



ARRCC 2025 Annual Report

ARRCC acknowledges the tens of thousands of years of traditional ownership of this land we now call Australia. This land was never ceded. It was stolen. We pay our respect to the elders of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, past and present. We stand in solidarity with their calls for Treaty and genuine respect for their human rights.



Faith leaders outside St John's Cathedral Brisbane before the May 2025 Election

About ARRCC

Vision

A safer climate for all, that supports communities based on just decision making, including care for the natural environment. ARRCC substantially increases the Australian faith-based support and action needed to urgently ensure, through a just transition, that the climate returns to safer limits.

Mission

To mobilise faith communities and leaders to advocate for the public policies, political leadership and economic transformation needed to achieve a safe climate and flourishing environment. ARRCC encourages all people, through their actions, to live in a way that supports the urgent restoration and protection of the environment.

Values

Compassion

We are motivated by our compassion for other people and beings, with whom we share this Earth, to take actions that provide the necessary care to those people and beings.

Respect

We show respect for people, regardless of their views, by treating them with kindness.

Justice

We are especially committed to the well-being of people, including future generations and Indigenous peoples, who are most severely hit by the slow pace of climate action by wealthy nations. We are committed to just solutions for regional communities who could be left behind in the transition away from fossil fuels. We believe the wealthy have the greatest responsibility for taking urgent action.

Truth-telling

Though we recognise that people may find it difficult to hear our messages, we are committed to carefully discerning the truth and communicating that truth.

A focus on what really matters

We believe happiness comes from a focus on those aspects of life that really matter: relationships and mutual caring, a sense of purpose, a spirituality that takes us beyond ourselves, and connection with the natural environment.

President's Message

Dear supporters and friends

Much has changed since the beginning of 2025, when we were concerned about the possibility of a Federal Government intent on nuclear energy. Thank you to all those many supporters who worked hard to put climate top of mind for the voting public before the election. Fortunately, the electorate weren't buying the nuclear distraction, and a Labor Government was swept into power with a resounding mandate to act on climate change - a positive outcome even though they remain frustratingly timid.

Since the election, there was plenty of action by ARRCC supporters but it has been decentralised, without as much coordinated campaigning as usual. The Committee quietly continued with

advocacy work but we were also laying the groundwork for our engagement with COP31 if it was to be held in Australia.

We also strengthened our financial position more than usual. Thank you to all our donors, especially everyone who gave very large donations or who give regularly - monthly, weekly or annually.

ARRCC's more publicly visible advocacy work has been led by everyday grassroots supporters. Congratulations should especially go to ARRCC WA and the Divestment Working Group, each of whom has been particularly focussed on challenging the fossil gas industry. In addition, ARRCC WA has hosted the weekly online prayers and meditations for a successful COP30.

Special thanks are due to two volunteers in particular, each of whom is stepping down: Rev. Ken

Devereux who has put in many skilled, dedicated hours to the success of ARRCC WA and the group's advocacy work; and Rev. Neil Forgie who has coordinated multi-faith participation in climate advocacy work in Cairns for the last ten years.

We especially appreciate Miriam Pepper too, whose remarkable patience, facilitation skills and hard work were crucial to the success of our preparation for the leadership transition now underway. We cannot thank you enough.

Hunter-Newcastle ARRCC provided hospitality to the dozens of ARRCC supporters who converged on the Rising Tide People's Blockade and took a stand against the coal export industry. Likewise various congregations put up banners and distributed yard signs and local groups showed up at protests as people of faith or hosted awareness-raising events.

Indeed, ARRCC is not a small team with a newsletter and a website. ARRCC is a *community* of hundreds, probably thousands, of people inspired by their faith to contribute to making the climate liveable for all - for our children and grandchildren, for vulnerable communities and for all of life on earth. It is a privilege to have the organisational structure and resources to support this community to pursue such an important Mission.

The ARRCC Committee has worked to ensure these resources remain available and, during 2025, we have been working behind the scenes to create a new leadership structure. After 17 years as President, I am stepping down - although remaining on the Committee. I have loved leading ARRCC but the time has come to hand things on and I'm delighted to say that Rev. Meredith Williams has generously accepted the role in my place. She is a very skilled, kind, committed and articulate person who is passionate about climate action.

From the beginning of June, there will also be a newly created position of Executive Director, who will report to the Committee. Our very capable, personable and dedicated long-time ARRCC Community Organiser Tejopala Rawls will take on the latter role. Tejopala comes with years of experience both with us and in senior positions before that. All going well, we plan to advertise for another organiser to take on some of the organising work that Tejopala has done to date.

The Committee is taking the opportunity to professionalise the organisation and leave it in better shape. We see these changes as tremendously exciting and as giving ARRCC more potential to grow. It will also need considerable support to make it work, especially financially. Appointing a new Executive Director will increase our costs as will keeping a new organiser longer than nine months. In the coming weeks and months we will be asking for all hands on deck to make this transition a success.

Thank you to everyone who is contributing, whether this be in the form of time, talents, money, moral support or prayer.

We face a daunting task together - to return the Earth's climate to safer limits - but we face it with millions of others around the world. Let us play our part as best we can.

For this, our love needs to triumph over fear, our spirit of solidarity must triumph over inertia, and our active hope must triumph over the temptation to despair.

Ever onwards!



Thea Ormerod
ARRCC President

Who we are

Management Committee

The ARRCC Committee is both dependable, skilled, committed and courageous, diverse and imaginative. What unites us are our passion for a safe climate, our interest in interfaith collaboration and our commitment to the highest of ethical principles.

Between us, the ARRCC Committee has skills in governance, community organising, fundraising, campaigning, facilitation, and working with media.



ARRCC Committee at our Team-building / Planning Day in September 2025 (Not shown here: Dr Harpreet Singh Kandra)

L to R: back row – Miriam Pepper, Tejopala Rawls, Gawaine Powell Davies, Bob Hinkley, Gregory Milles

Front row: Barbara Kinnane, Gerry Fahey, Fr Peter Moore, Rev Meredith Williams, Ahimsadhi Reffell, Thea Ormerod

The Committee has been made up of Buddhists, Ahimsadhi (formerly Gillian) Reffell and Gawaine Powell Davies; Christians, Fr Peter Moore, Rev. Meredith Williams, Robert (Bob) Hinkley and Thea Ormerod; a Quaker, Gerry Fahey. We have also had two new people joining Committee meetings - Anglican Gregory Milles and Sikh community leader, Harpreet Singh Kandra. Sadly, Bob Hinkley stepped down in October - we thank him for the months that he was able to contribute.

In the past year we have set up a number of working groups on key areas of our work - fundraising, managing the leadership transition, committee capacity building, multifaith and multicultural organising, networking and communications, governance policies and strategic planning. This allows us to work more effectively and share the load.

Everyone's commitment and hard work is most appreciated. Particular thanks go to Ahimsadhi as our Public Officer and Secretary, and Barbara who is the ARRCC Treasurer.

With the changes in leadership at ARRCC, Rev Meredith Williams will become the President from mid-March and Gerry Fahey will become the Vice President. Ahimsadhi and Barbara Kinnane will remain in their existing positions.

Patrons

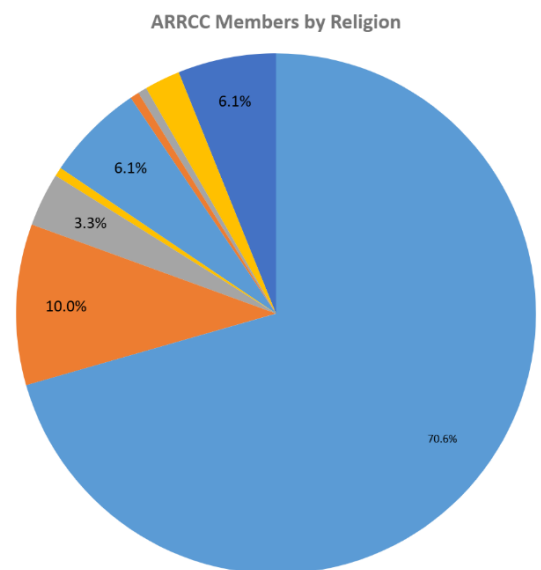
ARRCC has the generous support of patrons, Julian Burnside AO QC, Bishop Philip Huggins, Rabbi Jeffrey Kamins OAM and Steve Biddulph.

Bishop Philip Huggins has been an active contributor to ARRCC for some years. He has helped coordinate interfaith collaborations around COP negotiations since COP26. Rabbi Jeffrey Kamins OAM has been an active contributor to ARRCC since its establishment. Julian Burnside is an Australian barrister, a renowned human rights and refugee advocate and author. Steve Biddulph is a best-selling author of excellent books on raising children as well as a committed member of the Uniting Church.

We are honoured to have each of these wonderful people as patrons.

Our members

ARRCC Members by Faith	Number	%
Christian	127	70.6%
Buddhist	18	10.0%
Jewish	6	3.3%
Muslim	1	0.6%
Hindu	0	0.0%
Brahma Kumaris	0	0.0%
Quaker	11	6.1%
Unitarian	1	0.6%
Baha'i	1	0.6%
Other	4	2.2%
Unknown	11	6.1%
Total	180	100.00%



Organisational members

National organisational members

-  Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia
-  Federation of Australian Buddhist Councils
-  Brahma Kumaris Australia
-  Union for Progressive Judaism
-  Edmund Rice Community Services
-  Jesuits Australia
-  Islamic Sciences and Research Academy
-  Australian Federation of Islamic Councils
-  Sisters of Charity of Australia
-  Wellspring Community
-  Sisters of the Good Samaritan
-  Institute of the Sisters of Mercy, Australia & PNG
-  Brigidine Sisters
-  Temple Society Australia
-  Sisters of St Joseph
-  World Community for Christian Meditation Australia
-  Sisters of the Good Shepherd
-  Loreto Sisters
-  Australia & New Zealand Unitarian Universalist Church

State organisational members

-  Buddhist Council of New South Wales
-  Social Responsibilities Committee, Anglican Church Southern Queensland
-  Pax Christi Australia, New South Wales
-  Presentation Sisters Victoria
-  Presentation Sisters Queensland
-  Presentation Sisters WA
-  Angligreen – Anglican Church Southern Queensland
-  Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) Victoria
-  Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) SA & NT
-  Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) Canberra & Region
-  Unitarian Church of South Australia

Local organisational members

-  St Paul's Anglican Church, Beaconsfield, WA
-  Holy Cross Anglican, Hackett, ACT
-  Sisters of Mercy, Parramatta, NSW
-  Banyule Network of Uniting Churches, Vic
-  Anglican EcoCare, Newcastle
-  All Saints Floreat Uniting Church, WA
-  Presentation Sisters Wagga Wagga Congregation, NSW
-  Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) Wahroonga, NSW
-  St James Anglican, Toowoomba, Qld
-  Church of the Trinity, Clarence Park, SA
-  St Michael's Uniting Church, Melbourne, Vic
-  Berry Uniting Church, NSW



Mercies for Climate Justice at Rising Tide Peoples' Blockade in 2025

Partners, staff and key volunteers

Partner organisations

Peak bodies

GreenFaith International
 Pacific Conference of Churches
 Climate Action Network Australia (CANA)
 Religions for Peace Japan
 Australian Democracy Network
 Uniting Church in Australia Assembly
 National Council of Churches in Australia

Other civil society organisations

Market Forces
 Rising Tide
 Australian Marine Conservation Society
 Australian Conservation Foundation
 Greenpeace Australia
 Cairns & Far North Environment Centre

Other Faith organisations

Queensland Churches Environmental Network
 Anglican Church Southern Queensland
 Buddhist Council of NSW
 Pacific Conference of Churches
 Uniting Church Synod of Victoria and Tasmania
 Uniting Church Synod of NSW & ACT
 Religions for Peace Australia
 Religions for Peace Japan
 Catholic Religious Australia
 Multi-Faith Association of South Australia

Key volunteers

The Committee is grateful for the extensive contributions of the following key volunteers. We apologise to anyone who should have been included and would welcome feedback on this. Be assured, we are enormously grateful to all active supporters!

Facilitation and committee guidance

Dr Miriam Pepper

Media spokespeople

Rev Charissa Suli, President, Uniting Church in Australia, Assembly

Sr Jan Barnett, Sisters of St Joseph
 Philippa Rowland, Chair, Religions for Peace
 Aunty Togiab McRose Elu, Torres Strait Island Elder, advocate for communities & climate action
 Ven. Bhante Sujato Bikkhu, Founder and Director, SuttaCentral, Theravada Buddhist monk
 Rabbi Jonathan Keren-Black OAM, Assembly of Rabbis and Cantors
 The Right Reverend Jeremy Greaves, Anglican Archbishop of Brisbane
 Dr Daud Batchelor, Muslim Theologian
 Bishop Sarah Plowman, Anglican Church Southern Queensland
 Father Peter Moore
 The Very Reverend Dr Peter Catt, Dean of St John's Anglican Cathedral Brisbane
 Reverend Kath Merrifield
 Peter Cranwell
 Father Matthew Smedley
 Doug Hewitt
 Reverend Ken Devereux

Fundraising

Father Peter Moore
 Jon Eastgate
 Lucy Osborn
 Gill Counce
 Iain Radvan
 James Clough
 Ann Taylor
 Reverend Ken Devereux
 Bron Barber
 Sister Barbara Daniel
 Bob Hinkley
 Ahimsadhi Reffell
 Leigh Newton
 Reverend Rex Graham
 Thea Ormerod

Photography and video editing

Peter Branjerdporn

Divestment working group

Sue Ennis
 Jamie Thom
 Father Peter Moore
 Thea Ormerod

Data support

Robert Dawlings

Cairns

Father Neil Forgie
 Ven. Rinchen Kelly

Newcastle

Doug Hewitt
 Ann Taylor

Brisbane

Father Peter Moore
 Marilyn Wright
 Emma Beach
 Bronwyn Barber
 Jen Basham
 Sister Wendy Flannery
 John Steley
 Jon Eastgate
 Peter Branjerdporn
 Father Joe Mackay
 Wayne Anderson

Sydney

Jon O'Brien
 Reverend Meredith Williams
 Wies Schuringa
 Reverend Chris Walker
 Thea Ormerod
 Gill Burrows
 Rick Eyre
 Joseph Fernandez
 Sue Martin
 Lucy Osborn

NSW South Coast

Denis Quinn
 Barbara Kinnane
 Reverend Rex Graham
 Reverend Kath Merrifield
 Reverend John Brentnall
 Evan Christen
 Gillian True
 Kathy Rice
 Father Michael Dyer
 Louise Pinson

Melbourne

Gerry Fahey
 Jamie Thom
 Linda Wannan-Edgar
 David Tomkins
 Sister Barbara Daniel
 Norm Chapman
 Christina Pead-Erbrederis
 Robert Dawlings
 Robert Renton
 James Clough

South Australia

Tony Roach
 Gill Counce
 Peter Counce
 Iain Radvan
 Anna Markey
 Philippa Rowland
 Reverend Chelsea Size
 Leigh Newton
 Sue Kitto
 Jane Corin

Toowoomba

Reverend Melissa Conway

Perth

Reverend Ken Devereux
 Sharon Matthews
 Ven. Mujo Williams
 Elaine Bowkett
 Helene Fisher

Bunbury

Deborah Robertson
 Alison Dyall
 Charo Chacon
 Peter Eckersley
 Maria Lainer
 Santhi Thevar
 Diana Barrenger

Employee

Tejopala Rawls - community organiser

Consultants

Jocelyn Edge (accountant)
 Paul Boundy (administrative support)
 Sharon France (Looking Glass Press -
 graphic design)
 Corey McCann, Paddy McCann and Sara
 Fishburn from Code Nation (website and
 database)



Church of the Trinity, Clarence Park SA before the 2025 Election

Main achievements in 2025

Advocacy by ARRCC Committee

Open letters

ARRCC signed on to dozens of letters organised by The Australia Institute, Climate Action Network Australia (CANA), Lock the Gate, Jubilee Australia, Oxfam and others. We hope that adding our specifically religious voice helps demonstrate the breadth and depth of public support for, for example, far more robust Climate Finance for the Pacific, or the proper taxation of gas exporting companies which are making huge profits.

All of the Committee's advocacy work is done in partnership with other organisations. Those organisations are better resourced and so they provide much of the research and strategic leadership, while we contribute our own faith-informed endorsement to add power to the work.

Work with the Australian Democracy Network

ARRCC worked with the Australian Democracy Network (ADN) in 2025 on several of their campaigns to make our democracy more fair, open, participatory, and accountable

ADN is one of ARRCC's closer partners because we believe their work is critically important to protecting our right to advocate for a liveable climate.



ARRCC supporters at protest in Town Hall Square regarding rushed new anti-protest laws; Rev Jo Inkipin (next to pole) spoke at the rally

We endorsed ADN's [civil society letter of support](#) addressed to the Victorian Premier and Minister in favour of a legislated Treaty with the First Nations people of Victoria.

As part of ADN's **Stronger Charities Alliance**, we advocated for reforms that would prohibit government restrictions on charities' participation in public debates and require the merit-based and transparent appointment of the Commissioner of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC). This work has been moderately successful but has yet to be legislated.

Unfortunately, ADN was not successful in preventing the passage of electoral laws which will make it much harder for charities to use donations for electoral advocacy. These laws will apply to the 2028 federal election and create further unfair restrictions on charities' capacity to effectively advocate in the lead-up to elections. The charity sector is already tightly regulated in this area.

ADN coordinated challenges to **new anti-protest laws** in both Victoria and NSW which were intended to constrain protests near places of worship, and ARRCC participated in that work. For example, we challenged the Crimes Amendment (Places of Worship) Bill 2025 which was rushed through the NSW Legislative Assembly in February, supposedly to counter antisemitism. The key problem remains that citizens' human rights to assembly and freedom of speech have been further eroded while making it no safer for people to go into or out of places of worship.

Thea organised this [open letter](#) and wrote this [article for the South Sydney Herald](#). Doug Hewitt AM also got this [opinion piece](#) into the Newcastle Herald.

Subsequently, Thea Ormerod participated in a constitutional challenge to one aspect of the NSW anti-protest laws: the police move-on powers. This challenge was successful. The NSW Supreme Court found that they were unconstitutional.

Letters and Submissions

Letter to Coalition MPs

The committee [wrote to senior conservative MPs](#) Ted O'Brien, Peter Dutton, Sussan Ley and Susan McDonald after the Opposition announcement on February 28 that they would fast-track approvals for the North West Shelf Extension and other gas projects and defund the Environmental Defenders' Office.

Letter to the Climate Change Authority

When the government was deciding its 2035 target under the UN Paris Agreement, the committee [wrote to the Climate Change Authority](#) advocating for this target to be based on sound science.

Submission to WA Government on the Browse Project

With guidance from Greenpeace, the committee made a [formal submission](#) to the WA Environmental Protection Authority about Woodside's plans to drill close to the pristine Scott Reef for the Browse Gas project.

Joint statement with Religions for Peace Japan and Religions for Peace Australia

[This was sent](#) in October, along with a cover letter, to all Federal Labor Caucus members urging an early end to the liquified gas trade between Australia and Japan.

Submission to the Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee

In November this Senate committee held an inquiry into the then proposed Environment Protection Reform Bill (now an Act of Parliament) and six related bills that rewrote our federal environmental protection laws. The ARRCC committee [wrote this submission](#) to the inquiry.

Media coverage

[Article in *The Conversation*](#) also mentioning ARRCC as one of the climate movement's "unconventional advocates".

[Open letter to the Minns Government](#) in NSW about protest laws.

This [opinion piece from supporter Doug Hewitt in the *Newcastle Herald*](#) opposing laws that would limit protests outside places of worship. This article is paywalled. A copy of the text is [here](#).

[Another opinion piece from Doug Hewitt in the *Newcastle Herald*](#), this time about the Christian Season

[Joint video message](#) from senior leaders of several religious traditions encouraging Australians to vote on the climate and energy crisis.

[ABC TV coverage of Brisbane people of faith handing out yard signs](#) on the first day of pre-poll in the immediate wake of Pope Francis' passing.

[Insights magazine article](#) about the same event on the first day of pre-poll.

[Mention in *The Echo*](#) highlighting an invitation to the Prime Minister to visit the Torres Strait from Torres Strait 8 spokesperson Yessi Mosby and ARRCC supporter Archbishop Jeremy Greaves.

[National community radio coverage on *The Wire*](#) on the eve of the election about places of worship in the SA electorates of Boothby and Sturt putting up banners for climate action.

[Faith groups fear 'slippery slide' on protest rights](#) in *The Melbourne Anglican*

Article in [The Herald Malaysia](#) about the Australian Government's emissions target and continuing approval of coal and gas projects.

Anglican Archbishop Jeremy Greaves calling for greater moral courage from the government in setting emissions on targets in [Anglican Focus](#) and [AMUST](#) as well as on the [Religions for Peace Australia website](#) and in [The Melbourne Anglican](#).

Japan-Australia religious organisations' joint statement calling for environmental justice in the lead-up to the COP30 summit on [Interfaith Climate](#) and [further coverage on the same website](#) as well as [Religions for Peace Australia's](#) website.

[Oil Change International](#) covering ARRCC's involvement in global Days of Action against Japan's Asia Zero Emissions Community (AZEC).

[Criticism of the Coalition abandoning net zero](#) by 2050 in *The Melbourne Anglican*.

Religious media coverage of people of faith at the Rising Tide blockade in [Catholic Outlook](#), [Cath News](#), [Insights magazine](#), [The Tablet](#) and [Union of Catholic Asian News](#)

Divestment working group

Collaboration with Market Forces

We met bi-monthly with Brett Morgan from Market Forces to strengthen collaboration on challenging companies to divest from fossil fuels. As a result, we successfully linked the ARRCC Western Australian, New South Wales, and Victorian groups who then went along to participate in joint actions, mostly targeting Australian banks and mining companies. This collaboration has also involved distributing emails and updates about specific actions, including one or two calls for increased shareholder engagement.



Gawaine, Felicity, Chris with Knitting Nannas, Market Forces and others outside the Westpac AGM in November 2025

Engagement with Religions for Peace Japan

We joined with Religions for Peace (RfP) Japan in challenging the Australia-Japan LNG trade. This growing trade is based on the discredited assumption that gas is a 'transition fuel'. Japanese banks and mining companies are profiting handsomely while Japan's actual need for gas is declining; in fact Japan is on-selling large volumes of LNG to Asia under the misleading banner of 'Asian Zero Emissions Community'.

This work on Zoom brought together Market Forces, First Nations leaders (including Professor Anne Pattel-Gray), and some members of RfP Australia. We held about four meetings with Rev Shinohara, Secretary of both RfP Japan and RfP Asia. As a result of these discussions, the Chair of ARRCC, Thea, and Professor Anne Pattel-Gray presented at a climate [information session](#) in Japan focused on climate justice and responsibility.

This also resulted in Japan–Australia Religious Organisations' [Joint Statement](#) Calling for Environmental Justice toward COP30.

ARRCC supporters subsequently joined with Jubilee Australia to participate in a Don't Gas Asia Day of Action against the 'Asian Zero Emissions Community'.

Development of communication resources

As a way of raising divestment awareness, we have been developing one-minute video scripts to be read by multiple ARRCC faith leaders on Zoom. We plan to produce three videos covering an overview including bush fire/floods, superannuation and banking. These are intended to support public engagement and social media divestment outreach.

Activity during the year has been more limited than anticipated due to illness/injury affecting Jamie and Sue during the year.

The working group currently consists of Jamie Thom, Thea Ormerod, Peter Moore, and Sue Ennis. We would warmly welcome additional members to strengthen the group's capacity. We currently meet as a group monthly to bi-monthly on Zoom.

Looking Ahead

In 2026 we envisage continuing these activities including with Japan and focus on finalising and sharing the short videos on social media to broaden reach and impact.



ARRCC supporters at Don't Gas Asia protest on 28 October outside the Japanese Consulate in Sydney

Political advocacy and community organising

Before reviewing last year’s campaigning and organising, a moment of reflection. During the hubbub of the election campaign, the day after Easter Sunday, we learned of the passing of Pope Francis. He was of course passionately active on many issues, but it is close to impossible to describe what a difference this one man made to action on the climate emergency, especially among communities of faith. His 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si’* remains an utterly compelling document perhaps especially for its insistence on speaking of the climate problem as a crisis not only of policy but of morality and spiritual impoverishment. He never toned down his language for an instant. When the world was arguing at the DOP28 Dubai climate summit in late 2023 over whether to include the term “phase-out” in the final text (the eventual weasel words were “transition away”) the Holy Father used the word “eliminate”. He who inspired us all. What a loss. Yet it’s worth noting that in Maori tradition there is a proverb that when a mighty mature kahikatea tree falls in the forest and crashes into the forest floor the destruction clears space for light to reach younger, smaller saplings and creates room for them to thrive. May well all have the courage to grow to something close to his great height.

Election 2025

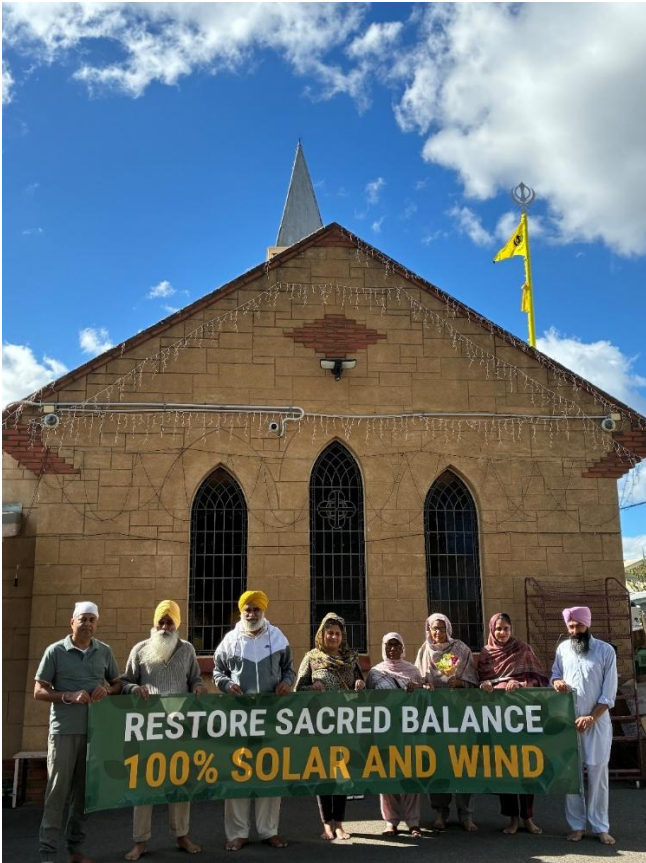
Before the year started our plans for the election were already well formed and teams of people were active from early on in the usually quiet summer period. We were in good shape after a high-impact week of action the previous September. All over the country teams of volunteers phoned places of worship to ask them to put up climate action banners and give out yard signs. Our keenest efforts were in marginal electorates, especially in Brisbane, Griffith, Gilmore, Wills, Boothby, Sturt and Curtin.

Banners outside places of worship

Our best estimate is that by Election Day in early May there were between 150 to 200 places of worship nationwide with an ARRCC climate action banner up spanning over 60 electorates. This is only an estimate because some went up in September 2024 and a small number of them may have since taken theirs down by election time, and over 120 banners had gone up in previous years’ actions, some of which would also still have been up. Of the ARRCC banners that went up after September, 71 were in 31 key electorates.



Right: Banner on Marion Mosque in the electorate of Boothby



Sikh Congregants outside Glen Osmond Gurdwara in Sturt electorate

Page 5 of the Post newspaper, delivered to homes across the marginal electorate of Curtin in WA on Friday May 2nd, the day before the election.

The journalist took considerable theological liberties with what the priest actually said, but it was a very effective headline.



Father Matthew Smedley wants voters to think of the environment at the federal election. Photo: Paul McGovern

'Nuclear displeases God'

By BEN DICKINSON

Building nuclear power plants in Australia would not please God, according to a Mosman Park priest.

St Luke's Anglican Church rector Matthew Smedley has hung up two banners outside his Monument Street church, ahead of a federal election in which the Opposition is promising to build nuclear reactors.

"Protect creation," say the banners. "Climate action not nuclear distraction."

Wembley Downs Uniting Church, Wembley Downs Church of Christ and St

Andrew's Anglican Church in Nedlands are also displaying pro-environment signs.

They are all affiliated with the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change, a national multifaith group founded in 2008.

Father Smedley said the banners were not an attack on the Liberal Party; he and his progressive congregation only wanted voters to think of the environment when they vote this Saturday.

"I'm not saying anything about parties," he said.

"We believe in the stewardship of Creation and caring for what God has given us."

He said climate change undermined that stewardship, but so did the radioactive waste generated by nuclear reactors.

"It certainly does not please God," he said.

Faith leaders including the president of the Uniting Church in Australia, the Anglican Archbishop of Brisbane and the president of the Multi Faith Association of South Australia made a joint statement on Monday urging voters to back renewable energy over nuclear.

"Experts agree that for Australia nuclear energy

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Billboard at St Paul's Cathedral

St Paul's Cathedral in Melbourne put up a large billboard that reads 'Protect Creation, no new coal and gas' right opposite Federation Square and Flinders Street station.

Vandals had destroyed a previous sign put up in September. It took less than 24 hours for a crowdfunding campaign to raise the replacement sign.



Distributing yard signs

There was a major movement-wide effort to distribute yard signs calling for stronger climate action in the months before the election, and faith communities rose to the occasion in getting these out. Some 2400 signs were handed out by people involved in 128 faith communities and congregations across 59 electorates including 25 key marginals. These yard signs proved popular as there was usually no need for official permission to hand them out and we are very likely to come back to this tactic in the future.

Senior faith leaders ask people to vote on the climate

On the first day of pre-poll on April 22 senior faith leaders put out a [joint video message](#) encouraging Australians to vote on the climate and energy crisis. The leaders were from several religious traditions including the President of the Uniting Church in Australia, Reverend Charissa Suli, and the Anglican Archbishop of Brisbane, the Most Reverend Jeremy Greaves. They urged people to back renewables over nuclear, saying “Experts agree that for Australia nuclear energy is the most expensive form of energy by far - hundreds of billions of taxpayer dollars - in large part to deal with the safety issues. Nuclear would not help prevent climate change either, because we would need to keep burning coal and gas while we wait decades for nuclear power stations to be built.”

Meetings with candidates

Multifaith delegations met with Liberal candidate Andrew Constance in Gilmore (NSW) and Independent MP Rebekha Sharkie in Mayo (SA) to let them know that local faith communities wanted stronger climate action and opposed nuclear energy.

Community Forums

Church Ministers who are ARRCC supporters hosted two public forums in Gilmore. People of faith also came to public meetings in Boothby, Sturt, Fenner and Reid.

Media during the campaign

We also received strong local media coverage in the following location in Gilmore, Brisbane, Boothby and Curtin. These can be seen in the section above on media coverage for the year generally.

Social media

Faith communities and leaders around the country put up videos and photos calling for greater action on the climate. Here are examples from three marginal electorates. In [Griffith](#) in Queensland Uniting Church Minister Reverend Erin Mawhinney put out a video talking about their banner opposing nuclear energy. In the electorate of [Brisbane](#) - Anglican priest Reverend Ceri Wynne from Milton Anglican put out a video about another anti-nuclear banner, this one right opposite a major train station. And in the hotly contested Melbourne seat of [Wills](#) a Baptist church put up a photo of their banner calling for an end to new coal and gas projects.

North-West Shelf gas project

After the election there was the shocking announcement that the massive North West Shelf gas project in WA would be extended until 2070. ARRCC supporters went to snap actions, made submissions opposing the Browse Gas Field linked to this project, wrote to MPs and attended screenings of the film Coral's Last Stand.

Climate target for 2035

In the middle of the year the issue that loomed largest was the decision as to what Australia's emissions reduction target for 2035 should be. ARRCC supporters joined with many others across the country in a concerted effort to push the Prime Minister to announce a target that would reflect climate science and necessity rather than political navigation.

We made submissions, wrote to MPs and met with government MPs Fiona Phillips in Gilmore, Josh Wilson in Fremantle who is also the Associate Minister for Climate and Energy, and Kate Thwaites in Jagajaga who is also the Government's Special Envoy for Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience.

The target that was eventually set of 62 to 70% compared to 2005 levels fell well short of what was needed. Although the government could technically claim that the target was what the science called for, it ignored the moral responsibility for developed nations to set targets higher than the global average, known in UN-speak as "common but differentiated responsibilities." No doubt in some ways this was shrewd politics. By setting a target of this level the Prime Minister could hope to avoid the worst excesses of criticism from all sides and can try to seem like a sensible and steady captain of the ship. What was not on display was moral courage - a government that will not only read the electorate but also lead them.

The COP that never was

In the second half of the year considerable time went into planning for what was then the high likelihood of the UN climate summit COP31 taking place in Adelaide at the end of 2026. This took the form of lengthy movement strategy meetings, meeting movement partners both domestic and international, writing funding applications and local ARRCC groups starting to prepare, especially

the group in South Australia. It was deeply disappointing when we eventually learned at the end of the year that the summit would instead be hosted by Turkiye. Not all efforts have been lost. Being part of developing movement strategy for a phase-out of coal and gas in a just and equitable way will bear fruit regardless of where the COP is held, for example. Moreover, Australian Climate and Energy Minister Chris Bowen will be the President of Negotiations at the COP and pressure on our government therefore remains an important part of international momentum. Exactly how this plays out has yet to be seen. Please see below for our plans for 2026.

Environmental law reform

People of faith joined in the widespread effort to ensure that the amendments made this year to the main federal environment Act of Parliament, the Environmental Protection Biodiversity and Conservation (EPBC) Act, were as strong as possible when it came to protecting the climate. We mostly did so by making official submissions. This was a partial success. The amended Act ended up being considerably tighter than earlier drafts, but protecting the climate remained outside the scope of what the Minister is required to consider when deciding whether or not to approve a new project - an enormous loophole.

Building our base

Finally, we not only campaigned, we put time into building our supporter base. All local ARRCC groups prioritised reaching out to a wider range of faith traditions, we held workshops on how to organise at the local level and we held a webinar with Climate 4 Change on how to have an effective conversation about the issue with members of your own faith community.

People of faith at Rising Tide

It was encouraging to see around 60 ARRCC supporters attending this year's Rising Tide People's Blockade of the world's largest coal port in Newcastle. These included Sisters of Mercy, Quakers, Muslims, Buddhists, Christians of all stripes and at least one Sikh. As usual, the whole event was exceedingly well organised and the high points were truly inspirational! The organisers were very happy to have a strong faith presence as they see communities of faith as important in showing mainstream support for a phase-out of coal and gas.



Multi-faith service on the beach, Sunday morning



Above: People of faith boat after going out on the water

Below: Ahimsadhi Reffell and Gerry Fahey



It was exciting to see Sister Mary Tinney RSM speaking so prophetically on [Channel 10 News](#).

That said, the conditions were more difficult than usual. The huge lightning storm on Wednesday night created a lot more work at the setting up stage, then it was hot and humid, and on the afternoons of Saturday and Sunday we battled very high winds.

Nonetheless, spirits were high and there was a palpable sense of common purpose. Here, everyone was passionately concerned about Australia's contribution to making the climate unsafe. Everyone was frustrated that the Labor Government is rightly seeking to lower domestic emissions while turning a blind eye to the fact that Australia's export-linked carbon footprint is roughly three times larger.

We were standing up for a complete phase-out of coal exports from Newcastle by 2030, a halt to new approvals for coal and gas projects, and a 78 percent windfall tax on fossil-fuel profits to fund disaster recovery and a just transition for workers.

At the end of the day, 155 people were arrested - among them a Catholic and two Buddhists (to our knowledge). Even aside from this, the sheer numbers of people participating in the 'protestival' - around 8,000 - was a demonstration of the strength of public feeling about these issues.

Attendance of Moderator Uniting Church Synod of NSW and ACT

It was with great pride that we welcomed Rev. Faaimata Havea Hiliau, Moderator of the Uniting Church, Synod of NSW and the ACT. Rev Mata spoke from the main stage at the launch of the (legally sanctioned) flotilla on Saturday morning, supported by a large contingent of Uniting Church folk.

Originally from Tonga, Rev Mata said, "My homelands are feeling the direct effects of our climate emergency, and so as a Church we are here to protest at one of the largest coal ports in the world and we will continue to advocate for care for God's creation. Our weather patterns are not improving, they are getting more extreme with each passing year, and we need to take action."

Multifaith Sacred Service

The Multifaith Sacred Service was truly memorable. Rev Alex Sangster led the Sunday morning Service on the beach in a way that was grounded in authentic feeling as well as uplifting and hopeful. Even without being asked, various people commented on how moved they were.

Religious media coverage

[Catholic Outlook](#) (Parramatta)

[CathNews](#)

[Insights](#) (Uniting Church)

[Religions for Peace website](#)

[Union of Catholic Asian News](#) (Visits to website 8.6 million per month)

Local groups

Queensland

From the start of the year until May Queensland ARRCC (known as QARRCC) was busy with the federal election. Some 26 places of worship gave out yard signs including in the key seats of Brisbane, Ryan, Griffith, Leichhardt, Dickson, Petrie and Bonner. No fewer than 14 of these were

due to the extraordinary efforts of ARRCC volunteer Emma Beach. On the first day of pre-poll, which coincided with Earth Day, faith leaders and a few other keen volunteers gave out yard signs in front of St John's Anglican Cathedral in central Brisbane to passers-by, with a giant seven metre climate banner behind us hanging from the front of the cathedral. This attracted coverage from the ABC who interviewed the Dean of the cathedral, the Very Reverend Dr Peter Catt, about both our action and the recent passing of Pope Francis. There was less success in getting climate banners up outside places of worship, but some of that may have been due to a large number having put these up in September 2024 as part of the national week of action at that time. We also participated in getting out short videos promoting climate action during the campaign, including one from Reverend Melissa Conway in Toowoomba.

In Cairns Father Neil Forgie formed a strong connection early in the year with the Catholic Bishop Joe Caddy who had started in the job only a few months earlier. Bishop Joe expressed his interest in helping to get the word out about climate action and ARRCC and we look forward to taking that further. Father Neil was due to be a member of a climate movement delegation that met with newly elected MP for Leichhardt Matt Smith. Despite Neil's absence Mr Smith commented on the important role of faith communities in climate action and he also looks to be something of a prospective champion in Parliament for the cause. This very promising start to the year in the far north has been put on hold, however, due to Neil standing down as our main coordinator there due to health issues. He will be sorely missed and we owe him much for his passion, determination and gentle kindness for many years.

QARRCC works closely with Queensland Churches Environmental Network (QCEN) a commission of Queensland Churches Together, with Anglicans, Roman Catholic, Uniting Church, Salvation Army and Lutheran participation and secular groups including Queensland Conservation Council (QCC). The Anglican Archbishop of Brisbane Jeremy Greaves is an active supporter.

Father Peter Moore - coordinator QARRCC

Sydney

In February, ARRCC supporters came out in Town Hall Square in support of the right to protest outside places of worship. The anti-protest laws were nonetheless rushed through the NSW Parliament, but the police 'move-on' powers were later deemed unconstitutional by the NSW Supreme Court. Another win that ARRCC was part of!

In March, out the front of NSW Parliament House, we showed solidarity with the Gomeroi Traditional Custodians who were resisting Santos' 850 gas wells planned in the Pilliga Forest. This was just prior to the outcome of a National Native Title Tribunal hearing at the Law Courts. The Gomeroi delivered a letter to the Parliament, calling for an acknowledgement that they had not given consent to Santos and their destructive Narrabri Gas project.

In the same month we supported the Sydney Alliance's Federal Pre-Election Assembly in Western Sydney. Several climate-related requests were put directly to Minister Chris Bowen with some success.

In July, we responded to calls by Market Forces to pressure Macquarie Bank at their AGM to stop funding gas developments in the Beetaloo Basin. Inside the AGM, in the largest ever display of shareholder support for a climate resolution at a major Australian bank, over 35% of shareholders voted in favour of a shareholder resolution filed by Market Forces.

Later in the year (October), we joined Jubilee Australia in front of the Japanese Consulate, as part of an International Day of Action organised by Don't Gas Asia, challenging Japan to stop promoting the LNG gas trade through its deceptively named "Asian Zero Emissions Partnership". Well done all!

Overall, the Sydney ARRCC group was good at showing up and adding a presence of people of faith to events organised by others - at times adding significant numbers.



Wonderful ARRCC supporters at Sydney Alliance Assembly, 13 March 2025

Illawarra and South Coast

The first half of the year was dominated by the federal election in the then marginal seat Gilmore. Our local group formed a partnership with the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) and 350.org and was actively involved in a broader group called the South East Climate Alliance (SECA).

We contacted faith communities and invited them to display banners calling for stronger climate action. However, we met with a fair bit of resistance to displaying these on church grounds. Nonetheless, four did put up such banners including one that read 'Climate Action not Nuclear distraction'. Banners were displayed at the Uniting Churches in Kiama and Berry, the Anglican Church in Moruya and the Manjushri Buddhist Centre. By contrast, asking people to hand out climate action yard signs through their faith communities proved very viable with a wider range of congregations.

SECA organised candidates' forums at the Kiama Uniting Church and the Batemans Bay Soldiers Club. These were ably chaired by ARRCC members Rev Kath Merrifield and Rev Linda Chapman OAM. Four people of faith including two clergy met with Liberal candidate Andrew Constance on March 17 to raise their concerns about nuclear and his public opposition and attempted backflip on the Coalition setting an emissions target for 2035. We also supported ACF and 350.org in their weekly stalls at local markets. Faith leaders and other people of faith letterboxed 1500 homes in Kiama and 400 in Berry.

Finally, we assisted Uniting in distributing postcards, yard signs and scorecards. In our local campaign review, Community Organiser Tejopala praised our group saying we "did everything right with a great result. Hard to ask for a better campaign".

After the election our focus started to go onto efforts to phase out fossil fuels over the next three years, advocating for an ambitious emissions reduction target for 2035 as well as changes to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, (EPBC Act). This started with a meeting with local Gilmore MP Fiona Phillips MP to advocate for an emissions target of no less than 80% by 2035. There was also a letter writing campaign to Government MPs requesting that they advocate for an ambitious target. We also worked on divestment from fossil fuels by writing letters to the CEO of Westpac as part of the Westpac Backtrack campaign led by Market Forces.

Finally, we committed ourselves to promoting diversity within our group. We have made a good start in this by welcoming the involvement of representatives of the Manjushri Buddhist Centre in our regular meetings.

Media coverage of the group's work:

[Positive coverage in The Bugle](#) of Gilmore candidates' forum that was ably moderated by supporter Rev Kath Merrifield as well as Liberal candidate Andrew Constance's questioning of the integrity of both the CSIRO and Climate Change Authority.

[A response from Rev Merrifield - again in The Bugle](#) - to criticism from former Liberal MP Joanna Gash about the lack of an Australian flag at the candidates' forum mentioned above.

[Further coverage in The Bugle](#) this time encouraging all people of faith to vote on the climate.

Post-election coverage again in [The Bugle in an article about the climate](#).

[Uniting Church Minister in the electorate of Gilmore speaks just before the election in the Spark Shoalhaven](#) about the climate concerns of faith communities locally and nationally.

Victoria

As 2025 began with the Federal Election - our year started with a focus on the Wills electorate. We worked to connect with the various faith communities in Wills, holding a public meeting in February at the Coburg Uniting Church with speakers from several faith traditions. Regardless of the result at the voting booth, making good connections across the community was worth the effort. During the lead-up to the election, St Paul's Cathedral put up a second prominent billboard facing Flinders Street Station saying 'Protect Creation, no new coal and gas', the original one having been vandalised. The money needed to pay for this was raised online by ARRCC supporters within a few hours.

Other work through the year has been supporting people to meet with their local MPs, which resulted in a meeting with Kate Thwaites, and with many people writing letters as well. There were

also times when a short notice call out from Market Forces had some of us on the street outside a business that needed urgent reminding of its duty of care to people and the earth.

An ongoing challenge for us is answering the question: how can we broaden the religious and ethnic diversity of ARRCC in Victoria? And how can we bring others into this space of working together to make the changes our society and children need?

Part of our exploring these questions has been to start developing our own skills, including in the area of effective organising. We hope that others will join us in our monthly meetings in 2026.

South Australia

For a small group ARRCC SA carries a lot of advocacy weight, both through working on ARRCC's national campaigns and joining in and adding value to other climate action groups. Like everyone else our energy in the early part of the year was focused on the federal election. In particular, working on campaigns in marginal electorates, helping to promote non-partisan candidate forums centred on climate and energy and activating our contacts in faith communities throughout these electorates to put up banners outside their places of worship and distribute placards that read Climate Action Now and No Nuclear.

In the electorate of Boothby seven places of worship across a wide range of religious traditions put up banners calling for climate action. This caught the attention of local Labor MP Louise Miller-Frost. These banners and three more in Sturt featured in a national community radio story in The Wire on May 2, the day before the election.

One of our group members then formed an Election Action Group for the electorate of Mayo local independent MP Rebekha Sharkie had been supporting nuclear power. An ARRCC delegation went to meet with her and let her know that supporting nuclear power was a serious concern in local faith communities.

Members also hung banners from bridges and overpasses with daring feats of escapology. These were an insistent presence in this electorate.

Later in the year we called Labor MPS and Senators offices to urge them to do all they can to support the Environment Protection bills and wrote to and called Labor MPs and Senators about the emissions reduction target for 2035.

We turned up at the SA Parliament to support Tammy Francks' landmark bill to ban fossil fuel sponsorships. Santos sponsors our wonderful Tour Down Under bike race, participated in the XR Rally outside of the Santos AGM and attended the Climate Target Snap Rally outside MP Clare Clutterham's office with the theme "Albanese in bed with Fossil Fuels". One supporter formed a monthly MP engagement group gathering people to write to MPs.

Then there was the algal bloom that has caused such great devastation along our coasts. Supporters attended the Toxic Surf South Coast Algal Bloom Forum and did banner drops highlighting the role of fossil fuels in marine deaths, with some joining together with other groups at vigils to mourn our marine life.

For much of the year it appeared that the UN climate summit COP31 would be coming to Adelaide. We did our best to start preparing by attending a planning meeting for the movement called Heaps Good COP31.

And throughout the year, on the first Wednesday of every month we gathered on the steps of SA Parliament House to Meditate for the Earth. This is an ARRCC SA initiative where we display



Meditate for the Earth on SA Parliament House Steps – held monthly for four years now

banners and meditate silently for 30 minutes. We start and finish by ringing bells in order to herald our concern for our precious planet. Leaflets are handed to passers-by, and our 'minder' on the footpath often engages in discussions with the interested. The aim is to draw attention to the need to swiftly move away from fossil fuels, and to urge the government to take strong action to cut emissions and to care for the environment. We often interact with politicians, passers-by and school children who come to visit Parliament. We have maintained our vigil for four years now. All are welcome to join us as and when they wish.

Western Australia

The WA state election took place in March. At the same time the federal election was looming, with the date as yet unknown. This combination set the scene at the start of the year for trying to stimulate climate awareness in faith communities and for directly working on advocacy in key electorates.

Around the federal election efforts went into promoting community awareness of priority environmental pollution and protection issues as well as extra lobbying efforts around key electorates of Churchlands and Fremantle. In both cases we contributed to strong community debate around the climate action commitments of candidates and their parties. Public banners

supporting climate action and discouraging the nuclear option were displayed by some churches stimulating attention both within their faith communities and the wider community. In the crucial electorate of Curtin five churches put up a banner calling for climate action and a Minister also put one up outside his house. St Luke's Anglican in Mosman Park put up a banner saying 'Climate action, not nuclear distraction'. The actions of four of these faith communities attracted coverage on the Friday before the election in the local paper The Post.

One of our main concerns was the long, drawn-out determination on Woodside's North-West Shelf (NWS) Gas Extension Project. Through our own submissions to the state EPA, state and federal governments and participation in collaborative environmental awareness programs with other groups we encouraged the relevant Ministers not to grant the extension through to 2070. Respect for protection of the Murujuga Rock Art Heritage has been part of our challenge to the extension of the gas processing works on Burrup Peninsula.



A delegation from ARRCC WA meets with Josh Wilson MP, Member for Fremantle and Federal Assistant Minister for Climate Action (August 2025)



Advocates for the defence of Scott Reef after viewing the film 'Coral's Last Stand' in Bunbury

A joint media event focusing on the NWS was held by the Uniting Church WA and ARRCC WA in June. ARRCC WA President Ken Kevereux spoke alongside the national President of the Uniting Church, the Moderator of the Synod of WA, and a leader of the Uniting Aboriginal & Islander Christian Congress. Regrettably, the extension was confirmed by the new Environment Minister Murray Watt in September.

We promoted screenings and discussions of the visual documentary *Coral's Last Stand* throughout the year to promote awareness of the environmental risks to the fragile and unique Scott Reef off the northern WA coast, if Woodside and the Joint Venturers' Browse Gas Project is allowed to go ahead.

We wrote letters calling for faster actions in support of an energy transition away from fossil fuels to state and federal Ministers and MPs. We received some detailed letters of response and a delegation had a constructive face to face meeting with Josh Wilson, Member for Fremantle and Federal Assistant Minister for Climate Change.

We sent a letter from various faith leaders and a number of active individuals calling for stronger climate action by the WA Government to the Premier and to all members of the WA Parliament. It led to several responses, including appreciation from the WA Greens. We also acknowledged the WA Greens' efforts in introducing a Climate Action This Decade Bill.

We urged the federal government when it was setting its emissions targets to reach net zero emissions by 2035 rather than by 2050.

Elaine Bowkett was actively involved in co-hosting an online series of Prayer and Meditation Sessions for the Earth in the lead-up to and throughout the COP30 climate summit in conjunction with the Brahma Kumaris and Religions for Peace Australia. This connected a number of people across Australia as well as through New Zealand and south-east Asia.

ARRCC WA has for several years had its own formal structure, and our AGM was held in February. Dr Allen Riebau, a member of the Baha'i faith, completed his term as President. Rev Ken Devereux, a Uniting Church minister was elected as President and Mrs Elaine Bowkett was re-elected as Secretary. Other elected members Sharon Matthews, Helene Fisher and Ven Mujiyo Williams have

also assisted in various roles through the year. Deborah Robertson has been a regular link person with the ARRCC South-West group based in Bunbury.

The Management Committee has explored the development of a Code of Conduct, with a working committee exploring the options and testing various descriptions that could best cover our range of cultural diversity and promote constructive dialogue and collaborative decision making. This document was finalized at the end of the year.

The ARRCC Sout- West / Bunbury group has been active with weekly prayer and meditation sessions as well as periodic public information seminars, workshops and public walks. A meditation and prayer event in May involved walking between various faith centres as public witness and interfaith learning and praying for climate justice through the new government.

In 2026 we will seek to grow our participatory network and hope either to find some fresh people to join the WA leadership committee or to move to a more informal model of group participation.

We thank the national leadership of ARRCC in this vital field of community and spiritual engagement. In particular we have appreciated regular supportive contact with Thea Ormerod and Tejopala Rawls.

Rev Ken Devereux (President)
Sharon Matthews (Vice-President)
Mrs Elaine Bowkett (Secretary)

Media coverage of the group's work:

Four churches with banners for climate action in the marginal WA electorate of Curtin in [local paper The Post](#), delivered to letterboxes across the electorate on the eve of the election.

[News Wire article of President of ARRCC WA Rev Ken Devereux](#) alongside senior leaders from the Uniting Church speaking about the government's decision to extend the North West Shelf gas project to 2070.

Coverage of Rev Devereux on the same decision in the [Canberra Times](#) (also covered in Country News, the Newcastle Herald, the Sydney Morning Herald and Michael West Media).

ARRCC plans for 2026

Over the coming year, and beyond that, our aims will be to strengthen ARRCC as an organisation, to campaign effectively for the urgent phasing out of fossil fuel exports, to mobilise faith communities with widespread support at grassroots and senior leadership levels and to work with others who share our goals.

Our campaigning for the phasing out of fossil fuel exports will go right through to at least the next federal election in a little over two years from now. This is without doubt the most pressing issue in front of us and we will tackle it on a few fronts: by joining with the broader Australian climate movement in a shared strategy for a commitment to a phase-out from the federal government, by campaigning with communities of faith around the world for a Fossil Fuel Treaty, by mobilising for Rising Tide, and by advocating for both individual people of faith and faith organisations to invest ethically and divest from fossil fuels.

Exactly what form our pressure on the government will take is not yet completely clear but should become much more so in the early part of this year and we are confident that we will be aligning our efforts with a coordinated push from most of the climate movement in the country. That is an exciting prospect and we will be calling on all faith communities and leaders to get fully involved. There will be no second chance at this.

A few things can be said at this stage about this campaign. First, since many people still do not make the connection, we will do our utmost to get the word out that climate impacts are caused by coal and gas and will be asking our supporters to talk about this in their respective faith communities as much as possible. Second, the main person we will be holding responsible will be the Prime Minister. The buck always stops with his office and to date he has shown himself to be a cautious incrementalist on nearly everything. While that is an understandable instinct, especially when it comes to the hardest political issue of them all, it is simply not one that is commensurate with the scale and pace of the problem we're up against. Finally, while we always remain impartial when it comes to party politics we are equally determined to push any government of the day to act boldly. This government may currently enjoy a huge majority in the House, but it has been noted that their support is wide but shallow, with that party's lowest primary vote since 1934, and candidates that will take the climate crisis seriously could easily disrupt the status quo just as community independents disrupted the last government.

Our efforts on the domestic political front will be coupled with a new campaign alongside faith communities around the world to advance the cause of the proposed international Fossil Fuel Treaty. This idea of this treaty is to tackle the climate crisis at its source - the production of coal, oil and gas - rather than merely addressing the consumption of those products, and to build momentum for this agenda with those willing to back it outside the UN process rather than by moving at the pace of the slowest country inside it. At time of writing 18 countries, including the Holy See, have publicly backed the idea and the coming year seems likely to provide a major opportunity to build on that, with the first ever international summit on the phasing out of fossil fuels to be held in Colombia on April 28 and 29 (jointly hosted by the governments of Colombia and the Netherlands) and the second such summit late this year or early next somewhere in the Pacific. The moment begs for leadership from faith communities. We are proud to say we will be leading the charge here in Australia for a new multifaith international campaign spearheaded by GreenFaith International.

To date there is promising broad interest in this campaign, including from the World Council of Churches, Soka Gakkai International, the Lutheran World Federation, ACT Alliance, the Laudato Si' Movement, Ummah for Earth, Eco-Judaism, Maryknoll, the Anglican Consultative Council, the Office of Religious Congregations for Integral Ecology (ORCIE), and others. We expect this to grow. The campaign will aim to create grassroots momentum-building in support of a Fossil Fuel Treaty - similar to the way that mass-petition and movement building efforts contributed to the nuclear freeze agreements in the 1980s. We want to see as many congregations, faith leaders and individual believers to sign on to the Treaty initiative as possible. It will also aim to shift global opinion in favor of a fossil fuel phaseout and increased investment in a rapid, just energy transition and to encourage more countries to join those actively calling for a phase-out. It will be possible to show faith-based support for such as a faith community or organisation, a faith leader or simply as an individual person of faith.

Here in Australia we will add a few more elements to the campaign. There will be public vigils on or around the time of the global summit in Colombia in late April across the country where all people of faith can come together to show their support. We will also be asking people to find a few others in their faith community to sing songs about the need to phase out coal and gas, the lyrics for which we will provide and which will be based on well-known tunes, often Christian hymns. We will also simply be asking you to find ways to get the message across in your own faith community as to why phasing out fossil fuels matters so much.

Financials

Financial policies

We are committed to continuing to encourage faith communities to take action against climate change, and to undertake truth-telling to the government and business sector on policies that are needed for climate justice.

In order to do these things effectively, ARRCC is committed to expanding our sources of generating income. We now have Deductible Grant Recipient status with the Australian Taxation Office which means that donations \$2.00 and over are tax deductible.

Made possible by our loyal regular donors, people kindly responding to crowdfunding campaigns, Grantmakers and generous organizational donors, ARRCC is able to employ a brilliant part-time community organiser. His professional skills, vision and commitment have increased our capacity to make a difference.

Principles

While we are committed to continuing our work, we do not believe that 'survival at all costs' is a justifiable position. We therefore premise our financing strategy on the following principles:

We will not undertake any work which compromises our independence, the quality of our work or our integrity and commitment to truth-telling;

We believe we are accountable to the wider community of people in our country and on our continent for the responsible use of all resources which are put at our disposal;

We respect donor relationships but are prepared to challenge and be challenged on important issues.

We will seek donations and grant funding for projects and current campaigns and will aim for cost-neutrality with respect to events and other activities.

Conclusion

People of faith make up 84% of the world's population and 60% of Australia's population. In this vital decade, the earth's climate cannot afford for us to wash our hands of "worldly" affairs or "politics". In collaboration with millions of other people of goodwill, we must do all we can to assume our civic responsibilities to protect the earth and all of life which depends on it.

Please persevere with us!

By Thea Ormerod
President, ARRCC

Balance Sheet

ARRCC Incorporated As at 31 December 2025

	31 DEC 2025	31 DEC 2024
Assets		
Bank		
ARRCC Gift Account	113,009	31,038
ARRCC Paypal Account	283	392
ARRCC Term Deposit 1	-	6,328
ARRCC Term Deposit 2	-	6,453
ARRCC Transaction Account	5,420	6,590
Stripe 1 NB > Gift	19	63
Total Bank	118,731	50,864
Current Assets		
Accounts Receivable	-	9,132
Total Current Assets	-	9,132
Total Assets	118,731	59,996
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	597	-
Annual Leave Provision	802	1,456
Funding in Advance	15,000	-
GST	(156)	(457)
PAYG Liability Account	4,236	3,952
Superannuation Payable	-	1,134
Credit Card	-	437
Total Current Liabilities	20,479	6,523
Total Liabilities	20,479	6,523
Net Assets	98,252	53,473
Equity		
Current Year Earnings	44,779	(22,979)
Retained Earnings	53,473	76,452
Total Equity	98,252	53,473

Profit and Loss

ARRCC Incorporated For the year ended 31 December 2025

	2025	2024
Trading Income		
Bank Interest	377	634
Conference Fees	-	10,316
Donations	91,500	77,885
Donations - Recurring	24,947	21,627
Grants	35,000	-
Membership	4,894	6,106
Other Income	38	7,309
Total Trading Income	156,756	123,876
Gross Profit	156,756	123,876
Operating Expenses		
Accounting Fees	1,506	2,221
Advertising	195	196
Bank Fees	1,624	1,327
Consulting Fees	960	9,627
Equipment	1,093	513
Event Costs	-	8,088
General Expenses	536	230
Grants to other Orgs	200	-
Insurance	5,926	6,636
Leave Entitlement	(654)	(4,583)
Postage	144	167
Printing & Stationery	826	1,309
Rent	-	130
Sub-Contractor fees	3,495	2,718
Subscriptions	3,515	4,591
Superannuation	9,791	11,035
Training	3,472	324
Travel Costs	2,685	6,776
Wages	76,662	95,551
Total Operating Expenses	111,977	146,856
Net Profit	44,779	(22,979)