



Volunteer Position Description

POSITION TITLE:	Member, National Committee, Stella Maris Australia
REMUNERATION:	Volunteer
TERM:	3-year term with the possibility of an additional term extension
LOCATION:	Australia – all locations
AUTHORISING OFFICER:	National Director
DATE:	7 July 2026

Primary Objective

Stella Maris Australia, formerly known as the Apostleship of the Sea in Australia, is the Catholic Church's missionary work to seafarers, whether they be on merchant, passenger or fishing vessels. While the Church has always been interested in seafarers since Christ first gathered his fishermen-disciples around him, the modern movement began in the 1890s with several isolated and independent beginnings.

In the Apostolic Letter that updated the norms of *Apostolatus Maris*, John Paul II stated: "Stella Maris" (Star of the Sea) has long been the favourite title by which people of the sea have called on her in whose protection they have always trusted: the Blessed Virgin Mary. The purpose of Stella Maris Australia is to support the work of Stella Maris centres, which care for the spiritual, social, and material welfare of all seafarers, without distinction of colour, race or creed. Stella Maris centres minister to maritime workers in Australian ports. Some centres operate ecumenically.

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (the Conference) appoints a Bishop Promoter from the Bishops Commission for Social Justice, Mission and Service. The Bishop Promoter will nominate a suitable candidate(s) for appointment to the role of Member, National Committee.

The mission of the National Committee is to support the National Director to lead the ministry in the pastoral care and welfare of the maritime community through port and other Church networks in Australia. This takes place in accordance with the 2025 *Chirograph* of Pope Leo XIV to institute the Apostleship of the Sea, and the 1997 Apostolic Letter *Motu Proprio (Stella Maris: On the Maritime Apostolate)* by Pope John Paul II.



Responsibilities of the National Committee

The National Committee advises and supports the Bishop Promoter and National Director in matters relating to the strategic direction, governance, sustainability and development of Stella Maris Australia. The National Director remains responsible for the day-to-day operations of the National Office.

Key responsibilities of the National Committee include:

- Providing advice, expertise and recommendations to the Bishop Promoter and National Director at a national level to support the governance, strategic direction and sustainability of Stella Maris Australia.
- Attending and actively contributing to National Committee meetings and consultative processes.
- Participating in strategic planning, organisational review, policy development and other consultative processes to ensure an effective, compliant and safe ministry.
- Providing advice and guidance on financial stewardship, fundraising initiatives, risk management, insurance and organisational sustainability.
- Supporting national reporting, communications and information sharing within Stella Maris Australia, the Catholic Church, international Stella Maris bodies and relevant external stakeholders.
- Promoting Stella Maris Australia and fostering effective relationships with dioceses, clergy, Catholic organisations, government and community agencies, maritime industry stakeholders, ecumenical partners and seafarers. Encouraging and supporting the Apostolate of the Laity in the ministry and care of seafarers.
- Supporting collaboration, recruitment, training, formation and resource development for Centre Managers, Port Chaplains, volunteers and other ministry personnel.
- Advising on opportunities for the growth and development of Stella Maris ministry in existing and emerging ports, including the promotion of ecumenical cooperation where appropriate.
- Supporting national programmes, events, appeals, conferences and approved visitations to Stella Maris centres.
- Upholding and promoting the highest standards of professional integrity and ethical conduct, while ensuring compliance with safeguarding standards, work health and safety requirements, and all relevant legislative obligations.

Organisational Environment

National Committee members are appointed by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, on recommendation from the Bishops Promoter, with the support of the National Director. This is a part-time, voluntary role, for a fixed term of three years, with the opportunity to apply for a further three-year appointment.



Key Communications

National Committee Members work collaboratively with a range of stakeholders to support the mission, strategic priorities and effective operation of Stella Maris. The National Director reports to the Bishop Promoter and both are supported by the National Committee. Key relationships of the National Committee include:

- Bishop Promoter and National Director: to provide strategic advice and support, contribute to the advancement of Stella Maris Australia, and remain informed of ministry priorities, activities and emerging issues.
- National Committee Chair and other Committee Members: to work collaboratively in an advisory capacity, contributing to the effective governance, strategic direction and decision-making of the National Committee, and supporting the achievement of Stella Maris Australia's objectives.
- Stella Maris Australia Chaplains and Centre Managers: to maintain engagement, foster supportive relationships, and provide advice and assistance on matters relevant to the ministry nationally.
- Ecumenical seafarer welfare organisations and networks: to share knowledge, strengthen relationships, and remain informed of developments and best practice within the sector.
- Australian Bishops, local clergy, and diocesan/Conference communications personnel: to promote awareness of the ministry's mission and activities, and to support positive relationships that advance the spiritual welfare of maritime people.
- Chief Operating Officer, General Secretary and staff of the General Secretariat of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference: to facilitate collaboration, consultation and information sharing on matters of mutual interest.
- Relevant local and national organisations: to build partnerships, exchange information, and support the ongoing development of the ministry.

Job Environment

The National Committee contributes to the development of organisational objectives in consultation with the Bishop Promoter and National Director, and determines organisational policies and strategies that have a service-wide effect at a national level.

Challenges

The National Committee will support the National Director to foster optimal pastoral support for the spiritual lives of seafarers in an ever-changing environment.

Funding the ongoing sustainability of this ministry is also a key focus for the National Committee.



The National Committee will be challenged in communicating and relating nationally with a dispersed group of Stella Maris Australia centres, operating within a variety of diocesan structures, and building bridges with related ecumenical communities.

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

This position is open to Members of Christ's Faithful, Laity, Religious and Ordained candidates.

Required:

- Knowledge, understanding and commitment to the structures and various seafarer ministries of the Church in Australia, and the relevance of Catholic Social Teaching to seafarer ministry.
- Experience in, and/or a passion for, seafarer ministry.

Desired, any combination of:

- Corporate governance expertise, ideally within a Catholic works environment.
- Leadership expertise in a Catholic agency or ministry.
- Demonstrated ability to build effective internal and external governance relationships.
- Experience in research, project management, events management and/or fundraising.
- Demonstrated ability to manage and collaborate with a team within a defined expenditure budget and strategic plan.
- Excellent and timely electronic, oral and written communication skills.
- Tertiary qualification(s) in Business, Strategy, Risk, Finance, Accounting, Marketing, Media, Communications, Theology, Pastoral Studies, Religious Education, or related discipline.

Position Impact

The National Committee contributes advice and guidance regarding fundraising activities, financial stewardship and the management of resources within approved budgets.

The National Committee will be required to work collaboratively with the National Director and personnel at Stella Maris Australia Centres, fostering this network to advance the mission of the Apostleship.

The National Committee supports and promotes the work of Stella Maris Australia Chaplains, Centre Managers and volunteers in advancing the ministry's mission nationally.