



**LUTHERAN
CHURCH**
OF AUSTRALIA



Emergency Response Procedure

A key part of the ChildSafe (Safe People | Safe Programs | Safe Places) safety management system is making an emergency plan.

The objective, should an incident occur during an activity or event, is to ensure as best we can the immediate safety and wellbeing of everyone onsite. Additional care and planning are required where an activity or event occurs at a location other than your own ministry group's facilities.

This procedure outlines the duties of a Team Leader.¹ It should be carefully worked through with their team during planning, well before any program² starts.

Application

This procedure applies to any incident that requires the attendance of emergency services, particularly police, fire, or special emergency service. It may also be useful where ambulance services are required or if additional support is desired. It applies to critical incidents including, but not limited to:

- death of a person
- lost person
- significantly injured person
- sexual assault
- bomb threat or terror attack
- outbreak of disease
- multiple cases of food poisoning
- person attempting or inflicting significant self-harm
- suicidal person
- significant violence
- serious vehicle incident
- heart attack or stroke
- natural disaster (eg bushfire, flood, earthquake).

¹ Principal onsite director/leader of a program

² A set of activities and events authorised and delivered by a congregation/ministry (eg camps, excursions, gatherings)



Planning

Before a program starts, use this procedure to make an emergency plan. Think carefully about the physical and emotional needs of the participants and team members. Also, think carefully about the different types of scenarios that could unfold and what you might do in each situation.

Know the location. If applicable, contact the operator of the relevant site for suggestions and instructions

Include blank incident report forms (example available in the Team Leader Resources on Safety Management Online) in the materials to be taken to the site, together with a copy of this procedure. Prefill the 'List of details/contacts form' attached to this procedure. If using Safety Management Online, ensure contact details are included in the Safety Plan and uploaded to the program.

If needed, the Professional Standards Department (PSD) will be available to help you with emergency planning.

Communication

It is crucial that you take suitable communication devices to the site and that they work at the site.

Timely communication can save lives. If you do not have a suitable mobile phone or if there is no mobile reception, find another means of communication. You may need to delegate communications to an experienced team member.

In Australia, when you can use a mobile phone at the location, download the Emergency+ App before the program starts. The app uses a phone's GPS to help emergency services



locate you. It also includes other useful phone contact numbers. This link provides details <https://emergencyapp.triplezero.gov.au/>

In New Zealand, the Hazard App provides similar monitoring functions and is highly recommended www.redcross.org.nz/what-we-do/in-new-zealand/disaster-management/hazard-app/

When at the location, make sure you can always receive and make calls.



Emergency Response Team

An Emergency Response Team is external (offsite) to the onsite team running the program and will provide support to the onsite team, where it is needed. Remember, the team is available to help; you are not alone!

An Emergency Response Team will consist of:

- Emergency Response Coordinator (district or churchwide, as applicable)
- Safe Church Coordinator
- pastoral carers – a pastor and pastoral assistant.

When planning, make sure you have quick access to the contact details of every person in the Emergency Response Team. Record the contact details in your phone and on the 'List of details/ contacts form' attached to this procedure. Ensure records (paper and electronic) are easily accessible (for example, use onsite file, noticeboard, first-aid kit, mobile phones, tablets).

Please note: if necessary, PSD can be contacted directly on +61 (0) 438 320 218 and will be available to help the Emergency Response Team. Remember to notify the Safe Church Coordinator of all incidents, whether critical or not.

Emergency Response Coordinator



contact phone numbers

South Australia – Northern Territory District

Angela Rogers
District Administrator
0413 386 482

Queensland District

Trevor Ruthenberg
District Administrator
0490 550 614

Victorian District (including Tasmania)

Stephen Mildred
District Administrator
0411 865 275

New South Wales District

Russell Veerhuis
District Administrator
0401 526 331

Western Australia District

Lester Dreckow
District Treasurer
0417 993 285

Lutheran Church of New Zealand

Debbie Venz
District Administrator
021 2230 2743

Churchwide

Tim Ross, Manager, PSD
+61 (0) 438 320 218

Useful information

'Critical Incidents', ChildSafe Team Members Guide, version 4, p 43

'Incidents and Critical Incidents', ChildSafe Team Leaders Guide, version 4, pp 45–8

If a critical incident occurs



1. Stay calm.
2. Assess whether there is immediate danger and take steps straight away to make sure everyone is safe. Organise to apply first aid, if necessary.
3. Call emergency services on 000 in Australia or 111 in New Zealand, listen to the prompts, and have relevant information ready.
 - Which services are required – police, fire, ambulance?
 - Tell them your location, with as much detail as possible.
 - Provide your name and contact number.
 - Tell them what happened and who was involved.
 - Stay focused, relevant, and on the line.
 - Ensure you carefully follow their instructions.
4. Check again that everyone is safe and feels safe. Move everyone to a safe and supervised area. Keep them calm and treat all injuries.
5. Call the Emergency Response Coordinator and notify them of the incident.³
6. Ensure the onsite chaplain or pastoral carer is providing immediate pastoral care to those impacted. Do they need additional support?
7. Keep your team and participants informed.
8. Expect regressive behaviour from participants in certain circumstances.
9. In the event of a death or a serious accident, the police will notify the family. For less serious incidents, seek the advice of the Emergency Response Coordinator before contacting the family or other people affected.
10. Commence an incident report as soon as practicable.
11. If applicable and possible, take photos of the site, situation, and injuries.
12. Refer any media inquiries to the Emergency Response Coordinator, who will forward them to the District Administrator
13. If applicable, follow any specific instructions from the operator of the site.
14. Review the program. What needs to change? Does it need to finish early?
15. If appropriate, gently encourage those impacted to speak with counsellors or doctors who can refer them to counsellors after the program.
16. Complete an incident report and share all records with the Emergency Response Coordinator and the Safe Church Coordinator, as appropriate.
17. Conduct a post-event review of the program. What went wrong? Why did it go wrong? What will we do differently next time?

Do not:

1. admit liability
2. speak to the media, apart from referring them to the Emergency Response Coordinator
3. forget about your own needs.

³ The Emergency Response Coordinator will coordinate the Emergency Response Team, as well as notify LCA Insurance of the incident. If required, the Emergency Response Coordinator may be able to find professional counsellors to assist at the site.

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Prepared by:
PSD

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EOC

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