



The Uniting Church in Australia  
Queensland Synod

# Work Health & Safety Policy



For Synod services\*,  
Presbyteries and Congregations

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<b>Authorised by</b>	General Secretary, Queensland Synod

\*Synod services includes Synod Support Services, Finance & Property Services, Trinity Theological College, Pilgrim Learning Community and all non-agency related boards, committees, functions and activities of the Synod.



## AUTHORISATION

I hereby declare that I, Dr Shirley Coulson, am the General Secretary of The Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod.

Acting in pursuance of the **Duties and Responsibilities** of the General Secretary as described in *Queensland Synod By-Law Q1.5.2*, I hereby authorise the **Work Health & Safety Policy (UCAQ\_WHS\_101\_v3.0)** to apply from 31 March 2012.



Dr Shirley Coulson  
**General Secretary**  
**The Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod**

29 March 2012

## Work Health & Safety Policy

The Work Health & Safety Policy of The Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod services<sup>1</sup>, Presbyteries and Congregations (the Church<sup>2</sup>) is to provide every person associated with its various businesses and undertakings with a healthy, safe and productive environment. This Policy is consistent with the Church's desire to:

- Create safe environments for people, living out the concept of sanctuary.
- Encourage the physical, emotional and spiritual development and well being of its ministers, members, adherents, employees and volunteers.

*"The Uniting Church has a deep concern for the wholeness and well being of each individual. Our Church seeks to safeguard the welfare of all people, regardless of age, who come in contact with the Church and its organisations."<sup>3</sup>*

Through the commitment and involvement of all persons, the health and safety objective of the Church is to prevent accidents, injuries and work-related illnesses.

The Church is committed to:

- Communicating the Church health and safety policies and procedures to all workers (*which includes volunteers*)<sup>4</sup> and others involved at its businesses or undertakings.
- Complying with appropriate health and safety legislation.
- Ensuring health and safety management systems are integrated into all aspects of the Church's activities.
- Investigating all incidents to the level required in the Church's workplace health and safety management systems.
- Achieving commitment of all workers<sup>4</sup> and others to the health and safety policy and procedures.
- Establishing measurable targets and ensuring continual improvement aimed at preventing work-related injury or illness.
- Maintaining and monitoring health and safety performance.
- Periodically reviewing and amending, where applicable, its health and safety policies and procedures to maintain consistency and relevance to its activities and current legislative requirements.

<sup>1</sup> Synod services includes Synod Support Services, Finance & Property Services, Trinity Theological College, Pilgrim Learning Community and all non-agency related boards, committees, functions and activities of the Synod.

<sup>2</sup> As defined under section 5 of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (the Act) the Church is considered a **person conducting a business or undertaking** (PCBU). Under the provisions of section 19 of The Act a PCBU has a primary duty of care to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of – (a) workers engaged, or caused to be engaged by the Church; and (b) workers whose activities in carrying out work are influenced or directed by the Church, while workers are at work in the business or undertaking.

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from the policy Statement from the Church of Scotland and endorsed by the Queensland Synod, 1998.

<sup>4</sup> Section 7 of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (the Act) defines a person as a **worker** if the person carries out work in any capacity for a PCBU, and includes employees, contractors or subcontractors and their employees, students undertaking work experience, and volunteers.



Officers<sup>5</sup>, including Board and Church Council Members, Managers and Church Leaders, are responsible for ensuring that the Church health and safety objective is achieved by providing places that are conducive to the health and safety of every person at each of its businesses and undertakings. Officers are responsible for ensuring that every reasonably practicable effort is made to prevent injuries and illnesses, control hazards and promote good health. To assist the Church in achieving our health and safety objective a sound risk management<sup>6</sup> approach will be taken in respect of all Church activities.

Work health and safety legislation and policy require all workers<sup>4</sup> to be actively involved in work health and safety. Commitment to health and safety can only be demonstrated through active participation, cooperation and support of the Church's health and safety objective as defined in this Policy. Workers<sup>4</sup> and others also have a responsibility to follow all instructions given for the safety of themselves and others in respect of Church activities.

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<sup>5</sup> The Church, as a **person conducting a business or undertaking** (PCBU), is governed by individuals who, through their decision making, influence the specific activities and behaviours that determine the success or failure of health and safety initiatives and compliance by the PCBU in accordance with the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (the Act). The definition of **officer**, whilst defined under Schedule 5 of the the Act, will ultimately be interpreted by the courts. Within the context of health and safety guidelines and *The Uniting Church in Australia Regulations*, persons with authority at the place may be defined as an **officer** under the Act, and as a consequence may be deemed liable if they fail to exercise **due diligence** in ensuring health and safety.

<sup>6</sup> Section 17 **Management of Risks** of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (the Act) states "A duty imposed on a person to ensure health and safety requires the person to – (a) eliminate risks to health and safety, so far as is reasonably practicable; and (b) if it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate risks to health and safety, to minimise those risks so far as is reasonably practicable."