



The Uniting Church in Australia  
QUEENSLAND SYNOD

# **SAFEMINISTRY WHS**

## Resource for Congregations

**Work Health and Safety**



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## Purpose and Scope

*"The Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod, is committed to providing safe places where people are cared for, nurtured and sustained. We commit ourselves to the care, protection and safety of all people relating to the Uniting Church or our agencies. For us, being compliant is more than just following the law; it is about doing what God expects of us in terms of caring for others"*

This includes, but not exclusively: workers (including contractors and volunteers), church members, students, clients, visitors and members of the public.

This Work Health Safety (WHS) Resource material has been developed to assist the Presbyteries and Congregations implement processes to effectively and practically manage health and safety at their premises and during the activities they undertake in their mission work. The tools can be amended to suit the congregation and are not in themselves mandatory.

The resources do consider the concept of risk management which is an underlying theme of the Queensland WHS legislation. The Codes of Practice have been consistently referenced in the document as they are enforceable, however they also provide practical information to assist in the management of risks.

Additional and more detailed safety management information is available in the Qld Synod Office Safety Management System (under development) or via email to [Health.Safety@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:Health.Safety@ucaqld.com.au)

## Work Health and Safety (WHS) Planning

Planning is essential to ensure there is effective safety management. A good safety management system has clear goals and describes actions on how to achieve them. These goals are often focused around health and safety improvements which ensure that safety is a focus for workplaces.

The WHS Plan template is provided to assist the Congregations to track their goals towards meeting safety needs. Note: It is also acceptable to include safety goals in the overall Congregation Business Plan, e.g. conduct an inspection of all potential slip/ trip hazards; find alternative products where possible for hazardous chemicals; implement safe ladder use.

The WHS Activity Calendar provides a user-friendly resource to quickly identify and schedule your WHS specific activities e.g. annual evacuation training, safety switch tests etc, which can be readily displayed.

### Actions to take:

- Display Synod Wide WHS Policy Statement
- Include Synod Wide WHS Policy Statement in Worker and Volunteer inductions
- Utilize WHS Plan and Activities Calendar -update annually and as required, table at Church Council Meetings (*optional however recommended*)
- Have WHS as a Routine Agenda item at meetings e.g. Church Council, Presbytery Standing Committee etc.



[Synod Wide WHS Policy Statement](#)

WHS Activities Calendar Template – link

WHS Plan Template –link



## Work Health and Safety (WHS) Roles and Responsibilities

*(Please see the Definitions Table at the end of this document)*

External legal advice has been sought to clarify and confirm the responsibilities of the various positions held within our church structure and in accordance with the Qld Work Health and Safety Legislation (the Act<sup>1</sup>). The terms PCBU and Officer are of significant importance. However, all persons have a duty of reasonable care for themselves and others

### What is a PCBU?

Essentially a PCBU (Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking) has a duty to ensure, **so far as reasonably practicable**, the health and safety of workers and others at the workplace, is not adversely affected by the way in which the organisation conducts its activities; This is the PCBU's primary duty of care

An Officer has the duty of Due Diligence and is required to be able to demonstrate that reasonable steps have been taken in the management of WHS

A "Volunteer Association" <sup>2</sup> is not a PCBU, however a duty of reasonable care will still apply

In relation to the Presbyteries and Congregations the following applies:

#### 1. Presbytery Standing Committee (PSC)

As the main governing council of the Presbytery, the PSC is required to meet the requirements as a PCBU and also an "Officer" under the Act

The following guidance will assist those responsibilities to be met:

- Have WHS as a Standing Agenda item at all Committee meetings
- Acquire and keep up to date knowledge of safety matters
- Understand the nature of the church operations and the general hazards and risks involved
- Ensure there are appropriate resources and processes to eliminate or minimise safety risks in the work environments and any plant/equipment
- Ensure there are processes for receiving, reviewing and responding to information about incidents, hazards and risks
- To ensure there are processes for congregations to comply with their duties, such as:
  - Consultation with workers (includes volunteers)
  - Provision of training and instruction
  - Reporting of notifiable incidents to the Regulator
- Adhere to responsibilities as a worker as listed below

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<sup>1</sup> [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)

<sup>2</sup> Where a congregation has an employee, the Church Council would be considered having a due diligence duty. However, if the congregation is only made up of only volunteers and has no paid employees, they would be considered a Volunteers Association. Under the WHS Act, a volunteer association does not conduct a business or undertaking for the purposes of the WHS Act, therefore the duty would be one of reasonable care.



### 2. Church Council

The church council is the body established in each congregation to have oversight of its total life and mission (Section 3 Constitution<sup>3</sup>). This would include ensuring the requirements as a PCBU and as an Officer are met under the Act

*Regulation 4.4.1 of the Uniting Church in Australia Regulations states; “subject to the regulations, the by-laws of the Synod and the rules of presbytery, **the church council** shall be responsible for the management and administration of all property of the church acquired or held for the use of the congregation, and without limiting the generality of the foregoing shall;*

- a. Be responsible for the care and maintenance of the property;
- b. Do such other things as are necessary or appropriate for the use and management of all property acquired or held for the congregation”

The following guidance will assist those responsibilities to be met:

- Have WHS as a Standing Agenda item at all Committee meetings
- Ensure roles, responsibilities are clearly defined and understood
- Assist in the development, implementation and reviews of the WHS Plan/WHS Activities Calendar
- Review Incidents, hazards reported to ensure all appropriate action has been taken manage/prevent
- Monitor the Risk Register on a regular basis and amend as required
- Ensure there are processes for complying with WHS Legislation, such as:
  - Effective consultation directly with relevant parties, including workers and contractors
  - Provision of training and instruction
  - Reporting of notifiable incidents
  - Conduct of emergency drills, emergency plan/procedure maintenance
  - Maintenance schedules /plans are in place to maintain a safe environment
- Acquire and maintain up to date knowledge of safety matters
- Ensure adequate resources are provided (financial, human, logistical) to conduct activities in a controlled and safe manner
- Adhere to responsibilities as a worker as listed below

### 3. Congregations and their Minister

A congregation is required to meet the requirements as a PCBU (Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking). The Minister of that congregation is considered to be an Officer of the PCBU

The following guidance will assist those responsibilities to be met:

- Day to day management of work health and safety issues within their area of responsibility
- Have WHS as a Standing Agenda item at all meetings
- Acquire and keep up to date knowledge of safety matters
- Understand the nature of the church operations and the general hazards and risks involved
- Ensure there are appropriate resources and processes to eliminate or minimise safety risks in the work environments and any plant/equipment
- Ensure there are processes for receiving, reviewing and responding to information about incidents, hazards and risks

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<sup>3</sup> [Section 3 Constitution](#)



- To ensure there are processes for complying with their duties, such as:
  - Consultation with workers (includes volunteers)
  - Provision of training, instruction and supervision
  - Reporting of notifiable incidents to the Regulator
  - Verification of actions taken and implemented for safety
- Adhere to responsibilities as a worker as listed below

#### 4. Workers and Volunteers

Essentially workers including volunteers, contractors and visitors are required to take reasonable care for their and others safety and thus this includes to:

- Take responsibility for personal safety and those around them
- Follow the Congregation's WHS Procedures, Processes and Instructions
- Only perform tasks or activities if you are licenced, trained, competent, physically and psychologically able to do
- Challenge unsafe behaviour, bullying, harassment or discrimination
- Actively participate in discussions, emergency drills and training sessions
- Report hazards, incidents and near misses



[Work Health and Safety Act Qld 2011](#)

[Work Health and Safety Regulations Qld 2011](#)

[Work health and safety consultation, cooperation and coordination Code of Practice 2011](#)

[Uniting Church in Australia Constitution and Regulations 2018](#)

[Essential Guide to Work Health and Safety for Volunteers -Safe Work Australia](#)

[Health and Safety Duty of an Officer Guide.pdf -Safe Work Australia](#)

[Guidance for officers in exercising due diligence.pdf- Australian Government Comcare](#)

### **Work Health and Safety (WHS) Risk Management**

The concept of risk management is a fundamental requirement of the WHS legislation, which strongly advises to eliminate a risk where possible and certainly reduce the risk to an acceptable level (Refer to the Hierarchy of Controls Diagram below)

WHS risk is referred to in the terms of hazard, risk assessment and control measures.

A **hazard** is an object or situation that can arise from the physical work environment and/or specific work practices or procedures, where there is potential for harm, loss or damage to people, plant, property or the environment. Ask- What could cause the harm? what could go wrong?

**Risk** is a measure of the likelihood of some adverse event occurring and the likely consequences of that event, e.g. injury, illness, and/or damage to plant, property or the environment.

**Control Measure** is any action or activity that is implemented in order to eliminate or reduce the potential for harm caused by exposure to a workplace hazard.



## 1. Identifying and Managing Risk

WHS Risk management then, is proactively identifying hazards which have a foreseeable potential to cause harm and managing the possibility that something will happen.

- Identify reasonably foreseeable hazards that could give rise to the risk
- Eliminate the risk so far as is reasonably practicable
- If it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate the risk – minimise the risk so far as is reasonably practicable by implementing control measures in accordance with the hierarchy of control
- Maintain the implemented control measure so that it remains effective
- Review, and if necessary revise, risk control measures to maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, a work environment that is without risks to health and safety

Effective communication and consultation processes are essential to effectively managing risk.

This includes sharing and communicating information on hazards and appropriate risk controls

- through such processes as:
- Hazard and incident/near miss reporting and investigation
- Communication of incidents and corrective actions taken, and monitoring how effective those actions were
- Involvement of personnel in decisions on equipment purchases, workplace design and risk controls
- Develop and / or share Safety Alerts

## 2. Common WHS Risks in a Church

The Common WHS Risks in a Church environment includes:

Fire, security, activities (e.g. working bees, church services, play groups, fetes), traffic, electrical, chemical, slips, trips and falls, manual handling items, managing volunteers and contractors.

- **STOP** and consider the work involved
- **LOOK** for and identify the hazards
- **ASSESS** the risks
- **MANAGE** - develop and implement controls

THIS DOCUMENT IS UNCONTROLLED WHEN PRINTED.



## SAFEMINISTRY WHS Resource for Congregations

The WHS Risk Matrix (below) provides a **guide** to assist in objectively assessing the risk potential and subsequent Control Measures to be put in place to adequately manage the risk.

It is suggested that the use of this risk matrix is undertaken by at least 2 persons and the resultant risk ratings are based on the **current control measures you have put in place.**

### 3. Risk Rating Matrix (For Safety and Environment)

1<sup>st</sup> What is the most probable consequence of the unwanted event, incident or circumstance occurring?

2<sup>nd</sup> What is the realistic likelihood of the unwanted event, incident or circumstance occurring?

3<sup>rd</sup> Use the Matrix below to see where the criteria from the Consequence and the Likelihood tables intersect

**Risk Rating Matrix**

Consequence	1.Negligible	2.Minor	3.Moderate	4.Major	5.Severe
<b>Work, Health, Safety &amp; Environment (WHSE)</b>	Limited harm First aid treatment Return to pre-existing condition within 24 hours Negligible environmental impact	Injury or illness No lost time Minor medical treatment Return to pre-existing condition within 1 week Minor localised environmental impact	Serious compensable injury, Extended time off >7 days Return to pre-existing condition within 1 month Material environmental impact	Injuries requiring hospitalisation Permanent impairment due to injury Return to pre-existing condition within 3 months Serious environmental impact	Fatality or numerous serious injuries Unable to return to pre-existing condition Long-term environmental harm

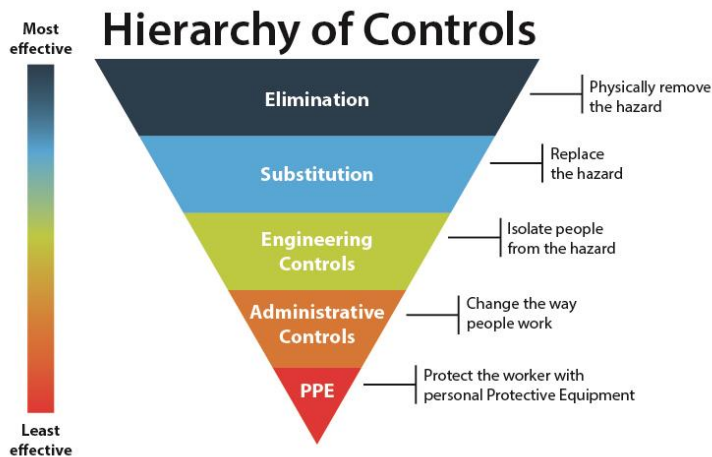
← Consequence →

Likelihood	Probability	Description	Frequency	1.Negligible	2.Minor	3.Moderate	4.Major	5.Severe
<b>Frequent</b>	>90%	Is expected to occur – almost inevitable	>10 times per year	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme	Extreme
<b>Likely</b>	70 – 90%	Will probably occur in most circumstance – not surprised if it happens	More than once in 12 months	Medium	Medium	High	High	Extreme
<b>Possible</b>	30 – 70%	Might occur at some time	Once in more than 3 years	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
<b>Unlikely</b>	5 – 30%	Could occur at some time – surprised if it happens	Once in 5 years	Low	Low	Low	Medium	High
<b>Rare</b>	<5%	Highly unexpected – considered exceptional circumstance	Once in >5 years	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium





Depending on the risk assessment you may need to implement additional controls, which could be a combination from the Hierarchy of Controls.



#### 4. Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS)

A SWMS

- Is a useful tool to use for undertaking activities and work that may carry significant risk. It should reflect the task at hand and include a logical work activity sequence, along with potential hazards associated with each job step outlined and the control measures to be put in place to control the risks identified.
- Is a legislative requirement that a written Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) is produced for work which is determined to be High Risk Construction Work under the WHS Regulations e.g. working at heights where there is a risk of falling more than two metres. It is important for a Safe Work Method Statement to be written in a way that can be easily understood, as it forms part of induction materials that workers must read and understand prior to commencing that work.

##### Actions to Take:

- Identify actual and potential hazards at your location
- Develop a WHS Risk Register or include WHS Risks as part of your overall Risk Register
- Undertake a WHS Risk Assessment to assist in identifying the appropriate ways to control and manage the risks
- Actively engage others to report hazards
- Table the WHS Risk Register at Church Council Meetings and review regularly



WHS Risk Register Template [-link](#)

Hazard Report Form [-link](#)

Risk Assessment Form & Risk Matrix [-link](#)

Safe Work Method Statement Template [-link](#)



[How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks Code of Practice 2011](#)



## Induction, Training and Competency

The provision of training and information about our work places and processes is required for all persons i.e. workers (contractors, volunteers and visitors).

A visitor is required to sign in/out on the register and be accompanied during their visit by a congregation representative. The object is to advise them of any specific hazards during their visit and most importantly the emergency management arrangements.

Note# this does not apply to persons attending a church service/activity.

All workers, including the volunteers, are to complete the congregation induction. This provides the opportunity to familiarize the person with the location's specific hazard and controls, the relevant work practices, in addition to assisting the identification of any training they may require.

It is recommended the induction for workers is completed/refreshed on an annual basis.

When undertaking training about a work process, using an item of machinery etc., it is recommended to record the person's attending on a Training Attendance Record Form. This also provides positive evidence in the event of an incident or inspection/audit.

The Training Register is a useful tool to capture the training and licences / certificates that the workers have completed and can be used to track outstanding training requirements.

### Actions to take:

- Complete induction training for all worker
- Establish a Sign in/out Register (Visitors, Contractors, Volunteers) -insert link
- Maintain a Training Register for Workers



Induction Checklist (Employees and Volunteers)-Insert link  
Sign in/out Register (Contractors, Volunteers, Visitors) -insert link  
Training Needs Analysis Form- insert link  
Training Register Form – Insert Link  
Training Attendance Record Form – insert link

## Contractor Management

Engaging contractors does not remove the Congregation from its work, health and safety obligations. Under the WHS Legislation the same duty of care to contractors applies to ensure the activities of the Congregation or the Contractor do not affect any parties' health and safety.

A contractor is deemed to be a "worker" under the Queensland WHS legislation is any person who provides a service under a contractual agreement for profit or gain whether the contract with the congregation is written or verbal. This includes the workers of the contractors and any subcontractors and their workers.

Contractors must also be made aware of the asbestos register at the beginning of any works to be conducted on Parish property.

The contractor induction process is recommended to be performed annually, thus still have the contractor sign in/out with each subsequent visit, as conditions may have changed in that time.

### Actions to Take:

- Induct the contractor to the work place and record – include the Asbestos Register where it exists
- Obtain copies of the contractor current insurance policies annually and record (Public Safety, Workers Compensation)
- Obtain copies of any relevant licences and certificates e.g. electrical contractor /electrical work licence
- Obtain copies of any Safe Work Method Statements where required
- Have the contractor sign in/out on the Sign in/out Register



- Maintain a list of approved contractors



Contractor Induction Checklist – [link](#)

Approved Contractor Register – [link](#)

Sign on/off Register (Contractors, Volunteers, Visitors) – [link](#)



[WHS Act 2011](#)

[WHS Regulation 2011](#)

## Near Miss and Incident Reporting and Investigation

### 1. Incident Management - General

**Incident** can be defined as “an event that has led to or could have led to an injury, illness or damage. Incidents include near misses, injuries, property damage, and environmental events.”

It is required to report incidents occurring to people (workers, volunteers, contractors or public members) and our property/assets.

The Incident Reporting Process Chart (below) provides a ready reference to follow for reporting incidents/ near misses occurring at church property and/or associated church activities.

Investigating incidents is important so that we can identify all actions required to prevent recurrence of such events. Where possible aim to identify all factors contributing to a reported incident, irrespective of the outcome. This information will assist you to implement rectification and /or improvements that may be required to maintain a safe environment for all parties.

Maintaining the incident register as a working document allows the congregation to track the progress of various incidents and provide summary information to the presbytery and/or the Qld Synod Office. It is expected that this document be reviewed as part of church council meeting agendas.

### 2. Notifiable Incidents – Mandatory Reporting to the Regulator

The Queensland WHS and Electrical legislation sets out what type of incidents are notifiable to Worksafe Queensland (includes Electrical Safety Office), **immediately** after becoming aware that a notifiable incident has occurred. These include death, serious injury or serious illness, dangerous incident arising out of the conduct of the business or undertaking at the workplace and may relate to any person – employee, contractor, member of the public.

All electrical shocks in workplaces must be reported under Queensland laws. If in any doubt, report the incident anyway and the Electrical Safety Office will carry out an assessment.

Reportable electrical incidents are referred to as *dangerous incidents* under work health and safety laws and *serious electrical incidents* under electrical safety laws.

A *serious electrical incident* involves an electrical fatality or where a person receives a shock or injury from electricity and needs to be treated by a doctor. Typically, this is where a person receives an electric shock and requires a skin graft for a burn.

A *dangerous incident* involves workers being exposed to serious risks from immediate or imminent exposure to electric shock. A common example of this is where a worker receives an electrical shock while unplugging electrical equipment and removing a plug from a socket.

Refer to the link in the tools section below for a description of the types of notifiable incidents.

It is recommended that all notifiable incidents be advised to the Qld Synod WHS **immediately**, who can assist with the Regulator notification and local incident management requirements.

**Note#** The incident Report must be kept for at least **5 years** from the date of notification.



**Worksafe Incident Notification Details are:**

- Phone on [1300 362 128](tel:1300362128)
- Complete and submit the [online incident notification form](#)
- Fax the completed [Incident Notification form](#) to facsimile number [\(07\) 3874 7700](tel:0738747700)
- Email the completed [Incident Notification form](#) to [whsq.aaa@oir.qld.gov.au](mailto:whsq.aaa@oir.qld.gov.au).



- Incident Reporting Flowchart [-link](#)
- Incident / Near Miss Report Form -Part 1 [-link](#)
- Incident /Near Miss Investigation Report Form -Part 2 [- link](#)
- Incident Register [-link](#)
- Notifiable Incidents Definitions [-link](#)
- [Notifiable Incident Electronic Reporting Portal to Worksafe](#)

**3. Illness and Injury Management (Employees, Volunteers, Public)**

Workers who sustain a workplace injury/illness may be eligible for workers compensation in Queensland. The legislation has a "no-fault" scheme for compensating workers where the injury is 'a personal injury arising out of, or in the course of, employment if the employment is a significant contributing factor to the injury.

Injuries can also take place if you are travelling for work or visiting other workplaces or sites for the purposes of your job. Employees may be covered for injuries sustained while working from home and on a recess break. Each case is considered on individual facts at the time by the Insurer, WorkCover Qld.

Examples of different types of injuries covered:

- Physical injuries—such as lacerations, fractures, burns, industrial deafness
- Psychiatric or psychological disorders — such as anxiety or depression
- Diseases—such as asbestosis or Q-fever
- Aggravation of a pre-existing condition
- Death from an injury or disease.

Compensation can be claimed by the worker if the injury or illness results in:

- Time off work
- Expenses for medical, hospital and rehabilitation services

It is important that any persons that may be required to lodge a Workers' Compensation Claim are notified to the **Qld Synod Work Health and Safety Manager** within 24 hours via Phone 07 3377 9946 / 0439 136 171 or email [christine.przibilla@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:christine.przibilla@ucaqld.com.au)

Initial enquiries in relation to an employee's claim can be made to QLD Synod Office WHS Manager or Qld Synod Group Insurance Services.

Most Congregations are covered by the Qld Synod Accident Insurance Policy (WorkCover Qld) as Qld Synod Office Payroll manages their pay, however if a Congregation separately pays their workers, then they are required to hold their own Accident Insurance Policy for their workers with WorkCover Qld.

**Voluntary Workers** who are injured in the course of their work at our premises or during an offsite activity, are covered for Personal Accident Insurance which is administered by **Aon Risk Solutions** on behalf of the UC Qld Synod. **Aon** can be contacted on **Phone 07 3223 7404** or email [christine.parker@aon.com](mailto:christine.parker@aon.com)

**Public Liability Claims** are managed by **Qld Synod Group Insurance**, **Phone 07 3377 9725** or email [insurance@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:insurance@ucaqld.com.au)



All reasonable steps should be taken following an accident or loss to protect the property or person from any further damage or injury.

Any incident should be **immediately** reported to Qld Synod Group Insurance where co-ordination and management of all such claims for the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod are handled.

Any loss by theft and/or wilful or malicious damage should be immediately advised to the nearest Police station.

#### **Rehabilitation – (Return to Work/Recover at Work)**

Rehabilitation is a legislative requirement and a strategy to maximise an individual's potential for return to their pre-injury physical, psychological, educational and vocational level. Emphasis is placed on returning the worker to safe, suitable work at the earliest possible time so that valuable work skills are not lost, minimising the human and financial costs of work injury.

#### **Actions to Take:**

Include Workers' Compensation (WC) and Rehabilitation topic in Congregation's training/induction program

Ensure you have an Accident Insurance Policy (WorkCover Qld), where the Congregation directly pays their workers

- Adhere to prompt incident reporting requirements for all incident types, including the completion of the Incident Report Form: phone Qld Synod WHS for assistance
- Ensure the injured worker obtains a Workers Compensation Medical Certificate from their medical practitioner – this is required to lodge an application with WorkCover Queensland. Forward this to Gallagher Bassett Insurance ASAP
- Ensure workers obtain medical clearance certification, where considered appropriate, for workers who may have incurred a non-work-related injury/illness
- Maintain strict confidentiality in relation to all medical information



[Workers' Compensation Application Form](#)

[Workers' Compensation Employer Report Form](#)

[Qld Synod Workplace Rehabilitation and Return to Work Policy, Procedures and Forms](#)

[Qld Synod Insurance and Claims Manual for Presbyteries and Congregations](#)



[Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003](#)

[Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Regulation 2014](#)

## Property and Facilities Management

### 1. Annual and Routine Inspections

The Uniting Church in Australia Regulations require a Presbytery Property Committee to regularly inspect or arrange for the regular inspection of properties for which the presbytery and church councils are responsible, and to ensure that such properties are maintained and in a safe condition to ensure the health, safety and well-being of all people associated with the church.

The church council is responsible for the management and administration of all congregational property, including the care and maintenance and other things as are necessary or appropriate for its use and management.



## SAFEMINISTRY WHS Resource for Congregations

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A general annual inspection as a minimum is required and it is recommended to consult workers, congregation members and/or volunteers in the inspection process(s). There are other items which require more frequent inspections e.g. Fire Fighting Equipment, as is detailed in the relevant topics below.

### Actions to Take:

- Complete Annual Inspection Checklist, maintain original on file, send a copy to the Presbytery Office
- Action or schedule items to action identified in the inspection process(s)



Annual Inspection Checklist-[Link](#)



[Managing the work environment and facilities Code of Practice 2011](#)

## 2. Plant and Equipment Management

Plant includes all machinery, equipment and tools - both stationary and mobile. WHS hazards and risk may occur due to lack of maintenance, experience of the operator, how or where it is used. Some common examples of these hazards and risks are using winch operated outdoor sign, gas cylinders, ladders, mowers, trimmers, brush cutters, playground equipment, electrical equipment.

Some items of Plant require Registration with the Regulator e.g. lifts – refer to **Appendix A** in the Plant Code of Practice.

Certain types of plant, such as forklifts, require the operator to have a high-risk work licence before they can operate the plant. **Schedule 3** of the WHS Regulation sets out the classes of high-risk work licences and the types of plant involved. This may be applicable to check when engaging contractors.

When Hot Work is undertaken where flammable or combustible chemicals or other materials are present that creates a significant risk of fire or explosion e.g. grinding, welding, brazing, oxy cutting, it is recommended to put in place the Hot Work Permit System to assist in managing the risks.

Whenever equipment is found to be faulty, inoperable or unsafe and the operation or use of that equipment would cause further damage or create hazards, then the equipment is to be tagged Out of Service.

Out of Service Tags are to be securely fastened in a designated isolation point or a prominent position on the equipment.

An Out of Service / Isolation Tag are ONLY to be removed from a piece of equipment by the competent person affecting repairs/replacement, when that person is satisfied that the equipment is in a fit for use and safe condition.



Source Safe Work Australia, Electrical safety code of practice 2013 - Managing electrical risks in the workplace

#### Actions to Take:

- Identify and register any items of Registrable Plant to the Regulator – Worksafe Qld
- Inspect and maintain plant and machinery as per manufacturer instructions and visually inspect/ complete pre-start check, before each use e.g. guards
- Display/provide Safe Operating Procedures E.g. Ride on Mower
- Ensure required Personal Protective Equipment is provided to the operator of the machinery
- Document training provided to operators of machinery
- Be aware of where any Emergency Stop Buttons exist and include in local induction practices
- Maintain a maintenance schedule to assist the processes of maintaining plant and equipment in a safe condition
- Obtain operating manuals and confirm compliance with Australian Standards for new plant and equipment
- Identify unsafe or faulty equipment by use of an Out of Service Tag or similar and remove from service



Maintenance Schedule -[link](#)  
Hot Work Permit -[link](#)  
Registrable Plant Requirements - Appendix A in Code of Practice  
Ride on Mower Safe Operating Procedure -[link](#)  
Line Trimmer Safe Operating Procedure -[link](#)  
Playground Equipment Checklist - [link](#)  
[Kidsafe Queensland Resources](#)



[Managing risks of plant in the workplace Code of Practice 2013](#)  
Registrable Plant – refer to **Appendix A** in Code of Practice



### 3. Electrical Safety and Isolation of Energy Sources

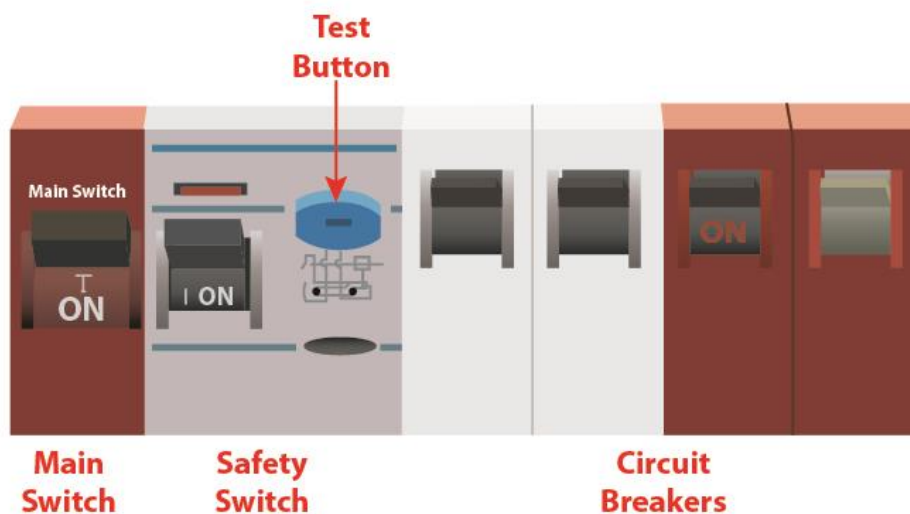
Electricity is one of the primary forms of energy. Electricity can shock, burn, damage nerves and internal organs or kill people. Electricity can also result in fire and explosion and cause serious damage to property.

#### 3.1. Safety Switches and Circuit Breakers

**Safety Switches** monitor the flow of electricity through a circuit and turn off the power in a fraction of a second if a leakage of current is detected. Safety switches provide **personal** protection against electric shock.

**Note#** A safety switch only protects you if it's on that circuit.

**Circuit breakers** protect an electrical circuit by quickly cutting power when there is a high current fault or overload that may cause a hazard.



#### 3.2. Energy Systems

Energy Systems include:

- Electricity (Mains, solar feed, generator or inverter)
- Mechanical (moving or rotating machinery)
- Pressure (Water, gas, compressed air, hydraulic oil)
- Radiation (Telecommunications Towers) and non -ionising radiation (microwaves)

All equipment or machinery to be worked on for maintenance or repairs must be tested and proven to be de-energised prior to that work commencing. There may be more than one energy source supplied to that equipment.

Before work commences on isolated equipment, a Personal Danger Tag and/or Personal Danger Lock shall be affixed to the equipment to maintain a positive isolation.





**Danger tagged circuit breaker locking off devices**



Source: Safe Work Australia, Electrical safety code of practice 2013 - Managing electrical risks in the workplace


**3.3. Powerline Safety**

Although the following are the minimum safe distances, the best way to stay electrically safe is to maintain the greatest possible distance from powerlines.

Power line voltage (1 kV = 1000 volts)	Examples	Exclusion zone*
Up to 132 kV	Low voltage and high voltage powerlines usually on poles	3 metres
Between 132 kV and 330 kV	High voltage powerlines usually on poles and towers	6 metres
Over 330 kV	High voltage powerlines usually on towers	8 metres

\*Note: The table above does not fully detail exclusion zone dimensions and other requirements. For further information refer to Part 5 of the [Electrical Safety Regulation 2013](#) and the [Electrical safety code of practice 2010 - Working near overhead and underground electric lines](#) (PDF, 231.59 KB).

**Recommended practices include:**

- Engage only licenced electrical workers to undertake electrical work or electrical equipment modifications
- Extension cords – avoid or minimize their use where possible, ensure they carry the Regulatory Compliance Mark (RCM) , protect from damage and keep away from water and walkways
- Use only power boards that are surge protected, carry the RCM and preferably individually switched
- Decorations—Be sure holiday decorations, lighting, and displays do not cause fire hazards when in use or in storage
- Be aware of underground and overhead electrical lines
- Immediately isolate, remove from service and lock out/tag out unsafe/faulty electrical equipment
- Electrical equipment which is loaned/hired out (even if monies are not exchanged) must be inspected, tested and tagged by a competent person every 6 months: and record a visual inspection of the equipment prior to loan/hire
  - New electrical equipment should hold a durable tag stating the date it was put into service and if there is not an RCD installed then that piece of equipment should also be tested and tagged by a competent person
- In high-risk areas (e.g. areas used by children), prevent shocks that may occur through contact with partially disconnected plugs. This can be achieved by using plugs with insulated pins or recessed type power points or by having the power points installed out of reach
- Before a person enters a ceiling space – turn off all the main power switches at the switchboard

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#### Actions to take

- Test the Residual Current Devices (RCD) - do a Push Button Test by user **every 6 monthly** and record: Operating Time and Current Test to be done **annually** by a licenced electrician or Qualified Test and Tag Technician and recorded
- Note: Portable Residual Current Devices to be tested before **every use** by performing the Push Button Test and be tested and tagged **annually**
- Engage a suitably qualified person (Test and Tag Technician) to annually test and tag electrical equipment when there is NO RCD / Safety Switch present on the circuitry/ switch board
- Install outlet covers in areas accessed by children
- Prohibit the use of double adaptors and daisy chaining power boards
- Immediately report any minor shocks or “tingles” from electrical equipment or electrical infrastructure (wiring, switches or plugs) to a Church Representative and also advise WHS Qld Synod Office. Immediately remove that equipment from service and tag out of service



Electrical Equipment Register (Note: May be provided by your Electrical Worker) – [link](#)

Switch Test Record Register – [Link](#)

[Safety Switch Brochure – Electrical Safety Office](#)



[Electrical safety code of practice 2013 - Managing electrical risk in the workplace](#)

[Electrical safety code of practice 2010 - Working near overhead and underground electric lines](#)

[Electrical Safety Act 2002](#)

[Electrical Safety Regulation 2013](#)

#### 4. Fall Prevention and Working at Heights

Falls from heights are a significant church issue as a fall can easily result in death. Even a fall from 2 metres can result in death or serious injury if there is an object underneath or if the falling person lands awkwardly.

The working height limit is 2 metres. Any work above these height limits must be performed using fall prevention controls. Fall prevention controls should be implemented in order of the hierarchy of controls, controls such as scaffolding and work platforms are the safest, followed by the use of barriers and finally fall arrest systems are required if none of the above controls can be implemented.

**Note#** Falls can also occur at the ground level e.g. Slip/trip, or into unprotected holes/pits, using access/exits.

Working at heights also needs to consider the potential for objects to fall from height onto persons or property below.

##### 4.1. Ladder Safety

Ladders are primarily a means of access and egress. Falls can take place when people are working from ladders due to incorrect work practices and/or selection and set up of the equipment.

Risk Factors include:

- Electricity including overhead powerlines
- Unstable ground
- Footwear
- Condition of ladder



- Water/rain
- Ladder type
- Using tools
- Position of ladder
- Fatigue
- Training
- Angle of ladder

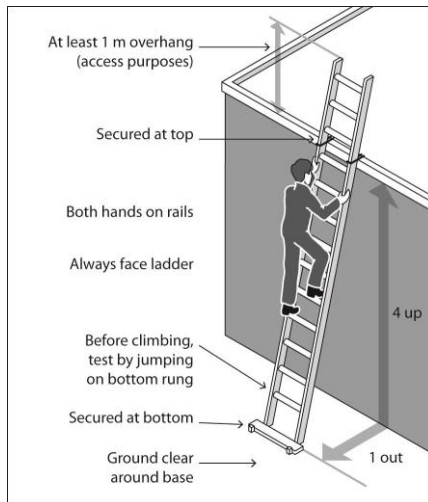
**Portable Ladders** - Extension or single ladders should generally only be used as a means of access to or egress from a work area. They should only be used as a working platform for light work of short duration that can be carried out safely on the ladder. Where a portable ladder is used, the following requirements apply:

- Only “**permitted work**” may be done
- Ladders must meet AS/NZS1892- Portable Ladders and be “Industrial” rated
- Ladders must be used at an angle of four to one, where the base of the ladder is 1 meter out from the supporting wall, for every 4 meters of supported length
- Must extend at least 1m past the point of egress
- When using a step ladder do not climb above the third top step, and ensure it is on the fully locked position before climbing
- Insulated ladders shall be used where a potential electrical hazard exists
- Ladders shall be secured at the top or bottom

**Note# Permitted work** is where the weight, size or shape of any equipment or material the person using the ladder is carrying is not likely to restrict the person’s movement while the person is climbing or descending the ladder; or

- Cause the person to lose balance on the ladder while doing the work; and
- The person’s trunk is approximately centred over the centre of the space between the sides of the ladder from when the person is fully on the ladder to when the person is leaving the ladder; and
- Any equipment being used by the person can be operated using 1 hand unless a control measure designed to support the person’s body is being worn or used. (i.e. must be able to maintain 3 points of contact)

**Note#** A commercially available step platform provides a more stable platform than a ladder; especially where the task involves extended periods of working at height or restricted vision



Source: Safe Work Australia, *Managing the risk of falls at workplaces Code of Practice 2018*

- Ensure ladder is secure at the top and bottom
- Top of ladder should extend 1m above contact point
- Face the ladder
- Maintain 3 points contact
- Keep from the waist down within the ladder stiles, i.e. do not reach out
- Avoid carrying tools or equipment e.g. hoist tools in a bucket when at the top
- Do not stand above 3<sup>rd</sup> rung from the top
- Only 1 person at a time on the ladder

#### Actions to take

- Check ladders before use and at least annually;
- Check for presence of overhead powerlines
- Ladders should only be used if it is not reasonably practicable to use any of the following:
- Work from the ground or a solid platform;
- Use a passive fall protection device (e.g. temporary work platform, scaffolding, roof safety mesh or guard rail)
- Check ladders comply with the Australian Standard AS/NZS 1892.1-5, are well maintained, have non-slip feet, be set at a slope of four to one for single or extension ladders, secured at the top and bottom
- Check Stepladders are used in the fully opened position.
- Store ladders undercover, supported horizontally, above ground

#### 4.2. Slips, Trips, Falls (incl site access)

##### Tips to reduce the risks of falls at same levels include:

- Consider the external environment. Lighting, in particular for access and egress; marked walkways for pedestrians; regular cleaning of paths and driveways to assist grip on the surfaces;
- Workers to wear appropriate footwear for the environment in which they are working;
- Oils, greases, detergents and foodstuffs - clean up immediately. Cleaning floors is best performed after activities have finished;
- Keep floor surfaces consistent wherever possible as slips often happen due to differing levels of friction. If this isn't possible, identify changes with tactile dots, colour changes or signage;
- Good housekeeping and regular inspections, adequate storage and clear locations for materials, waste and equipment will keep the workplace clutter free e.g. Shelving



Safe Work Method Statement – Working at Heights >2 metres [insert link](#)

Permit to Work – Heights >2 metres [insert link](#)

[Managing the Risk of Falls – Safe Use of Ladders Video Clip](#)



[Falls Management Video Series SafeWork SA](#)



[Managing the risk of falls at workplaces Code of Practice 2018](#)

## 5. Hazardous Chemicals

Hazardous Chemicals are substances, mixtures and articles that can pose a significant risk to health and safety if not managed correctly. They may have health hazards, physical hazards or both.

Examples of chemicals that can cause adverse health effects include:

- Toxic chemicals, chemicals that cause skin damage, carcinogens e.g. Chlorine

Examples of chemicals that can immediately injure people or damage property include:

- Flammable liquids, compressed gasses, explosives e.g. LPG

Under WHS Legislation, if you store any hazardous chemicals at your congregation that may pose a hazard to human health or a fire/explosion risk, you must comply with the following:

- Safety data sheets (SDS) must be provided for all hazardous chemicals
- Ensure that sufficient information about the safe use, handling and storage of the chemical is accessible to staff and emergency workers
- Ensure all items are labelled in accordance with their contents
- Placing substances into other containers (decanting) should be avoided. If decanting cannot be avoided and the contents of the container are not immediately used, a label must be affixed to reflect the same information as the original container

**Note #** An SDS is not legally required with the use of consumer products that are intended to be used in the same way and same quantities as household products, however it is recommended to obtain an SDS if the chemical container does not provide adequate safe instructions re use: in addition, the SDS information can assist any persons whom may have sensitivity to the chemical.

The Globally Harmonised System (GHS) is a system used to classify and communicate chemical hazards using internationally consistent terms and information on chemical labels and Safety Data Sheets.

The GHS provides criteria for the classification of physical hazards (e.g. flammable liquids), health hazards (e.g. carcinogens) and environmental hazards (e.g. aquatic toxicity). The GHS uses 'Danger' and 'Warning' as signal words to indicate the relative level of severity of a hazard. 'Danger' is used for the more severe or a significant hazard, while 'Warning' is used for the less severe hazards. Refer to Tool "GHS Pictograms and Hazard Classes".

### Actions to take

- Establish and maintain a Hazardous Chemical Register - The register must include— (a) a list of hazardous chemicals used, handled or stored; and (b) the current safety data sheet for each hazardous chemical listed
- Update SDS for all hazardous chemicals every 5 years from the manufacturer/supplier
- Complete a Hazardous Chemical Risk Assessment every 5 years
- Ensure all Hazardous Chemicals are stored in a locked and / or secured location against unauthorised access i.e. children and public cannot readily access
- Store away from food and drinks, in a well-ventilated area and in accordance with the SDS
- Provide Personal Protective equipment as stated on the SDS to workers



Source Safe Work  
Australia, Labelling  
Chemicals



- Provide training to workers re the use, storage, transportation and disposal requirements
- Aim to replace hazardous chemicals with low toxicity and environmentally friendly products
- Minimize quantities held at any one time
- Provide spill containment system if necessary e.g. bunding for corrosives
- Provide Firefighting equipment
- Control ignition sources in the vicinity if applicable



Hazardous Chemicals Register (Include Pest Management Chemicals) [-link](#)  
Hazardous Chemical Risk Assessment Template [-link](#)  
GHS pictograms and hazard classes [-link](#)



[Managing risks of hazardous chemicals in the workplace Code of Practice 2013](#)  
[Labelling of workplace hazardous chemicals Code of Practice 2011](#)

#### 6. Asbestos-Containing Materials Management

Due to the age they were built, Congregation's buildings may contain asbestos-containing material (ACM) and therefore an ACM Register is required to outline the presence and location of such materials. An Asbestos Management Plan is also required to detail how the ACM will be managed and monitored.

An inspection and assessment of the ACM must be undertaken by a competent person every 5 years to ensure it is kept up to date. Any changes made in that 5-year period must also be reflected on the ACM Register and Management Plan.

Any persons (workers, volunteers, contractors) undertaking work on the buildings which contain ACM must be shown the ACM Register and Management Plan prior to commencing work.

Any activities that require the removal of any asbestos must be undertaken only by a licensed asbestos removalist.

##### **Actions to Take**

- Ascertain requirement for ACM Assessment, initial and/or 5 yearly review
- Retain original asbestos documentation (e.g. Church Council records, asbestos registers and management plans) and continue ongoing asbestos management activities in accordance with
- legislation
- Provide copies of asbestos documentation to the Presbytery Property Committee and Queensland
- Synod Office Registry
- Ensure signage is placed at the entrance to each building containing ACM
- Ensure ACM Register and Management Plan is available for all persons undertaking work
- Include as a topic in induction for all workers
- Where practicable, install small labels in areas where ACM has been identified
- Check Queensland Government's online register of licence holders first before engaging an Asbestos Removalist



Asbestos- Containing Materials Register Log Template [-link](#)  
Asbestos Containing Materials Register Template Example [-link](#)  
Asbestos- Containing Materials Management Action Plan Template [-link](#)

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[Queensland Government Asbestos Removalist Online Register](#)



[How to manage and control asbestos in the workplace Code of Practice 2011](#)

[How to safely remove asbestos Code of Practice 2011](#)

## 7. Safety Signage

Safety signs are considered low on the hierarchy of managing risk however they are used for various situations and are required in some situations to meet legislative requirements e.g. Fire Safety.

### 7.1. Regulatory Signs

Contain instructions with which failure to comply constitutes either an offence at law, or a breach of standing orders, safety procedures or other directions, depending on which kind of control has been imposed at the work site or workplace.

- **Prohibition signs** indicate that an action or activity is not permitted e.g. No Smoking
- **Mandatory signs** indicate that an instruction must be carried out e.g. wear safety glasses
- **Limitation or restriction signs** e.g. speed limit

### 7.2. Hazard signs

Essentially these advise of hazards.

- **DANGER signs** warn of a particular hazard or hazardous condition that is likely to be life-threatening e.g. Overhead Powerlines
- **Warning signs** advise of a hazard or hazardous condition that is not likely to be life-threatening e.g. Koala crossing

### 7.3. Emergency Information signs

Emergency Information Signs indicate the location of, or directions to, emergency related facilities such as exits, safety equipment or first aid facilities.

### 7.4. Fire Signs

**Fire signs** advise the location of fire alarms and fire-fighting facilities.

#### **Actions to Take:**

Include location and condition of signs as part of the inspection program

Ensure all emergency information and fire signs are in place



Signage Inspection Checklist [link](#)

## 8. Traffic Management

This duty includes implementing control measures to prevent people being injured by moving vehicles at the workplace. The risk of vehicles colliding with people at your workplace needs to be managed. The best way to protect people is to keep them physically separated from vehicles. Think about how vehicles and pedestrians move around the area. Are they separated? Are there ways to stop them interacting? Are visitors at risk?

#### **Actions to Take:**

Document/Draw the traffic Management plan and include as required:

- **Keep people and vehicles apart** - clearly sign-post to indicate speed limits, traffic calming measures like speed humps and parking areas

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- **Vehicle routes** – Directional signs as required
- **Parking areas**- clearly mark and sign-post, well-lit and unobstructed, located away from busy work areas and traffic routes
- **Pedestrian crossings** - clearly marked with ground markings, lights or signs. Both pedestrians and vehicles should have good visibility



[Onsite traffic management self-assessment tool – WorkSafe Qld](#)

[Traffic Hazard Checklist \(Safe Work Australia\)](#)

[Workplace Traffic Management Information Sheet\(Safe work Australia\)](#)

[Traffic Control Measures Checklist \(Safe Work Australia\)](#)

[General Guide for Workplace Traffic Management \(Safe Work Australia\)](#)

#### 9. Equipment Purchase -WHS Considerations

It is useful to considering the risks associated with the purchase of goods with WHS implications prior to introducing the item into the workplace, so as not to introduce additional hazards/risks e.g.:

- Where will the item be located?
- What maintenance is required?
- What safety standards apply?



[Equipment Purchase Checklist – link](#)

#### 10. Refurbishments and Construction Work

It is opportune to identify reasonably foreseeable hazards that may occur, when in the design phase of refurbishments or construction work at a congregation. It is recommended that sound consultation practices and consideration be given to the use and maintenance of the new works planned. This practice can eliminate /reduce associated hazards/risks being introduced, in addition to costs associated to rectify hazards/risks once built.



[Safe design of structures Code of Practice 2013](#)

[Traffic management for construction or maintenance work Code of Practice 2008](#)

#### 11. Access and Security Management

The safety and security of people and our property needs to be managed. Consider the following to assist your local processes:

Lighting levels, After Hours Access, Working Alone, Cash Handling, locks (doors and windows), parking proximity to office etc, Roof Access Restricted, Alarms, security camera, Lock Down Procedures, limit master key use, valuable items storage or safe, minimising hiding places e.g. Trim shrubbery, physical barriers, internet security

##### Actions to Take

- Implement a Key/Pass Register
- Secure valuable equipment in locked cupboards/ rooms
- Implement cash handling process
- Report access breaches and theft
- Incorporate into local inspection programs





Key Register [-Link](#)

[Fences and safety barriers – children – guidance notes](#)

[Guide for Handling and Transporting Cash \(Safe Work Australia\)](#)

## 12. Leasing and Hiring Safety Considerations

The Qld Synod Office Registry and Paralegal assists the Congregations to manage their hiring and leasing requirements and required insurances etc.

The following provides items to consider when hiring or leasing your premises to other parties from a WHS Perspective.

- Has the third party been advised or provided with the location's Emergency Management Plan/Procedures and have access to the Evacuation Diagram (Displayed on Wall)?
- Do they need to be advised of any Asbestos-Containing Material?
- Have they been advised of the security requirements/ system?
- Have they been provided with information on how to safely use any specific equipment items?
- Has the area/location and associated equipment been inspected prior to identify and manage hazards/risks?
- Are the electrical and Firefighting Equipment inspections in date?
- Are the smoke alarms in working order?
- Is the premises protected with safety switch(s)?
- Will the activities conducted by the third party meet with the current Building Classification Certification?
- Are there any items present that could pose a risk to children e.g. chemicals, location power points?

## Emergency Response and Preparedness

### 1. Emergency Management Plan (including Fire Evacuation Plan)

Qld Legislation requires the work environments and areas conducting public activities e.g. Church Hall etc, to have an emergency plan. This is a written document detailing how a congregation and its occupants deal with or manage an emergency across all areas of its location.

An effective emergency plan consists of the preparedness, response and recovery activities including the roles/responsibilities and arrangements.

The level of detail in the emergency plan will depend on the complexity of the activities at the work and/or public location involved, how much and what types of hazardous materials are stored or used at the site.

Typical emergencies include:

- Fire, Bush Fires
- Security
- Personal Threat -shooting, hostage situation
- Medical
- Electrical outage -extended
- Mechanical or process failure
- Natural events such as storms or cyclones
- Hazardous materials release e.g. gas, asbestos
- Explosion
- Pandemic -e.g. tuberculosis, measles

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#### Actions to Take:

- Annually review the Fire Evacuation Plan and Emergency Management Plan
- Include plan(s) in induction processes
- Display Evacuation Diagram adjacent to all exits
- Maintain Fire Fighting Equipment, Exit Lights etc Inspections every 6 months
- Smoke detectors and alarms—Test all smoke detectors and alarm systems for proper operation once a month (If detectors use batteries, replace them at least annually)
- Display Emergency Flip Chart
- Display Building Classification Certificate
- Complete the Occupiers Statement Annually and maintain records on site
- Complete the Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) Form for relevant workers
- Complete the First Aid Kit Contents Checklist and check contents remain in date and in supply on a regular basis (quarterly recommended) and at least annually
- Display Emergency Contacts information e.g. RACE Poster or similar



RACE and Emergency Contacts Poster [-link](#)

First Aid Kit Contents Checklist [-link](#)

Bomb Threat Checklist- [link](#)

Emergency Flip Chart [-link](#)

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) Form [-link](#)

[Occupiers Statement \(Annual\) \(QFES\)](#)

[Evacuation Sign and Diagram Example \(QFES\)](#)

[Building Classification Certificate](#)

[Fire and Evacuation Plan for Congregations with more than 100 regular attendees \(QFES\)](#)

[Fire and Evacuation Plan for Congregations with less than 100 regular attendees \(QFES\)](#)

# (QFES) = Queensland Fire and Emergency Services

## 2. Training and Emergency Evacuation Exercises

As Per Part 4 of the *Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008*, the following training is a legislative requirement

- **General evacuation instructions** must be given to staff within 2 days of a person commencing work in the building (Points 1-5) and repeated annually (refer to Fire and Evacuation Instruction Training Record in Tools)
- **First response evacuation instructions** must be given to staff within one month of a person commencing work in the building (Points 1-7) and repeated two-yearly (refer to Fire and Evacuation Instruction Training Record)
- **Evacuation coordination procedures** must be given to nominated responsible staff within the month prior to that person taking on those responsibilities (All Points) and repeated annually
- Instructions on **any change to the Fire Evacuation Plan** must be given to all persons within one month of the change taking effect

#### Actions to Take:

- Train all workers in the congregation's fire and emergency procedures in accordance with the legislation as outlined above and maintain training records on local files
- Complete an annual evacuation practice/ exercise, record attendees and summarise findings



[Evacuation Instruction Training Record \(QFES\)](#)  
[Evacuation Practice/Exercise Record and Summary \(QFES\)](#)



[Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990](#)  
[Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008](#)  
[Fire Safety Management Tool for Owner/Occupiers \(QFES\)](#)  
[Advisory Notes for Fire Safety Management Tool for Owner/Occupiers \(QFES\)](#)  
[First aid in the workplace Code of Practice 2014](#)

## On-site and Off-site Activities Management (Events)

E.g. garage sales, car boot sales, fete's, concerts, camps, fundraisers, conferences, child care, etc.

If a new activity is introduced or the work environment changes significantly the checklist should be re-done. It is recommended that a *Checklist* be completed prior to **each** specific high-risk Congregation activity if it is repeated during the year (e.g. working bees; onsite and offsite events).

The checklist findings will be tabled at Church Council meetings and identified hazards and risks will be discussed to decide the actions that will be taken to eliminate or minimise the risk to workers, public or property. Allocation of responsibility for actions and an agreed timeframe is required.

### 1. Food Safety

All food supplied by or provided at our UC Qld premises or activities is to be safe and not cause illness to workers / employees, contractors, visitors, congregation members, volunteers and members of the public. All persons are required to practice high levels of personal hygiene and abide by safe food storage requirements.

A charity or a non-profit community group that is selling or handling food is considered to be a food business under the *Food Act 2006*, and as such is required to meet food safety standards. This involves ensuring all food handled, sold or given away is safe and suitable for consumption and is compliant with the provisions of the Act and the Food Standards Code.

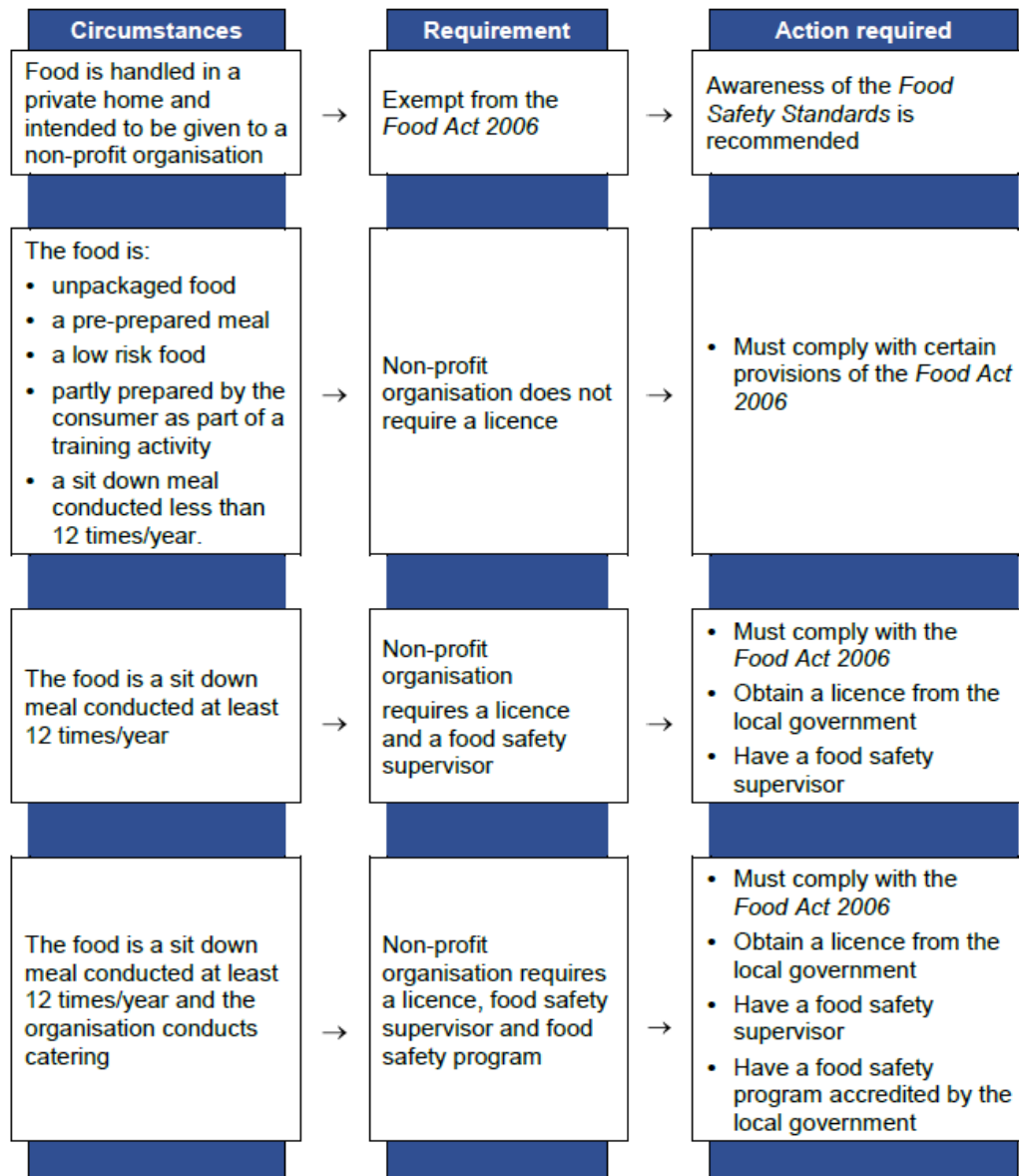
A 'food business' is defined as any activity that involves:

- the handling of food intended for sale
- the sale of food, **regardless of whether:**
  - the business, enterprise or activity concerned is of a commercial, charitable or community nature
  - the activity involves the handling or sale of food on one occasion only

The only situation in relation to non-profit organisations, when compliance with the Act is **NOT** required, is when a person handles food at their own home, with the intention to give it away to a non-profit organisation, for that organisation to sell or give away.



**A guide to licencing a non-profit organisation**



Source: State of Queensland (Queensland Health)- *Food safety in non-profit organisations*, April 2015

**Key Tips Include:**

- High level personal hygiene including handwashing - refer to Poster -link
- Time and temperature control -refer to Poster -Link
- Cleaning and sanitising – refer to Poster-Link
- Training of food handlers (if required)
- Liaise with Local council to determine licencing requirements if required – refer Chart above



[Old Health Pocket Guide -Food Safety for Fundraising Non-Profit](#)  
[Qld Health Food Safety in Non-Profit Organisations](#)  
[Food Safety Temperature Chart](#)



Kitchen Checklist [-Link](#)

[Temporary Food Stall Operation Guide](#)

[Temporary Food Stall Equipment Checklist](#)

Handwash Poster [-link](#)



[Food Act 2006](#)

[Food Regulation 2016](#)

[Guide to the Food Safety Standards, Chapter 3 of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code, 2016](#)

## 2. Events

The WHS Legislation applies when the Church conducts a public event and as an event organiser needs to anticipate all reasonably foreseeable risks that patrons are likely to be exposed to and provide reasonably practicable control measures in response.

The church is to ensure:

- The health and safety of participants, spectators and anyone else at the event
- The work environment is without potential risks to health and safety
- Plant and structures are safe
- Safe systems of work

Workers and other persons such as patrons at public events conducted by the Church also have a duty of care to:

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety
- Take reasonable care that they do not adversely affect the health and safety of others
- Comply with reasonable instructions given by the event organisers

Managing risks is an important component of your event planning. Undertaking risk assessments of event activities can assist you to identify, assess and control risks relevant to that event and/or using tools such as an events risk register.

Some controls may include:

- Adequate supervision
- Provision information and signage
- Provision barriers and /or restricting entry to certain areas or activities



Events Risk Register Template [-link](#)

Events Safety Checklist [- Link](#)

Working Bee Checklist [- link](#)

[General Guide for Amusement Devices -Safe Work Australia](#)

Generic Safe Work Method Statement(SWMS) & Checklists for Jumping Castle [-link](#)



[WorkSafe Qld Public Events and Safety](#)

[Traffic Management: Guide for Events \(Safe Work Australia\)](#)



### 3. Opportunity / Thrift Shops

Many of our Churches offer second hand clothes and goods to the community through an Opportunity/Thrift Shop. Op shops can provide some of the financial backing needed for mission, whether for local congregation or community causes. All of them are one of our 'public faces'. All of them are ministry and provide a doorway into our church community.

Op shops need to be safe places for people who work there and our customers – we need to ensure we have a safe and secure environment for all.

Some key tips include:

- The following items should **not** be sold by the Op Shop as they may be unsafe - thereby making the shop liable for any injuries, or have difficulty meeting the appropriate re-sale health and other regulations e.g.
  - Cots – children or baby
  - Mattresses
  - Electrical Goods of **any** description (unless in new or original packaging AND covered by the manufacturer's warranty)
  - Helmets – cyclists or motor cyclists
  - Baby capsules
  - Car booster seats
  - Prams and Strollers
- Maintaining clear fire exits and doorways
- Induction of staff to specific and emergency procedures
- Security and cash handling procedures
- Safe means to move goods – e.g. trolleys
- Good housekeeping -clear aisles, spaces to move and prevent trip/slip /fall hazards
- Safe storage areas and safe shelving to access easily and bear weights/loads
- Safety switch and/or current test and tag of electrical items in use
- Continually identify hazards, rectify and report all incidents



Op/Thrift Shop Checklist [-link](#)

#### 3.1. Men's Shed

**Men's sheds** can help connect men with their communities and mainstream society whose primary activity is the provision of a safe and friendly environment where men are able to work on meaningful projects at their own pace in their own time in the company of other men.

Members have a Duty of Care to themselves, their Shed colleagues, family members and visitors to operate safely. The Committee or authorised persons who establish and oversee shed operations and the members that supervise activities, have a key role in requiring that safe practices are followed and a safe environment and plant items is in place.

Some key tips include:

- Induction and familiarisation of facilities and the equipment (document)
- Specific rules re safe operation of equipment
- Unsafe plant and equipment procedures e.g. Isolation, lock out, tag out and report
- Emergency procedures including evacuation routes, assembly point and First aid



- Regular inspections of the environment and equipment, machine maintenance and guarding
- Electrical safety – Safety Switch, Test and Tag
- Incident reporting protocols
- Safe chemical use and storage
- Warning signs e.g. Hearing protection must be worn
- Good housekeeping, prevent slips, trips or falls



Men's Shed Inspection Checklist- link

Specific resources are available with membership with the [Australian Men's Shed Association](#)

## **Hazardous Manual Tasks and Ergonomics**

**A hazardous manual task** means a task that requires a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any person, animal or thing involving one or more of the following:

- Repetitive or sustained force
- High or sudden force
- Repetitive movement
- Sustained or awkward posture
- Exposure to vibration

These factors (known as characteristics of a hazardous manual task) directly stress the body and can lead to injury. There is no legal weight limit for manual handling. WHS legislation is based on a risk management approach where hazards are identified, assessed and controlled. If a manual handling task looks difficult, awkward or heavy, assess the task and develop controls to reduce the risk.

It is recommended to carry out a risk assessment for any hazardous manual tasks identified, unless the risk is well known and you know how to control it.

### **Control your risk**

- Ask first – is the task necessary?
- Identify manual handling hazards
- implement practical solutions – can the work area etc be changed?
- understand your own physical strengths and your fitness
- use available lifting aids or equipment; and
- seek assistance from other workers

It is important to know when to get help, how to use lifting aids or equipment and how to work as a team to move objects in a safe and practical manner.

### **Plan the lift – Simple Guide**

- Know what your capabilities are
- Determine the weight of the item to be moved
- Assess horizontal reach required
- Assess vertical reach required
- Avoid jerking/twisting movements
- Determine best grip
- Keep load close to the body

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- Do not lift excessive weights
- Use team lifting or lifting equipment



Source UK Health & Safety Executive, *Getting to Grips with Manual Handling - A Short Guide*

**Ergonomics** is defined as the assessment and design of the working environment, to ensure the best fit to the individual, thus best to design the task to fit the person. Ergonomics can incorporate all factors of the work environment such as noise, lighting, temperature, and position of controls, design of equipment and tools and workstations. A common example is setting up the workstation for an office worker.

#### Actions to Take:

- Ensure there are adequate and appropriate trolleys/ equipment to assist the movement of items e.g. chairs, tables etc;
- Incorporate manual handling training/awareness into the induction program for all workers;
- Provide Office Based workers with the Workstation Checklist at induction;
- Undertake the Hazardous Manual Task Risk Assessment as identified/requested;
- Minimize weight of items purchased where possible;
- Place heavier items on shelving between shoulder- waist heights;
- Use correct tools for the tasks.



Workstation Checklist (Office Based Workers) [-link](#)

Hazardous Manual Task Risk Assessment Checklist [- link](#)



[Hazardous manual tasks Code of Practice 2011](#)





## Related Documents, Reference Materials and Useful Website Information

### 1. Related Documents

Qld Synod Office WHS Management System – under development

[Synod Office HR Policies – \(including Ministry Agents in Placement\)](#)

[Synod Office HR Policies - Congregation Applicability](#)

### 2. Reference Materials

[Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(Qld\)](#)

[Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 \(Qld\)](#)

[Codes of Practice \(Qld\)](#)

[Electrical Safety Act 2002 \(Qld\)](#)

[Electrical Safety Regulations 2013 \(Qld\)](#)

[Electrical Safety Codes Practice \(Qld\)](#)

[Workers Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003 \(Qld\)](#)

[Workers Compensation and Rehabilitation Regulation 2014 \(Qld\)](#)

[Food Act 2006](#)

[Food Regulation 2016](#)

[A Guide to the Food Safety Standards, Chapter 3 of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code, 2016](#)

[National Construction Codes Website \(Register here\)](#)

### 3. Key Websites

[WorkSafe Qld \(Including the Electrical Safety Office and WorkCover Qld\)](#)

[Qld Fire and Emergency Services \(QFES\)](#)

[ADG Code 2018](#)

## Congregation WHS Management System Self- Assessment Tool

This tool is designed to assist the Congregations to undertake a self-assessment of their WHS Management System to identify the current status and areas for improvement.



WHS Management System Self-Assessment Checklist [link](#)

## Qld Synod Office Support Contact Details

### 4. Work Health and Safety

**Phone:** 07 3377 9946

**Email:** [Health.Safety@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:Health.Safety@ucaqld.com.au)

### 5. Qld Synod Group Insurance

**Phone:** 07 3377 9725

**Email:** [UCInsurance@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:UCInsurance@ucaqld.com.au)

### 6. Safe Ministry (Children)

**Phone:** 07 3377 9833

**Email:** [lynette.drew@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:lynette.drew@ucaqld.com.au)

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**7. General Property Related Enquiries (Registry)**

**Phone:** 07 3377 9838

**Email:** [property@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:property@ucaqld.com.au)

**Resources List**

The Forms, Templates can be accessed and personalised as required see - [insert Link to main WHS Congregation Webpage](#)

**Definitions**

Term	Meaning
<b>PCBU (Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking)</b>	PCBU ((Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking): a business or an undertaking that is either conducted alone or with others, whether or not for profit or gain. A PCBU can be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a sole trader (for example a self-employed person)</li> <li>• a partnership</li> <li>• a company</li> <li>• an unincorporated association</li> <li>• a government department</li> <li>• a public authority (including a municipal council)</li> </ul>
<b>Officer</b>	An <b>officer</b> is a person who makes, or participates in making, decisions that affect the whole, or a substantial part, of the organisation’s business activities; has the capacity to significantly affect the corporation’s financial standing and is to exercise <b>due diligence</b>
<b>Workers</b>	Can be employees, contractors, subcontractors, outworkers, apprentices and trainees, work experience students, volunteers and PCBUs who are individuals if they perform work for the business
<b>Due Diligence</b>	Due diligence includes personally taking reasonable steps to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• acquire and keep current information on work health and safety matters</li> <li>• understand the nature and operations of the work and associated hazards and risks</li> <li>• ensure the PCBU has, and uses, appropriate resources and processes to eliminate or reduce risks to health and safety</li> <li>• ensure the PCBU has appropriate processes to receive and consider information about incidents, hazards and risks, and to respond in a timely manner</li> <li>• ensure the PCBU has, and implements, processes for complying with their duties and obligations e.g. reports notifiable incidents</li> <li>• consults with workers, complies with notices, provides training and instruction</li> </ul>
<b>Reasonably Practicable</b>	‘Reasonably practicable’, in relation to a duty to ensure health and safety, means that which is, or was at a particular time, reasonably able to be done to ensure health and safety, taking into account and weighing up all relevant matters including:

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## SAFEMINISTRY WHS Resource for Congregations

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the likelihood of the hazard or the risk concerned occurring:</li> <li>• the degree of harm that might result from the hazard or the risk</li> <li>• what the person concerned knows, or ought reasonably to know, about the hazard or risk, and about the ways of eliminating or minimising the risk</li> <li>• the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk</li> <li>• after assessing the extent of the risk and the available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, the cost associated with available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk</li> </ul>
<b>Reasonable Care</b>	<p>This term describes the standard of care that workers, including volunteers must meet. It means doing what a reasonable person would do in the circumstance having regard to things like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the person’s knowledge</li> <li>• the person’s role</li> <li>• the person’s skills and the resources available to them</li> <li>• the person’s qualifications</li> <li>• the information the person has, and</li> <li>• the consequences to health and safety of a failure for them to act in the circumstances</li> </ul>

### Revisions

Document number		PROXXX-XX			
Version	Approval date	Approved by	Effective date	Policy owner	Policy contact
DRAFT	31.01.2019	<Insert title/body>	DD/MM/YYYY	ED RISK	WHS Manager
Next scheduled review		DD.MM.YYYY			