



ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF CANBERRA AND GOULBURN

## A Guide for Implementing WHS into a Ministry Unit

- *The clergy and ministry unit council, and those in authority in other diocesan agencies, are responsible for ensuring that: as far as is reasonably practicable, ensure that all church workers and those accessing ministries conducted by the ministry unit comply with the Work Health & Safety Act 2011*
- *All reasonable and practicable steps are taken to avoid risks of physical and psychological of harm to members of the church and wider community arising from their involvement in any ministry*

*(Safe Communities of Faith Policy Aug 2015)*

### Responsibility

The *Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act 2011*, WHS Regulations 2011 and Codes of Practice form the legislative framework which applies in the ACT and NSW.

The Act defines specific duties or responsibilities for those in leadership positions and *workers*. Under the Act, a *workers* is defined as a person who carries out work in any capacity for a business or organisation and includes clergy, employees, contractors and subcontractors, trainees, work experience students and volunteers.

*Workers* are required to:

- comply with safe work practices, with the intent of avoiding injury to themselves and others and damage to plant and equipment
- take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and others
- wear personal protective equipment and clothing where necessary
- comply with reasonable directions relating to health and safety issues
- not misuse or interfere with anything provided for health and safety
- report all accidents, incidents and hazards

For those who hold leadership roles within ministry units, there are additional responsibilities. As far as is reasonably practicable, the ministry unit council are required to provide and maintain:

- a safe working environment and safe systems of work
- all plant and substances in safe condition
- facilities for the welfare of *workers*
- information, instruction, training and supervision that is necessary to ensure that each *workers* is safe from injury and risks to health
- a commitment to consult and co-operate with *workers* in all matters relating to health and safety.



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- a commitment to continually improve performance through effective safety management.

## Consultation

So far as is reasonably practicable, a ministry unit council must have meaningful and open consultation about work health and safety matters with all *workers*. To appropriately consult with *workers*, the parish or ministry unit council or those in a leadership role, are required to:

- identify and implement a method of consultation which has been agreed to by *workers*
- consult with *workers* about health and safety issues
- provide frequent opportunities for *workers* to address health and safety concerns (including psychological safety)
- report all hazards and incidents (particularly those incidents that are of a serious nature eg injury or illness, a death or a dangerous incident) **within 24 hours** to Anglican Diocesan Services.

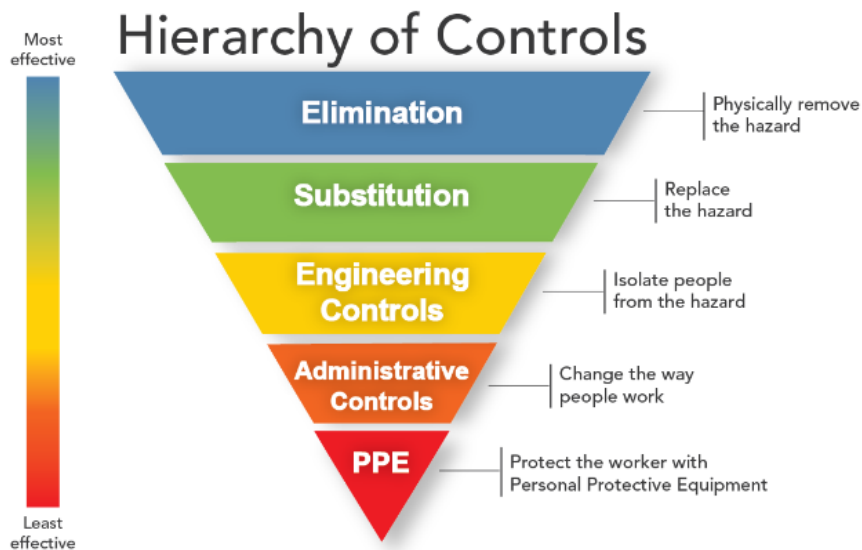
## Implementation

WHS implementation requires the ministry unit council to:

1. Consult appropriately, which requires the ministry unit council and *workers* to have in place an agreed procedure for consultation. Depending on the size of the ministry unit, consultation may take place with all *workers* within team meetings or alternatively, a person (eg Risk Officer) can be appointed. Whatever the agreed process is, it must be documented and all consultation must be in accordance with the procedure.
2. Display a permanent poster in key ministry unit buildings explaining that any health and safety matter identified can be communicate to a nominated person (eg Risk Officer) and provide contact details.
3. Insert a note in the ministry unit Newsletter on a regular basis advising *workers* and parishioners that any health and safety matters are to be reported to a nominated person (eg Risk Officer).
4. List health and safety as a permanent agenda item at all ministry unit council meetings and make provision for the Risk Officer or other appointed person to bring any expressed concerns to the meeting for discussion and decision-making.
5. Address health and safety concerns in a timely manner and provide appropriate feedback.
6. Undertake a safe environment inspection at an appropriate interval, or at least annually, and report the findings to the ministry unit council.
7. Hazards are to be managed in accordance with the level of risk and using the hierarchy of controls described below:



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8. Ensure all *workers* are provided with an appropriate induction to the parish or ministry unit which also includes all hazards/risks associated with the tasks they are required to perform.
9. Report all hazards and incidents using the Diocesan online hazard and incident reporting process accessed from the Diocesan website.

## Feedback

Feedback on this document can be submitted to the Anglian Diocesan Services, Director Risk and Legal - [Business.Support@anglicands.org.au](mailto:Business.Support@anglicands.org.au)