



Safe people safe environments

The Uniting Church in Australia
BREMER BRISBANE PRESBYTERY

Policies and information for providing safe places
where people are cared for, nurtured and sustained.

01 May 2014

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Safe people safe environments

Introduction



Letter to the Members of Bremer Brisbane Presbytery

April 2014

Brothers and Sisters in Christ

I am excited that we are able to bring you this Manual as a stepping stone for mission in your local communities,

The Mary Burnett Presbytery began work on this project in 2012.

At the Presbytery meeting in March 2013 the following report was received

Safe people, safe environments

This report has been prepared from the work of a Compliance Reference Group with reps from each Zone, an expert in Workplace Health and Safety documentation from business, and a Synod rep (David Munro), facilitated by Rev Pam Batson.

The resultant Manual will be the distillation of vast amounts of paper work to a more accessible document.

Why?

It is Australian Law and as a church we are to comply with the law of the land unless it goes against the gospel. We give to Caesar what is Caesars, and we give to God what is Gods. Matt 22:15-21; Mark 12: 13-17; Luke 20: 20-26. Also see Romans 13.

Providing a safe place and environment for people is consistent with the Gospel, and an act of hospitality and Grace.

The most important thing to remember as we engage in this work is that it is a stepping stone to sharing the Gospel with others.

Who is it for?

Church Councils and congregations (because Government legislation shares responsibility between Synod, Presbyteries and Church Councils)

What is in the Manual ?

The manual begins with a Statement of Commitment toward all people. This broad commitment is then divided into two more specific guidelines.

1. Guidelines for people 18 years and older (Workplace Health and Safety Act)
2. More specific guidelines for people under 18 years of age (Child Safe)
3. Specific Guidelines for Church Councils - Insurance Register; Risk Management Register; Copyright; and Emergency management

One copy of all forms and Registers will be provided in the Appendices of the Manual for Church Councils to photocopy

How will the Manual be presented?

- Colour coded
- One Hard copy of all relevant material (including the Synod Resource Kit, and a book on Poisonous Plants and Fungi) will be given to each Church Council
- One copy of an Emergency Procedures Folder per congregation
- Copy of all docs on USB Flash Drive for each Church Councils
- Access to all docs via Presbytery web site
- Access to all docs via Synod web site
- Establish a Resource person in each Zone
- Employ a skilled person to educate and train Church Councils and Zone Resource people,
- Maintain a Reference Group to monitor progress, support the Educator/trainer, and report to the Standing Committee

Letter to the Members of Bremer Brisbane Presbytery

When will this start?

Starting as soon as possible, but it will be an ongoing process of education and training. The first couple of years may require more time and energy to arrive at maintenance levels of attention to Safe People, Safe Environments.

It was resolved by consensus (Minute 13/09) that the Mary Burnett Presbytery:

1. receives the report of the Compliance Reference Group
2. thanks Rev Pam Batson and members of the Reference Group for the work done so far
3. establishes an ongoing project called Safe People, Safe Environments (SPSE)
4. provides one copy of SPSE documents to each Church Council
5. provides one copy of an Emergency Procedures Folder per congregation
6. provides one copy of SPSE documents on a USB flash drive to each Church Council
7. provides access to all SPSE documents on the Presbytery Website
8. directs each Zone to appoint a SPSE Resource person
9. extend the 0.4 Presbytery placement for Rev Pam Batson until the end of June to continue the work which has begun.
10. maintain a SPSE Reference Group to monitor progress, support the Educator/trainer, and report to the Standing Committee
11. contract a skilled person for up to 2years to educate and train Church Councils and Zone Resource people based on the following selection criteria: knowledge of WHS, Child Safe, Copyright, and Emergency management; knowledge of the Uniting Church; skilled trainer/educator; available for night work and weekend work.
12. gives permission to the Standing Committee to advertise and select a Safe People, Safe Environments Educator subject to the approval of Presbytery in July.

We have come a long way, and we have still further to travel as we commit ourselves to the Mission of God in our local communities. My prayer is that this Manual will help us to be salt yeast and light in God's world in the name of Christ.

Grace and Peace

Rev Bob Harriman

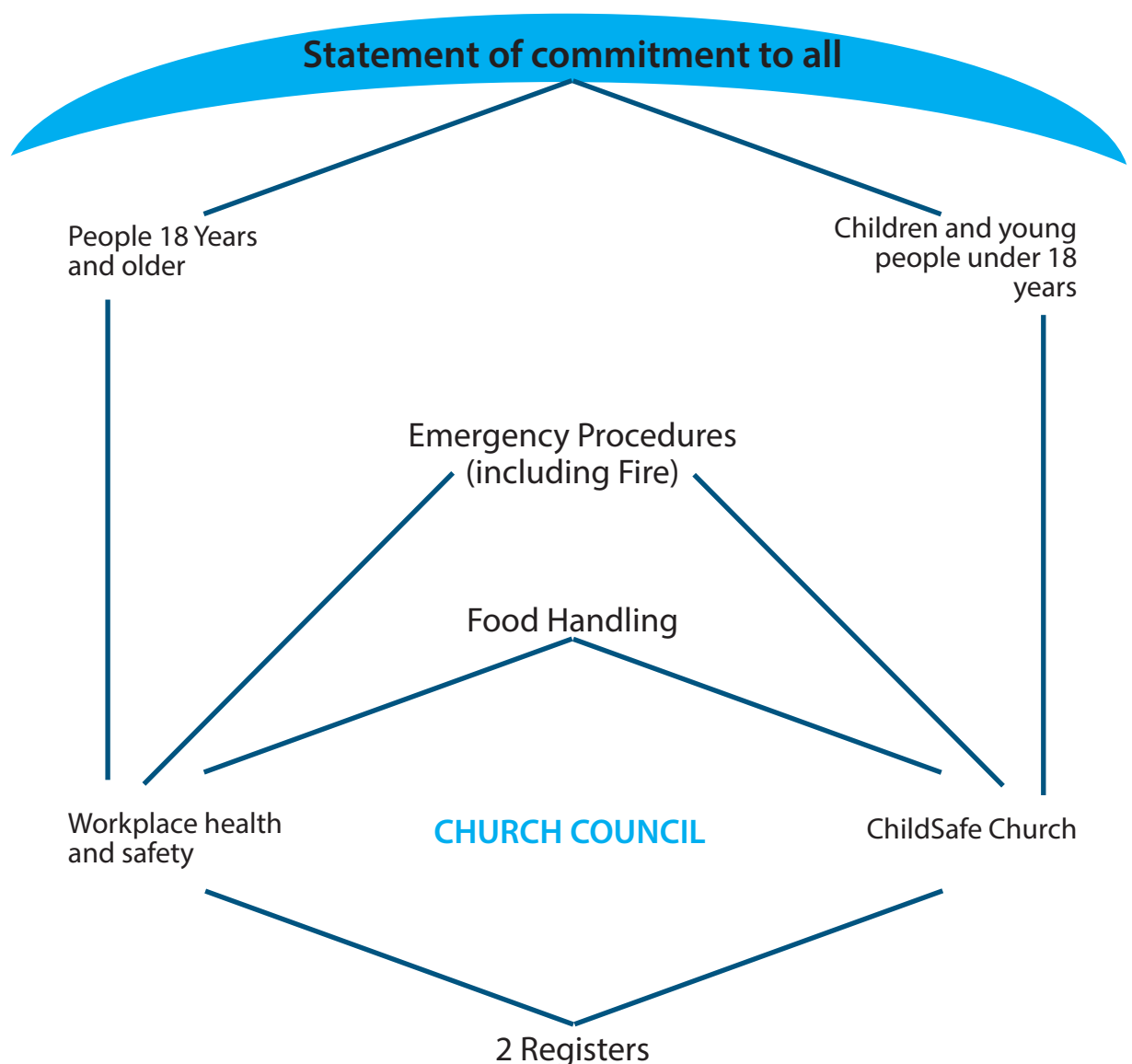
on behalf of the SPSE Reference Gp

Presbytery of Mary Burnett



Safe people, safe environment

Diagram of what is in the Manual





Safe people, safe environment

Statement of Commitment

The Uniting Church in Australia Bremer Brisbane Presbytery is committed to the safety and well-being of all people, including those who use our services. We will provide safe places where people of all ages, gender, ability and economic situations are cared for, nurtured and sustained. We will treat all people with respect, understanding and we will address their concerns at all times.

We, Bremer Brisbane Presbytery commit to being a community who:

- provide and maintain a welcoming, safe and supportive environment for all people including children and young people
- offer suitable and well equipped leadership for all activities offered by Bremer Brisbane Presbytery provide a level of resourcing that reflects the value of all people
- provide clear and appropriate guidelines for managing the safety of people, programs and the environment²

Therefore in order to support our commitment to all people, including children and young people, we will consider within this Safe People, Safe Environment Policy

1. People 18 years and over
2. Children and young people under the age of 18 years – Child Safe Church

Safe people, safe environment for people 18 years and over

In the light of our Statement of Commitment, to be committed to the safety and well-being of all people, including those who use our services, we the Bremer Brisbane Presbytery need to take responsibility for the activities and the environment to ensure that they are as safe as can reasonably be expected. It is the role and responsibility of the Church Council to ensure that this is done.

Safe people, safe environment for people under 18 years

In order to support children and young people under the age of 18 years we are committed to The Uniting Church in Australia Queensland Synod's Child Safe Church policy and procedures which includes risk management strategies to effectively address the safety and well-being of children and young people under the age of 18 years in our care.



¹ Uniting Church in Australia Queensland Synod Child Safe Church Policy for Synod Services, Presbyteries and Congregations - Introduction

² Based on Uniting Church in Australia Queensland Synod Child Safe Church Policy for Synod Services, Presbyteries and Congregations – Introduction 1.1

