



## **Packing days - Convener**

### **Job description: role, time demands, etc**

Packing Day is an activity of the National and World Mission Support Team [NWMS] affiliated with UCAF and working in partnership with the International Mission office of the Synod. Packing Day had its beginnings in the late 1940s/early 1950s, running at a single site for some years before expanding to the present three packing sites.

For the last 30 or more years at least, it has served these sites and communities:

- Op Shops run by or in association with the Uniting Church in Tennant Creek (the only Op Shop in the town), Alice Springs, Broome and in the island and coastal communities east of Darwin – Maningrida, Minjilang, Galiwin'ku, Yirrkala
- Residential Care facilities in Alice Springs (Hetti Perkins), Kununurra (now operated by Juniper) and Wyndham
- A small consignment to some independent schools east of Darwin
- The huge annual fete at the Old Timers' Home in Alice Springs.

Op Shops are always glad to receive supplies; the indigenous communities use their op shops as a way of contributing funds towards various community development activities.

The residential care facilities have many people who come in for short-term respite care: donations to them enable them, as one of their activities, to give people a set of new clothes to people as they leave to go back home.

The Frontier Services Team in SA has for many, many years supported the Old Timers' Fete with hand-crafted rugs, soft toys and the like for the Work Stall.

**The primary role of the Convener of Packing Day** is to set in place all the “big-picture” administrative arrangements that are needed – the actual work of obtaining, sorting and packing the goods is managed at the local level.

At the same time, the Convener is the public face of the Packing Day operation, as well as the provider of the encouragement, exhortation and maybe even the inspiration of the local managers and their teams.

So the role has both administrative and pastoral elements.

There are three packing sites – Athelstone, Balhannah and Marion. (A little history – Balhannah is the last remaining of the three original sites that did the task for many years, decades in fact. Marion has done 4 now, and Athelstone 2.)

Each site is completely self-contained – every site has its own co-ordinator, contacts for supplies, personal style, etc. The only coordination *between* the sites is the dividing up of the total packing task [see below].

Administrative tasks are:

- Maintain the list of Adelaide contacts, both the UCA personnel and the contact with the land-based carriers
- Establish and maintain the list of contact names and delivery addresses for the receiving sites

Communication tasks are:

- Contact potential recipients to ensure that what we have been sending still meets their needs
- Contact the land-based carrier in Adelaide (Allied Pickfords Removals) and the north-coast shipping carrier in Darwin (Seaswift) to establish / maintain Free of Charge transport arrangements [Packing Day has NO BUDGET at all]
- Liaise with local site managers to arrange planning and reporting days
- Liaise with Goodwill re items surplus to Packing Day requirements
- Write the Packing Day page for the UCAF annual Handbook

- Write a story for the UCAF magazine Together for (end of) March and a follow-up for about September
- Assorted questions that crop up from time to time.

During Packing Day week support / enthuse / profusely thank all concerned, as appropriate.

It's a long-looking list, but for the most part the task does not consume a lot of time. But it does require that the Convener be "on call" most of the year.

### Annual schedule

The working year runs from December to September, in effect. What appears below is how things have been done for the last few years: it says nothing about how things must be done in the future – the last few years are already different from what happened traditionally before that.

Date	Internal	Allied Pickfords	Seaswift	Goodwill
December	a little preliminary work to make sure the previous year's records are up to date			
January	write the Handbook page			
January / February	make contact with receiving sites to check the suitability of goods sent the previous year			
March	write the Together story – plans for the current year etc  Call meeting of planning group [= the three local conveners / managers] to plan the packing task and attend to other admin requirements	Contact land transport re Sponsorship / Free of Charge carriage	Contact sea shippers re Sponsorship / Free of Charge carriage	
April/May	report plans to NWMS  keep a watching brief – the "making it happen" work is being done at the local level now	Follow up Sponsorship request as necessary  Deal with admin arrangements	Follow up Sponsorship request as necessary	liaise with Goodwill for supplies of empty bags, and then pick-up
June	Packing Day week (!!)	Ensure collection ["uplift" in the trade] is in place		Ensure collection of surplus goods is in place
July/August	probably relax: things rarely go wrong			
September	call reporting meeting write report for Together report to NWMS. <i>Be sure to include appreciation of transport providers.</i>	Write letters of thanks to transport providers.	Write letters of thanks to transport providers.	
Oct/Nov	think about something else!!!			

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