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Below is a collation of the way we see the current situation in Churches of Christ in Vic/Tas.

Strengths

- The movement's narrative is built upon a generous, orthodox gospel
- The important questions are on the table—mission/missional questions and identity/purpose/belonging questions...we have a (recent) base of Future Directions, Unfreeze, Forge, Dreaming Days etc, the missional conversation is part of the 'culture' backdrop
- Intentionally working on vision and reframing of the Story
- A culture (or deeper story) of invitation and experimentation evoked by the flexibility, fluidity and freedom of 'our way of doing things'
- Diverse and creative churches and mission agencies; this diversity in unity allows depth and breadth of ministry and mission
- Human, physical and spiritual resources in local, mission contexts
- Size - less inertia than larger tribes
- DNA of movement promotes healthy ecumenism
- Shared sense of togetherness as expressed in motifs of Conference and "brotherhood" between churches (however, these motifs are now outdated)

Weaknesses

- Leadership—demographic of minister-leaders, often inadequate formation of leader-leaders; not enough emphasis on empowered leadership
- A commitment to old paradigms (e.g. of governance) and methods (e.g. of a minister's role or the shape of 'church') by non-ministry leaders can result in tension and the need for reactive responses (energy-draining, loss of focus, lowering of morale)
- Outdated adversarial rather than collaborative decision making processes and governance culture (i.e. Eldership vs. Minister vs. Congregation vs. Deacons Board)
- Proportion of congregations either in crisis (or in dependence mode) on a variety of issues, and the subsequent time spent problem solving rather than creating the new
- Rhetorical commitment to mission (mission drift, stated mission and purpose vs. hidden/shadow and then actually expressed or lived out mission and purpose)
- Proportion of churches still in older attractional paradigm and shape and other dated models of church that believe their task is just to survive
- Local church autonomy can inhibit shared interdependence
- Fear of interference and mistrust from perceived centralised or hierarchical control of Conference
- The soft edges (theologically, doctrinally) can override the core/centre both horizontally from transfer growth and vertically from generational loss of earlier vision and understanding

Opportunities

- In these days, in this context and culture, 'we', with our DNA of simple and uncluttered Christianity and "interdependent particularity" are made for such a time as this...our flat structure and DNA provide an ideal platform to grow and adapt in new and adaptive, dynamic cultures typical of where we find ourselves in Australia today
- Creative, adaptive missiological expression and exploration at the micro local church level
- Releasing the missional imagination of God as churches/congregations are planted or revitalised, and new leaders are formed, and releasing young leaders into new experiments (not just taking on their parents church)
- Meeting felt needs in the community; empowering all of our people to be missionaries in the neighbourhood and workplace
- To foster relational unity among God's people in mission and to partner with other tribes on similar issues; inviting other like-minded and like-spirited groups and individuals to partner or collaborate with us, or even to more formally join us.
- To keep reframing the story as Renewal rather than Restoration
- Healthy sense of collaborating together allows consolidation of services and shared learning resources at macro (Conference, states level)

Threats

- The prevailing broader cultural context (e.g. secularism, consumerism, self-ism, multi-culturalism, multi-faith)... and an at times 'open-endedness' of the movement can lead to loss of orthodoxy and missional focus
- The prevailing Christian cultural context (e.g. piecemeal spiritual formation—spiritual practices, "I'm over church", rumours and realities of 'post-denominationalism'...and consumerism and self-interest)
- Idiosyncratic, isolationist independence of churches, ministers, leaders including an apparent emergence of fundamentalist positions bringing an uncompromising spirit to the original movement's open embracing of a more diverse expression of belief (denominationalism)
- Capacity for more traditional (and independent) churches to embrace change and interdependence
- Resources—are there the people we need and the funds required, and are the resources located in the best places for God to use to build his Kingdom; will 'future church' need property funding or mission funding (eg 100% funding for planters)?
- Large proportion of struggling and unhealthy churches, particularly where resources (both economic and people) are not "replanted" and regenerated through the practice of good stewardship.
- Small thinking
- 'Pastorally caring' for ourselves rather than taking faith steps into mission, health and growth
- Silos rather than collaboration and partnerships

May 2011