

**REPORT OF JUDICIAL COMMITTEE
TO GENERAL SYNOD/TE HĪNOTA WHĀNUI 2026**

1. The Judicial Committee is established by Title C, Canon IV and consists of nine members. There is a requirement for there to be at least two members from each Tikanga and one Bishop, one Ordained Minister and at least three laypersons within the group.
2. Bishops, Ordained Ministers, and laypersons enrolled as barristers or solicitors of the High Court of New Zealand and of not less than seven years' standing or who hold similar qualifications and experience in any of the legal jurisdictions in the Diocese of Polynesia, are eligible for election.
3. After election, a Chair and on occasion a Deputy Chair are appointed from amongst the members.
4. The primary tasks of the Judicial Committee are set out in Title C, Canon IV, Section 4, Clause 4.1, and involve determination of questions and appeals.
- 4.1 The Judicial Committee is also tasked with reviewing motions of the General Synod/te Hīnota Whānui and Standing Resolutions on a regular basis after each General Synod, pursuant to the Title C, Canon II, Clauses 2 and 3.
- 4.2 The current membership is:

House of Bishops	The Rt Rev'd Anashuya Fletcher
House of Clergy	The Rev'd Joel Rowse The Rev'd Jenny Chalmers
Tikanga Māori	The Rev'd Pania Houkamau-Ngaheu A vacancy
Tikanga Pākehā	Judge Chris Harding (Chair) Mr Alex Twaddle (Deputy Chair)
Tikanga Pasefika	Mr Walton Morgan Ms Shelyn Kiran
General Secretary	The Rev'd Canon Michael Hughes

- 4.3 The Judicial Committee does not meet or attend to any business other than when issues are expressly put before it.

5. **Standing Resolutions**

The General Synod/Te Hīnota Whānui last met in 2024. There were no resolutions passed which were required to be considered for inclusion as a standing resolution and the Committee accordingly did not attend to that task.

6. **Matters for determination**

The only matters requiring determination by the Committee in this period were appeals by Rt Rev'd Te Kitohi Wiremu Pikaahu and an associated appeal by Ven Katene Eruera and Ven Dr Lyndon Drake.

6.1 In each appeal, the matter to be determined was the validity of a Te Rūnanga Whāiti decision. In the first, the decision on 8 August 2023 to suspend Bishop Te Kitohi Wiremu Pikaahu (Bishop Kito) from all roles representing Te Pīhopatanga o Aotearoa.

6.2 In the second, the issue was the validity of the consequential decision of Te Rūnanga Whāiti concerning the status of Te Taitokerau representatives Ven Katene Eruera and Ven Dr Lyndon Drake attending the General Synod/te Hīnota Whānui (GSTHW) on 19 to 23 May 2024.

7. **Meetings of the committee**

During 2024, the Judicial Committee held several meetings, by email exchange and Zoom, to advance the appeals as recorded in the various minutes attached to this report.

A hearing was held to determine the issues in Auckland on 30 October 2024, with a decision granting the appeals delivered on 12 November 2024. A copy of our decision is appended to this report.

A decision on costs was later delivered after submissions from the parties. A copy of our decision on costs is also appended to this report.

We draw attention to the possibility mentioned in that, of future parties being required to contribute not only to costs between the parties but also to the cost of the Committee hearing, involving as it does, a number of people and international travel, together with venue hire and the like.

There was no other business for the Judicial Committee.



CJ Harding
Chair of the Committee

25 March 2026

Attachments:

- 1 Minutes 10 April 2024
- 2 Minutes 15 May 2024
- 3 Minutes 10 July 2024
- 4 Minutes Omnibus November 2024
- 5 Decision of Committee on appeal 12 November 2024
- 6 Decision of Committee on costs