

DOCTRINAL STATEMENTS AND THEOLOGICAL OPINIONS (DSTO)

VOLUME 1

D. MINISTRIES IN THE CHURCH

The right to use the title 'pastor'

Paragraphs 1–3 adopted by the Commission on Theology and Inter-Church Relations, May 1974. Paragraph 4 adopted in February 1977.

Edited February 2000.

1. A pastor is a person who has been authorised and commissioned by the church to the office of the public ministry. He is recognised by the church as being *rite vocatus*, that is, properly called according to the regulations and rites of the church.
2. The church commissions and authorises a person by means of the rite of ordination. Ordination presupposes that the candidate is fit for the public office. It also presupposes that the candidate has received and accepted a call from a congregation, parish, the church (district or national), or a board of the church which has the authority to call. Ordination does not give the candidate a special status or an indelible character. That is to say, ordination does not make a person permanently and irrevocably a pastor.
3. In general usage, an *emeritus* may be simply 'one honourably discharged from public service'. However, a *pastor emeritus*, as we have used the term and according to the essential meaning of the term, is a pastor who has served out his time; he is retired from long and active service. There seems to be no warrant for extending the use of the term 'emeritus' to pastors who have left the public ministry to take up some other calling.
4. All pastors whose names are on the official 'Roll of Pastors' of the Lutheran Church of Australia are entitled to be called 'Pastor'.