### Safe Church PERSON OF CONCERN Facilitator Guide

### Required:

O Equipment to display PowerPoint.

### **Optional** (location/trainer preferences):

- O SC Person of Concern Handout (1pp or alternatively direct attendees to The Hub).
- O SC Person of Concern **Quiz** (1pp or digital quiz or complete in small groups using slides).
- O SC Person of Concern **Answers** (1 copy, if marking individually).

**Reference document** (optional, but available on the Hub and referred to in Handout which is also on the Hub): O <u>C2.4.1.1 Responding to a Person of Concern</u> (1pp or 1 between 2 or use QR code on PPT to access online).

Welcame for Safe Church Person of Concern Training	Welcome to Safe Church – Person of Concern Training.
Monoradiant Marting () Figure an understanding of: • Who is a Person of Concern. • Processor for a Person of Concern. • Subject Agreements. • Reporting requirements.	<ul> <li>The purpose of this module is for you to gain an understanding of:</li> <li>Who is a Person of Concern.</li> <li>Process for a Person of Concern.</li> <li>Safety Agreements.</li> <li>Reporting requirements.</li> </ul>
Safe Profile Safe Radionous Conception Safe Radionous Conception	<ul> <li>This module focuses on Safe Participants.</li> <li>[If done separately to other modules explain the following: <ul> <li>Safe People focuses on our volunteers.</li> <li>Safe Behaviour focuses on actions and reporting.</li> <li>Safe Programs focuses on the activities and guidelines.</li> <li>Safe Participants focuses on attendees.]</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
WARNING           Warning the other information in this training control to the information.           Warning the the standing with someone you trut, your need it by speaking with someone you trut, your need it by speaking with someone you trut, your need it by speaking with someone you.	<ul> <li>WARNING</li> <li>Information includes talk of abuse, neglect and grooming.</li> <li>It may be unsettling, challenging, confronting or distressing.</li> <li>It may trigger memories, cause flashbacks or remind you of events you or others have experienced.</li> <li>It is important you are safe and seek support from someone you trust.</li> </ul>
A La Responding to a Person of Concern	<ul> <li>Please get a copy of 'Responding to a Person of Concern' – this will be used throughout the module.</li> <li>[1pp or 1 shared between two]</li> <li>[Assist people with getting a digital copy (scanning the QR code, searching the code (C2.4.1.1) on the Hub, or pass out paper copies]</li> </ul>
When the A Person of Concern? reasonable	Discussion Let's start with some shared understanding. From what you may know, who is a Person of Concern?

# RESOURCES



The definition of a Person of Concern is a person wishing to attend a Congregation or Faith Community of the Uniting Church in Australia, who has **engaged in or is suspected of harmful sexual behaviour** towards a child or adult, resulting in:

- Criminal charges or conviction relating to sexual offences.
- Placement on the register of sexual offenders.
- Recorded on the National Coordinated Criminal History Check.
- Blue/Exemption Card suspended, refused, or negative notice due to child-related activities.
- Concerns in the Congregation, Faith Community, Presbytery or Synod that the safety of others is at risk due to inappropriate sexual behaviour.



Here is a quick overview of the Person of Concern process.

- Identify the Person of Concern. Ask them to refrain from attendance at Church events (activities, services, programs etc) or on Church property.
- **Complete a Risk Assessment** to determine ability of Congregation to provide for all requirements.
- Recruit monitors.
- Safety Agreement offered.
- The Person of Concern **accepts Safety Agreement** and can attend Church events with monitor present.
- Maintain and review the Safety Agreement.

Note **Pastoral Care** is provided throughout this process, to all parties involved.

If the Person of Concern **declines the Safety Agreement**, it is withdrawn or not **offered**, they will exit the Church and Pastoral Care will cease.

Are they a Person of Concern? Why? 1. A person that has been charged with a child grooming offence.

 A volunteer with two complaints of boundary violations made against them

 A Ministry Agent who has applied for their Blue Card and not yet received it

### Discussion

For the following scenarios, identify if they are a person of concern or not. Explain why.

- 1. A person that has been charged with a child grooming offence.
- 2. A volunteer with 2 complaints of boundary violations made against them.
- 3. A Ministry Agent who has applied for their Blue Card and not yet received it.

### [Answers on next slide]



### Answer:

- 1. **Person of Concern** (as they have been charged with a child-related sexual offence).
- 2. **NOT a Person of Concern**. However continued boundary violations lead to a Performance Improvement Plan, and any behaviours reported internally and externally if required.
- 3. **NOT a Person of Concern**. They should not be involved in child-related activities until a positive Blue Card notice is received.



### Discussion

Let's pause and reflect.

If a person advises the Church that they are prohibited from applying for a Blue Card, they are considered as a Person of Concern while further information is obtained.

[Continued over page]

### What information would confirm they:

- Are a Person of Concern?
- Are NOT a Person of Concern?

### [Explanation outlined on next slide]

**Hint**: A criminal offence may lead to a person being prohibited from applying for a Blue Card.

What kind of offence would make someone be considered as a Person of Concern?



A person may be prohibited from apply for a Blue Card due to an offence.

If the offence was **NOT** due to criminal sexual behaviour toward children or adults, then the person is **NOT considered a Person of Concern.** Whilst they are unable to participate in child-related activities as a leader or volunteer, they are able to use their gifts in other mission areas of the church and are **NOT required to have a Safety Agreement** in place in order to participate in the life of the church.

If the offence **WAS** due to criminal sexual behaviour toward a child and/or adult, then the person **IS a Person of Concern.** They are **required to have a Safety Agreement** in place and should be responded to and supported using the 'Responding to a Person of Concern' Procedure.

[Optional: Serious offences which prohibit the person from obtaining a Blue Card include offences under the following categories (including but not limited to):

- Murder and other serious violent offences.
- Torture.
- Administering poison.
- Drug supply and trafficking offences.

Concern in our Church community.

- Some domestic violence offences (strangulation).
- Kidnapping for ransom.
- Acts intended to cause grievous bodily harm.]

Initial Steps and Reporting



Let's explore the initial steps and reporting requirements if we identify a Person of

The Church has the privilege and responsibility to create safe communities where:

- We are free from abuse and harm.
- Each person can express their faith and explore their relationship with God.
- We aspire for people to experience the love of God in safe and supportive environments.
- We desire to be inclusive, compassionate and respectful of all people.
- We create appropriate boundaries and are accountable to each other. As a Person of Concern is deemed a risk to the safety of others, safeguards must be placed around their participation in Church activities or events.
- We adhere to the Person of Concern Policy to keep people accountable and safe.



### Scenario

Let's explore with a scenario.

### [Optional reminder to get a copy of 'Responding to a Person of Concern']

- You are the chairperson of the church council.
- You receive a phone call from Blue Card Services advising that you are listed as the primary contact for your church with Blue Card Services.
- During the call, they advise you of the identity of an individual which is linked on their system to your church and ask you to confirm if that person still volunteers with your church.
- You confirm that they do.
- Blue Card Services advise that the person's Positive Notice (their Blue Card) has been suspended and inform you that until further notice, the individual is not permitted to engage in child-related work in either a paid or voluntary capacity.
- They provide no details as to the reason for the suspension.

### [Question on next slide]

Scenario 1 - Overview • You we the Chairperson of the Unich Connell. • Blour card sincer tell you that a Volunteer's Blour Card is supported. • Volunteer's in one permitted to engage in child related work. • They provide no details as to the reason for the suspension. What immediate actions should you take?

### For this scenario, what immediate actions should you take?

Work through Responding to a Person of Concern in groups of 2-4 to identify immediate actions.

[Hint: There may be a few actions. Consider sections 3-5]

Answer: [Square brackets here indicate section in document]

[3] Person of Concern is **stood aside from all leadership positions or roles** within the Church or Presbytery.

[3] **Considered to be a Person of Concern** until otherwise notified by Blue Card Services. They are to not attend Church.

[3] No accusations of guilt made.

[4] Pastoral Care offered before and after a Safety Agreement.

[5] Ministry Agent must **immediately notify the General Secretary and Presbytery Chair** of the presence of a POC.

[5] Mandatory internal and external reporting if not already occurred.

[5] If Person of Concern is a young or vulnerable person, their **parent or caregiver is to be notified.** 

### **Optional Additional Notes:**

- Blue card suspension notices generally provided in writing for serious offences.
- If the person declines to explain why the Blue Card was suspended (nor are we informed by Blue Card Services), advise they are considered a POC until court documents confirm reason is not a sexual offence.]



- We each have an important role in caring for each other.
- The impact of an offence is wide-reaching and long-lasting.
- It is essential to provide Pastoral Care for those in your congregation, including:
  - The survivor, especially if they are young or vulnerable.
  - The survivor's parents, family and extended family.
  - $\circ$  The Person of Concern.

....Onortunately, many people who have been convicted of committing child sexual offences wished they had sought professional support before they acted on their urges.... Jearning to manage sexual thoughts, feelings and behavior involving children can rarely be achieved in isolation......

### **Offender treatment**

The excerpt below has been taken directly from the Queensland Police Service Reportable Offender's Information Brochure, and provides an excellent summary:

"No excuse justifies adults and older teenagers sexually interacting with children. Unfortunately, many people who have been convicted of committing child sexual offences wished they had sought professional support before they acted on their urges. For many, acknowledging urges and other warning signs that may lead them to sexually interacting with a child is an important step in preventing the sexual abuse of children.

In circumstances where people take responsibility for how they think, feel and behave, they are well positioned to seek appropriate professional support to stop themselves from harming children and committing serious criminal offences. Importantly, learning to manage sexual thoughts, feelings and behaviours involving children can rarely be achieved in isolation. Seeking prosocial support and professional services has helped many people live offence-free lifestyles. Such support can be sought from mental health professionals who specialise in sexual behaviour problems (e.g., forensic psychologists, forensic psychiatrists)....

Critically, many experts agree that the successful completion of evidence-based sex offender intervention programs can help reduce the likelihood of participants interacting sexually with children, and also, to help them live healthy, productive and meaningful lives."



Offering Pastoral Care for the Person of Concern provides them with safe, transparent social support.

By strengthening social ties and increasing mutual support, it results in:

- Improved mental, emotional and spiritual health.
- Increased likelihood of adopting positive strategies and avoiding triggers for offending due to increased connectedness.
- Reduced stress and decreased likelihood of re-offending. Longitudinal research with sex offenders has shown that reducing isolation, helps reduces stress. This in turn reduces triggers for offenders that are linked to stress and may reduce the likelihood of re-offending.
- A safe environment for worship for the Person of Concern.

This Pastoral Care starts when a Person of Concern is identified and continues if a Safety Agreement is put in place. If a Safety Agreement is not accepted, is withdrawn or ends, Pastoral Care will cease.

Now we're assessing the next steps.

Assessing the Next Steps



### Discussion

- With the steps needed and commitment from individuals, why offer a Safety Agreement?
- Natural Justice implies fairness, reasonableness, equity and equality when considering decisions.

[Continued over page]

## What reasons would support the decision to offer a Safety Agreement to a Person of Concern?

Take 2 minutes and discuss with the person next to you.

### [Optional hint]

- How might the principles of natural justice relate?
- If you had been accused of a crime relating to the abuse or neglect of a child and believed that you were innocent of that crime, what steps would you want your church to take to protect you while the matter was being investigated?
- How does this reflect our approach as Christians?



### Discussion

- A **risk assessment** should be completed by a Church with a Person of Concern to assess the suitability of offering a Safety Agreement.
- It does require extra effort by the Ministry Agent and Monitors, however this provides a safe community for the Person of Concern.

### Using 'Responding to a Person of Concern':

- 1. What key things should be considered in the Risk Assessment?
- 2. Who should be consulted?

Work in groups of 2-4.

### [Hint: Follow the steps in section 8]

### Answer:

- 1. Key things:
  - o Is the Person of Concern willing to cooperate?
  - Can we keep people safe?
  - Do we have capacity to monitor a Person of Concern?
- 2. Who:
  - Person of Concern.
  - Synod legal, risk and insurance teams.
  - Church Council.
  - Ministry Agent.
  - Potential Monitors.]

### Remember to keep matters confidential as outlined in section 15.



### So far we have:

- Identified a Person of Concern.
- o Church Council completed Risk Assessment.
- Monitors recruited.

Now we will see what happens if a Safety Agreement is not offered or declined.



A Safety Agreement may **not be offered** if the risk cannot be managed appropriately. At this point in time:

• Pastoral Care will cease. [Continued over page]

- Written decision communicated outlining the decision and consequences (such as not participating in a Church event nor being allowed on Church Property).
  - Letter signed by Church Council, Presbytery and General Secretary.
- A Template and examples are available on the Hub.

Safety Agreement DECLINED • Not signed within specified period. • Terms of Safety Agreement not accepted. • Person of Concern has the right to: • Not consent to Safety Agreement. • Withdraw at any time from the process. ٠

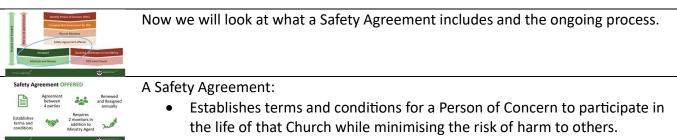
A Safety Agreement may be declined if:

- Not signed within specified period.
- Terms of Safety Agreement not accepted.

Additionally, the Person of Concern has the right to:

- Not consent to a Safety Agreement.
- Withdraw at any time from the process.

If a Safety Agreement is **declined**, similar to when a Safety Agreement is not offered, it must be specified in writing, and the person not allowed at Church events or on Church property.



- It's an agreement between 4 parties:
  - Person of Concern
  - Congregation or Faith Community
  - Presbytery, and
  - o Synod
- Requires a minimum of 2 Monitors, in addition to the Ministry Agent.
- Renewed and re-signed annually.

Once offered, accepted and completely signed off, the Person of Concern can attend Church events with a monitor and within the terms and conditions outlined.



Scenario 2 - Overview

What 3 conditions should be included?

### Scenario

- An activity leader's Blue Card was suspended due to updated police information.
- The leader did not inform the church council.
- A parent reported to the police that the leader had sexually touched their child, and the leader was charged with sexual offences.
- The parent also made a complaint to the Church.
- The Church Council offered a Safety Agreement, which the leader accepted.

### [Question and overview on next slide]

For this scenario, What 3 conditions should be included in the 'agreement and conditions' section of a Safety Agreement?

Work in groups of 2-4 using 'Responding to a Person of Concern'.

### Answer:

Some examples of conditions include:

- Identifying which activities the POC will (or will not) be able to participate in.
- Interaction with specific individuals and/or identified types (e.g. children).
- Processes for monitoring the POC in a congregational setting.
- Communication process.



#### Discussion

Let's Pause and Reflect.

Having identified who a Person of Concern is and understanding inclusions within a Safety Agreement, a Monitor is a person who supports and oversees the Person of Concern, aiding in keeping our Church safe.

### What qualities are needed in someone who is a Person of Concern monitor?

[Invite participants to share]

[Hint: section 13] [Answer on next slide]



A Person of Concern Monitor should understand and fulfil their role including:

- Possessing a mature faith and be a person of integrity
- Maintaining current Safe Church training and Blue Card.
- Providing mentorship, support and accountability for the Person of Concern.
- Willingly meets, accompanies and shadows a Person of Concern at Church events.
- Understands the impact of grooming and sexual abuse and harm and reports actual or suspected actions to the police.
- Identifies, interrupts and names behaviours that are a breach of the Safety Agreement and calmly and firmly advises the Person of Concern to leave immediately.

Maintain and Review Safety Agreements Once accepted, it is important to **maintain and review Safety Agreements**, which is the responsibility of the Church Council.



**Maintaining Safety Agreements** includes ongoing provision for and quarterly reporting of the following:

- Pastoral Care sessions (record dates).
- Events attended (when, where and monitor/s present).
- Safety Agreement breaches (breach and action taken).
- Monitor compliance of training and Blue Cards (date completed/expiry).

### The Safety Agreement is to be reviewed annually, considering:

- Ability to manage risk.
- Terms of the Safety Agreement.



**Records** regarding each Person of Concern must be provided to Presbytery and Safe Church. These include:

- Safety Agreements (current and past).
- Risk Assessment for Person of Concern [Continued over page]

<ul> <li>Safe Church Training details (including date, time, place an Card record for:</li> </ul>	d format) and Blue
<ul> <li>Ministry Agents.</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>Church Council Chair.</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>Person of Concern Monitors.</li> </ul>	
Breaches •Roport immediately to General Secretary •Complete internal adversarie room Clurch •Complete internal adversarie room Clurch •Complete internal adversarie room Clurch	
property.	
May result in a review, steration or withdrawal of Second Complete internal and external reporting if needed, such a child which was not previously known by police.	is sexual abuse of a
<ul> <li>Person of Concern not allowed at Church events or on Chu</li> </ul>	rch property.
<ul> <li>Investigation occurs by General Secretary or delegate who</li> </ul>	will determine if a
breach occurred.	
<ul> <li>May result in a review, alteration or withdrawal of Safety A</li> </ul>	greement.
Person of Concern ceases attending the Congregation or -sitely Agreement ceases.	Faith Community,
*Ministry Agent to notify General Secretary immediately the General Secretary immediately	itely.
General Secretary to communicate with: • Ministry Agent of new conception (Untiting Church) • Denominational head (not Uniting Church)	
If attending a new Church, the General Secretary will commun	icate with:
<ul> <li>The Ministry Agent of the new congregation if within the L</li> </ul>	Initing Church.
<ul> <li>The denominational head if not within the Uniting Church.</li> </ul>	
QUIZ	
Safe Church – Person of Concern Let's have a look at a few questions related to this module.	
Cli Aprovide Control of Control o	lue to sexual offences
against an adult starts to attend your Church. Are they a Perso	
A. Yes.	
rmand to the second B. No.	
01. A pross who has criminal drages against them due to simular offerers against a dust tasts to attend your Church. Are they a Person of Concent?	
A: Yes - Due to the criminal charges being sexual in nature, this	s meets the definition
of a Person of Concern.	
22. Should the processors of a Darrow of Concern he know	own by the entire
Congregation of a Person of Concern be known by the entropy of the presence of a Person of Concern be known by the entropy of the presence of a Person of Concern be known by the congregation of Faith Community?	own by the entire
Congregation of Particle Community: Congregation of Particle Community: Congregation of Particle Community: A. Yes – for everyone's safety.	
B. No – some people may need to be informed due to their re	ala aras a montor
C. No – only the Church Council and Ministry Agent should kr	
C. NO – Only the Charch Council and Ministry Agent should ki	10 w.
02: Stould the pressive of a Person of Concern bic Novem by the entity Conception of rath Community? Answer:	
B: No – some people may need to be informed due to their rol	e, or as a mentor.
This will include the Church Council, Ministry Agent, Person of	
may include specific ministry coordinators (such as the youth o	
	-
33. When would a Safety Agreement be declined, with a Safety Agreement be declined, with	hdrawn or not
Divert's Councel not able to manage the mix involved.     Discount of Councer not a greened to target and the approximate.     Diversitating Agreement to target participations.     Offered?	
A. Church Council not able to manage the risk involved.	
B. Person of Concern not agreeing to Terms of Safety Agreem	ent.
C. Annual Safety Agreement not signed within specified peric	od.

Q3: When would a Safety Agreement be declined, withdrawn or not offered?	Answer:
Church Council not able to manage the risk involved. Person of Concern not agreeing to Terms of Safety Agreement. Annual Safety Agreement not signed within specified period.	D: All of the above.
All of the above.	
ren e tord j	
Q4: Which is <u>X07</u> a role requirement of a Person of Concern Monitor?	Question 4: Which is NOT a role requirement of a Person of Concern Monitor?
Accompanies a resonant Concern architect events previously     agreed upon.     Reports actual or suspected abuse or harm to the police.     Be available for all dwords events.	A. Accompanies a Person of Concern at Church events previously agreed upon.
<ul> <li>Provides mentorship, support and accountability for Person of Concern.</li> </ul>	B. Reports actual or suspected abuse or harm to the police.
rensterel, 🤯 bazanere	C. Be available for all church events.
	D. Provides mentorship, support and accountability for Person of Concern.
$\mathbf{Q4}$ : Which is $\underline{\textit{MOT}}$ a role requirement of a Person of Concern	
Monitor? Accompanies a Person of Concern at Church events previously agreed upon.	Answer: C: Be available for all church events.
Reports a data for sugge ded abuse or harm to the police.     Be available for all dwords events.     Provides memorizing, support and accountability for Person of Concern.	
presented	Monitors and the Person of Concern must come to an agreement of which events
	will be attended by respective monitors. This ensures boundaries can be in place for
	the monitors and enables the Person of Concern to safely engage with the Church
	community.
Q5: How often is a Safety Agreement up for renewa I?	Question E. How often is a Safety Agreement up for renowal?
Quarterly: Exery 6 months.	<b>Question 5:</b> How often is a Safety Agreement up for renewal? A. Quarterly.
Annually. Biery 2 years.	<ul><li>A. Quarterly.</li><li>B. Every 6 months.</li></ul>
perstal	C. Annually.
	D. Every 2 years.
Q5: How often is a Safety Agreement up for renewal?	Answer:
Cuarterly. Exery 6 months. Annually. Exery 2 years.	C: Annually.
	Safety Agreements should be re-signed each year. They may need to be reviewed
renetvelj 💓 tatalitet	within that time if pressing issues arise. It is reporting Pastoral Care sessions, events
	attended and any breaches that occurred which needs to occur quarterly.
Q6: A Person of Concern with a Safety Agreement leaves one Congregation to attend another Congregation. Should the Church	Question 6: A Person of Concern with a Safety Agreement leaves one Congregation
Council inform the new congregation?	to attend another Congregation. Should the Church Council inform the new
<ul> <li>No – the Church Council has no responsibility after a POC leaves.</li> <li>No – the General Secretary should be informed, and they will inform the new Congregation.</li> </ul>	congregation?
renewal) 💓 tatalaan	A. Yes – it's the Church Council's responsibility.
	B. No – the Church Council has no responsibility after a POC leaves.
	C. No – the General Secretary should be informed, and they will inform the new
Q6: A Person of Concern with a Safety Agreement leaves one	
Congregation to attend another Congregation. Should the Church Council Inform the new congregation?	Answer: C: No – the General Secretary should be informed, and they will inform the new
<ul> <li>No - the Church Council a responsibility.</li> <li>No - the Church Council has no responsibility after a PDC leaves.</li> <li>No - the General Secretary should be informed, and they will inform the new Corgregation.</li> </ul>	C. NO – the General Secretary should be informed, and they will inform the new
periodical	
Ministry Agents	To aid with record keeping, all Ministry Agents need to:
Confirm you completed the module:	<ul> <li>Scan the QR code.</li> </ul>
Complete the form.	<ul> <li>Complete the form.</li> </ul>
prese algoride)	This will be accessible by your Presbytery to prove you have completed this
	module.
Thankyou!	•
Resources on The Hub: hub.ucaqld.com.au safechurch@ucaqld.com.au	<ul> <li>Safe Church resources can be found on The Hub.</li> </ul>
(07) 3377 9833	
paratiral	