

Boundaries Commission FAQs

November 1, 2017

These notes are designed to answer questions about the remit implementation process, specifically those concerning the Boundaries Commission.

What is the reason for setting up the Boundaries Commission? What will guide the commissioners' choices on regions?

Remit 1 states that if a majority of pastoral charges and presbyteries approve the Three Council Model (which happened in June 2017), a commission would be formed to start working on regional councils in the fall. Their work will be guided by discussions held with every Conference, and input from presbyteries/districts/consistoires/synods, taking into consideration factors such as geography, culture, linguistics, and other affinities.

Are the boundaries negotiable, when do they form, and are there opportunities for members to provide input into the process?

On January 10, 2018, the Boundaries Commission will release its draft report suggesting what the regional councils will be. Everyone's input and suggestions will be welcomed until January 31. The Commission will then release a final report no later than March 15, 2018, outlining what the new regional councils will be. If the 43rd General Council approves Remit 1: Three Council Model in July 2018, the new boundaries will take effect on January 1, 2019.

Why not have a representative from each Conference on the Boundaries Commission?

Those named to the Boundaries Commission are not there as representatives of any region or group but were recommended by the Nominating Committee, after considerable discernment, to work on behalf of the whole church. The Nominating Committee looked for people who would be able to quickly, faithfully, and effectively take on this work for the whole of the church, and with the whole of the church in mind.

There is wide representation from across the country on this Commission. What I do not see is any member who can represent the wide expanse of land and congregations that are within the boundaries of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario. We feel isolated and alone.

Someone from the Commission will meet with the Executive of all Conferences, and all presbyteries/districts/consistoires/synods are invited to provide comments or advice to the Commission. In addition, any congregation or member of the United Church is welcome to write to the Commission at remits@united-church.ca.

Are there scenarios for how the regional councils will be set up—i.e., connections to provincial and territorial jurisdictions?

It's too early to know, but we will have a better idea on January 10, 2018, when the Boundaries Commission releases its draft report.

How is the size of the proposed regions being decided? What parameters will be used to make such a decision?

The Boundaries Commission will consider input from Conferences, presbyteries, and other church organizations to determine the size and number of regions. The Commission is to take into consideration geographic, cultural, linguistic, and other affinities, plus conversations already held across the church.

An article in the October *Observer* speculates that Maritime Conference “is the most likely to remain as a region, and could even include Newfoundland and Labrador.” Is there any possibility of knowing at the present time what the realignment of the regions will look like?

The short answer is no. The Boundaries Commission is considering all possibilities, so it is too early to speculate about the number of regional councils or their boundaries.

Questions/comments/suggestions/concerns can be sent to remits@united-church.ca. To get regular updates, go to www.united-church.ca, search “Remit Implementation,” and click the [Remit Implementation newsletter](#) link to register.