

Introduction

As a church family spread across regional, rural and coastal Australia, we embrace risk management as part of our calling to be people of courageous influence in God's Kingdom. Just as we live with "Thankful Hope" in all situations, we approach risk management not merely as a protective measure, but as an opportunity to demonstrate faithful stewardship of all God has entrusted to us.

Our commitment to "Personal Impact" (1 Peter 4:11) means using everything God has given us - including our risk management practices - to impact the world for His glory. This plan reflects our understanding that effective stewardship enables us to create discipleship communities where everyday people can live in a restorative and transformative relationship with Jesus.

In line with our Leadership Cultural Imperatives, we "lead with authenticity, integrity and humility" in how we approach risk. We recognize that "if any task is below us, then leadership is beyond us." This principle shapes how we view risk management - not as a bureaucratic burden, but as a practical expression of our care for God's people and resources. Furthermore, as leaders who are "connected and accountable," we understand that effective risk management requires strong connections based on shared values, responsibilities, and care for each other.

Purpose of the Handbook

Guided by our value that "People Matter" (Matthew 22:37-39) and our Ministry Philosophy that "structure serves what the Spirit is doing," this Risk Management Plan (RMP) Handbook serves as a comprehensive guide that enables us to care well for every person God brings into our church family. Living out our commitment to "move beyond our comfort to care as Jesus cares," this handbook aims to:

1. Provide a structured framework that helps us steward our ministry effectively across all locations
2. Establish consistent approaches to protecting our people, mission, and resources

3. Foster a culture where risk awareness flows naturally from our value of "Humble Growth"
4. Ensure we meet our obligations in areas like workplace safety and child protection
5. Support Spirit-led yet informed decision-making at all levels
6. Strengthen our Safer Churches framework
7. Create environments where people can safely grow in their relationship with Jesus
8. Demonstrate practical stewardship of all God has entrusted to us

Importance of Risk Management

Our approach to risk management flows from our conviction that every person is valuable and deserving of love, respect and care. As we live this out, proper risk management becomes essential for:

1. Fulfilling our duty of care: Living our value that "People Matter" means creating genuinely safe environments where every person can encounter Jesus
2. Stewarding resources: Our value of "Personal Impact" calls us to wisely manage everything God has provided for Kingdom impact
3. Ensuring ministry sustainability: Protecting our ability to serve future generations through sound financial and operational practices
4. Advancing our mission: Safeguarding our capacity to create discipleship communities across Australia
5. Maintaining community trust: Demonstrating that we honor God and people through careful oversight
6. Meeting legal requirements: Fulfilling our obligations as good citizens and witnesses
7. Supporting growth: Creating safe spaces for discipleship and spiritual development
8. Informing leadership: Enabling Spirit-led yet wise decision-making
9. Protecting our people: Ensuring comprehensive care for staff, volunteers, and congregants
10. Emergency readiness: Being prepared to respond well to challenges
11. Continuous improvement: Growing in our capacity to serve effectively

By approaching risk management through the lens of our values and mission, we ensure it serves rather than hinders what the Spirit is doing in our midst. This enables us to focus on our calling while wisely stewarding all God has entrusted to us.

Overview of the Handbook Structure

This handbook's structure reflects our commitment to "Humble Growth" and "Spirit Led" leadership while ensuring comprehensive coverage of all risk management requirements. Each section builds upon our foundation of being "locationally motivated, centrally supported, and unified in our vision, values, and mission."

This Risk Management Plan (RMP) Handbook is designed to provide a comprehensive and integrated approach to risk management for Generocity Church. The structure of this handbook reflects our commitment to creating a safe environment for all members of our church community while ensuring compliance with relevant regulations and best practices. Here's an overview of the handbook's structure:

1. Introduction

- Purpose of the Handbook
- Importance of Risk Management
- Overview of the Handbook Structure (current section)
- Scope and Purpose of the RMP

2. Core Risk Management Framework

- Introduction to Risk and Hazard Management
- Policies and General Procedures
- Training and Induction
- Risk Identification and Assessment

3. Specific Risk Areas

- Operational Risks

- Strategic Risks
- Compliance Risks
- Financial Management

4. Risk Controls and Mitigations

- Preventive Controls
- Reactive Controls

5. Hazard Management

- Chemical Safety
- Physical and Ergonomic Hazards
- Psychosocial Hazards
- Health and Hygiene Hazards
- Environmental Hazards

6. Specialised Risk Areas

- People Protection (including Child and Youth Protection)
- Property Protection
- Cyber Security

7. Emergency and Incident Management

- Emergency Preparedness and Response
- Incident Reporting and Investigation

8. Insurance and Risk Transfer

9. Compliance and Continuous Improvement

10. Resources and Appendices

Throughout this handbook, we have integrated key elements of our Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) policies and Safer Churches framework to ensure a cohesive approach to risk management. This integration reflects our understanding that effective risk management is intrinsically linked to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all who interact with our church.

The WHS components are particularly evident in sections dealing with hazard management, emergency procedures, and incident reporting. These sections align with our commitment to providing a safe system of work for both employees and volunteers, as required by common law and WHS legislation.

Our Safer Churches framework, which focuses on creating safe environments for children and vulnerable people, is prominently featured in the People Protection section and is woven throughout the handbook. This integration ensures that our risk management practices support our commitment to being a child-safe organisation, in line with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

By structuring the handbook in this way, we aim to provide a clear, accessible, and comprehensive guide that:

1. Addresses all major areas of risk relevant to our church operations
2. Aligns with our legal and ethical obligations
3. Promotes a culture of safety and risk awareness
4. Provides practical tools and resources for implementing effective risk management practices

We encourage all staff, volunteers, and church leaders to familiarise themselves with this handbook and to use it as a reference in their day-to-day activities and decision-making processes. Remember, effective risk management is a shared responsibility, and your active participation is crucial in creating a safer environment for all at Generocity Church.

Scope of the RMP

The Risk Management Plan (RMP) for Generocity Church embodies our Leadership Cultural Imperative to "lead with authenticity, integrity and humility" while providing a comprehensive framework for identifying, assessing, and managing risks across all our Australian locations. While it is a standalone document, it works in harmony with our WHS policies and Child Protection policies to create a holistic approach that reflects our value that "People Matter."

This Risk Management Plan covers:

1. All physical locations owned or operated by Generocity Church
2. All activities and programs run by the church, both on-site and off-site
3. All staff, volunteers, congregants, and visitors
4. Financial and operational aspects of the church
5. Reputational risks
6. Compliance with legal and regulatory requirements

Purpose of the RMP

The primary purposes of this Risk Management Plan is to:

1. Provide a systematic approach to identifying and managing risks
2. Protect the people, assets, and reputation of Generocity Church
3. Ensure the continuity of our ministry and operations
4. Promote a culture of risk awareness throughout the organisation
5. Support informed decision-making at all levels of the church

Connection to WHS Policies

While the RMP covers a broad range of risks, it works in tandem with our WHS policies to ensure a safe environment for all. Specifically:

- The RMP provides the overarching framework for risk assessment, which informs specific WHS procedures
- WHS policies provide detailed guidelines for managing health and safety risks identified through the RMP process
- Incident reporting and investigation procedures outlined in the RMP support WHS compliance and improvement

Connection to Child Protection Policies

Child protection is a critical area of risk management for Generocity Church. The RMP supports our child protection efforts by:

- Identifying potential risks to children in all church activities
- Outlining risk assessment procedures that specifically consider child safety
- Ensuring that child protection considerations are integrated into all relevant church operations
- Supporting the implementation and monitoring of our child protection policies

By clearly defining the scope and purpose of the RMP and its connections to WHS and child protection policies, we aim to create a comprehensive and integrated approach to risk management at Generocity Church.

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