any objections are raised these must be discussed between the National Executives concerned with reference to the Senior Minister of the main supporting church. If the matter is still not resolved then it shall be brought to a panel of 3 National Chairmen of at least 5 years experience, or their equally qualified representatives, whose majority decision shall be final.
- iv. Where there is more than one sponsoring church working in a nation in order for a national movement to be recognised there must be respectful communication and cooperation with the other sponsoring churches or other National Executives involved in the process of applying for recognition as a national movement.
- v. Once approval has been given for the new national movement the local national leadership team shall proceed to follow through all appropriate legal registration (where permissible) in the country; and use the name CRC Churches International.
- vi. It is recognised that specific laws in some countries may require some variation in the above but the general process, which recognises both the autonomy and interdependence of the whole movement must be complied with.

3. MINISTRY CREDENTIALS

Where a pastor has previously held ministry credentials in another movement or as an independent ministry which gives rights to marry or other public recognition in their country such credentials may be held, if permissible by the issuing authority, while they are an Affiliate church/field of CRC Churches International.

3.1. No ministry credentials will be issued to Pastors of Partner churches/fields.

3.2. Affiliate churches/fields

A Minister (Country...) Credential may be issued to such persons who have completed the appropriate competencies and received recommendation from the senior minister of the sponsoring church. The issuing authority will be the National Executive of the home country of the sponsoring church on recommendation of the Mission Board of that country. OR may be delegated by the appropriate National Executive to the credential authority in that country, eg. State Credential Teams in Australia. A Minister (Country...) credential is a ministry recognition by CRC Churches International in the home country of the sponsoring church and endorses the minister to perform religious services within the laws of the relevant country. Such a credential would not give the right to solemnise marriages, but in some countries may be used for ID purposes. People holding a Minister (Country...) credential may be called Pastor.

3.3. Member church/fields

- 3.3.1. Where a national CRC field is established with at least 5 viable churches they should issue their own ministry credentials in line with their constitution, and any appropriate Government regulations.
- 3.3.2. Where there are CRC churches but a national CRC movement has not been established Minister (Country...) Credentials may be issued by the same procedure as used for issuing Credentials in Affiliate Churches.

3.4. Credential Competencies

When the church/field is in a country where the level of education is good and English is the first language, the Australian Trainee Ministers credential competencies are appropriate for a Ministry (Country...) Credential applicant: The Australian Ministers credential competencies are appropriate for upgrading the minister's qualifications.

Where the education level of a country is low, or where English is a second or third language, simplified competencies, Credential Competencies, Minister (Country...) are available from the Australian Missions Office. In time competencies will need to be translated into other languages.

All Credential applicants should produce a current Police check.

3.5. Ordination

The ordination of ministers will normally be done in their home country, usually by the Senior Minister of the sponsoring church or his delegate. Acknowledgement will be given at the Australian National Conference of overseas credentials that have been granted.

