

POLICY DOCUMENT

Title	EMAIL
<i>Theological Foundation / Constitution Alignment</i>	In the beginning God used words to speak the world into being (Genesis 1:3), our Lord used words to announce the gospel (Mark 1:15), and he uses words today to speak our new life into being as well, when the gospel is proclaimed and enacted. Our Lord even commissions us to speak for him as he calls us to be his presence for others: <i>Whoever hears you, hears me</i> (Luke 10:16). All the words and other means of communication we use therefore should be in conformity with the word and will of God, <i>full of grace and truth</i> (John 1:14; Ephesians 4:15). This is reflected in Luther's explanation to the Eighth Command, <i>You shall not bear false witness against you neighbour</i> (Exodus 20:16) which reads: <i>We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbours, betray or slander them, or destroy their reputations. Instead we are to come to their defence, speak well of them, and interpret everything in the best possible light.</i>
<i>Relevant to</i>	Pastors, District and Congregational staff and volunteers, members of all District Boards, Councils and Committees undertaking their duties as required and/or directed.
<i>Objectives</i>	<p>The LCA, LCA Districts, and their departments, organisations and institutions are making extensive use on email in communicating and carrying out their mission.</p> <p>With emails now forming a significant part of the "memory" of organisations and, in some cases containing information of a confidential nature, it is important that our organisations have a policy in place to ensure that legal, business and privacy issues are handled effectively and understood and followed by everyone involved.</p> <p>All departments, organisations and institutions of the Lutheran Church of Australia and its districts are strongly encouraged to have a policy on email in place which addresses the key areas outlined in the attached policy.</p> <p>Where LCA organisations do not have an email policy, the Policy of the LCA ICT Board will apply.</p>
<i>Policy Statement</i>	<p><i>Ownership of emails</i> All emails sent or received by users are, and shall always be, the property of <the organisation.</p> <p><i>Privacy of electronic mail</i> The District reserves the right to access and/or archive any or all email records created or received by its employees. However permission may need to be provided to access confidential material as detailed below.</p>

Privacy of emails of pastors and lay workers

In the case where a parish or congregation supplies a computer for the pastor or lay worker to do their work, even though the parish owns the computer, all the emails and other work is considered confidential and are not to be accessed by other parties, including parish officials and committees, unless the pastor/lay worker concerned, or the district president gives permission.

Both pastor/lay worker and parish need to be aware of their responsibilities under privacy legislation and the church's understanding of the confidentiality of much of a pastor/lay worker's work, including correspondence with parishioners, other pastors and church workers, his president etc.

Archiving copies of emails

Because emails form a significant and important part its "corporate memory" <the organisation> should have in place a way of storing copies of emails received and sent. This archive should be stored in a form which is accessible by the District when needed. Confidential material must be archived in an appropriate way to ensure confidentiality is retained (eg encryption, password protection etc).

Password security

Users are responsible for their password. A password is not to be shared with another person under any circumstance. If a user has reason to believe that their password has been compromised then the password is to be changed immediately.

Personal use

Email is provided to staff for the work of Church departments and agencies; however, the District recognises that, consistent with the provision of a family friendly work environment some personal use is reasonable. Therefore limited personal use of email is permitted where:

- There is no additional cost to the District;
- It does not interfere with the user's work and the activities of other employees;
- It does not disrupt the system and/or harm the District's reputation; and
- Use is not classified as inappropriate.

Use for reasonable incidental personal purposes does not include:

- Use for the purposes of a third party (eg another business, a club society or organisation)
- Use for conducting personal business affairs (eg a second job);
- Use which disparages the District or harms its reputation (eg sending to persons outside the District comments that are critical, abusive or derogatory of the District or its management, even where the views are expressed as being personal).

Email Content

Email is a communication tool to be used for distributing church-

	<p>related information. The following conditions apply to email content.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Email is a record: Management of email must comply with existing legislation, regulations, policies, and standards (eg. the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act). It is also subject to legal disclosure processes. 2. Inappropriate material: Users may not send or distribute email containing inappropriate material, such as offensive jokes (text or graphic). This includes, but is not limited to, sound files, movie files or any form of such material. 3. Profanity or pornography: Users may not send or distribute email containing profanity or pornography. Safe Place Policy and Equal Employment Opportunity laws apply to email content. Sending pornographic material (of any degree) by email is an extremely serious matter and may lead to termination of employment. 4. Derogatory or inflammatory information: Users may not send or distribute email containing derogatory, inflammatory, insulting or libellous information about any other user, church member, associate or any other person whatsoever. 5. Altering forwarded information: Altering forwarded information is not recommended. Wherever practical, where forwarded emails require comments or clarification this text should be contained in a separate section rather than changing the original email. 6. Impersonating or misrepresenting someone else via email: Impersonating or misrepresenting someone else in any manner, including via email, for example a user logging onto a functional ID and sending an email signing it with someone else's name, is strictly prohibited. <p><i>Digitised Signatures</i> Use of scanned written signatures pasted into electronic mail messages or other documents is discouraged.</p> <p><i>Spam Mail</i> Spam mail is electronic junk mail. In general, senders of spam mail have two purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to encourage recipients to purchase goods or services from the sender • to gather live email addresses for future use or for selling on to other spammers. <p>Users are not to respond to or encourage the receipt of spam mail. All spam email should be deleted.</p> <p><i>Chain Letters</i> A chain letter is a communication that includes an incentive to forward it on to others. This incentive takes the form of a promise</p>
--	--

	<p>for reward and/or a threat.</p> <p>Forwarding of chain letters does not constitute useful application of the email facility. Forwarding or sending of improper communications is a waste of resources. Users are encouraged not to forward chain letters.</p> <p>Responsibilities The District Administrator has the responsibility to ensure users are fully aware of this policy. Users are responsible for ensuring that their use of email is appropriate and compliant with this policy. Serious breaches may be referred to the appropriate manager.</p> <p>The District Administrator is responsible for taking appropriate action when this policy has been breached.</p> <p>Consequences Users involved in an alleged inappropriate use of the email technology will be dealt with according to the policy. After appropriate investigation, sanctions may include but are not limited to disciplinary action that may include eventual dismissal.</p> <p>Use of disclaimers Individual users are not required to include any disclaimer. Staff are to be informed of the authorised use of any applicable organisational disclaimer.</p> <p>Report email abuse If the content of a message is offensive, the appropriate policy or procedure should be immediately brought to the attention of their supervisor.</p>
<p>Procedures / Guidelines</p>	<p>Use email effectively Please observe the following etiquette:</p> <p>Netiquette: The Internet has its own etiquette and codes of behaviour. A number of Web sites set out "Netiquette" guidelines. A comprehensive site may be found at: www.fau.edu/irm/about/netiquette.php The 32 points for email etiquette available at www.emailreplies.com are very helpful.</p> <p>Be polite:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All capitals is SHOUTING - At least that is the way many people interpret the use of all capitals in electronic mail. • Say Please and Thank you - While conciseness is good, it should never be at the expense of common courtesy. • Review before Sending - Proof reading messages before sending will not only reveal spelling and grammatical mistakes, but will detect whether the message is sensible and is going to be well received and understood. <p>Use email as a work tool</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confine Messages to Business Matters

	<p>email is not provided to distribute chain letters, no matter how innocent or appealing their content. These are a serious waste of resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat email as a Permanent, Official Record <p>What is written can be used in evidence for or against users. This should be considered before sending mail.</p> <p>Signoff messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting a name at the end of a message is courteous. Your sign off message should convey business card type information in a professional manner. Use of colour, graphical backgrounds, pictures and unusual fonts should be avoided. <p>Tips for Efficiency</p> <p>When creating a message it is important not to overload recipients with information they do not really want or need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be concise, but not at the expense of normal courtesy. • Don't attach a document with letterhead and logo when a short message would suffice. • Reduce size of graphics before attaching to emails • Travelling staff may be using a slow connection to download their email, so don't send attached documents that may take a long time to receive. <p>Numerous Web sites and online services ask you to provide your Email addresses for various purposes. Be aware that doing so may result in you receiving unwanted email, sometimes in large quantities.</p> <p>Email Confidentiality</p> <p>Protecting your organisation's confidential information is the shared responsibility of all employees. If you have any doubt whatsoever about whether any written or verbal information can be sent or communicated to a person external to your organisation, please contact your supervisor.</p> <p>Use of the BCC: field</p> <p>In certain circumstances use of BCC: address field can be useful, eg when sending an email to multiple recipients. You can hide people's email addresses from each other for security purposes. This is a sensible privacy and anti-spam precaution because it avoids making a long list of email addresses available to all the recipients (which is what happens if you put everyone's address in the TO: or CC: fields). For this reason, it often makes sense to use the BCC: field for mailing lists.</p> <p>Use of disclaimers</p> <p>Individual users are not required to include any disclaimer. Staff are to be informed of the authorised use of any applicable organisational disclaimer.</p> <p>Report email abuse</p> <p>If the content of a message is offensive, the message should be immediately brought to the attention of their supervisor.</p>
<p>Policy Ownership</p>	<p>The LCA ICT Committee is responsible for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing this policy annually and recommending any necessary amendments to the General Church Council.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arranging for the policy to be published on the LCA public or members websites as appropriate. <p>The LCA Secretary is responsible for ensuring that all LCA departments, organisations and institutions are aware of the policy</p> <p>The District Administrator is responsible for ensuring that all LCA congregations, parishes, organisations and institutions in the District are aware of the policy.</p>
Policy Implementation	District Administrator
Definitions	N/A
References	LCA Policy Alignment – <i>LCA Email Policy (Pastors' Handbook 2005)</i>
Risk & Compliance	Reviewed by Risk & Compliance Committee / /
Effective Date	Adopted by District Church Council / /2013 Resolution 13/xxx
Review Date	June 2015
Reference No.	VP-005.A
Attachments	N/A