



Allora Uniting Church
44 Warwick Street, Allora

23rd – 25th February 2024

Presbytery Property Committee

Please pray for...

- Good and glorifying use of all our physical assets.
- The people of Warwick Killarney Freestone Parish as they undertake a big affordable housing project.
- That the Presbytery Property Committee be sustained in its work including the provision of a new chairperson.

Report

The Presbytery Property Committee (PPC) comprises Jenny Noble, Gordon Gillmore, Ian Darnell and Rev Rob Callow. The committee continues to meet monthly overseeing matters associated with presbytery owned properties and supporting congregations and church councils in property issues.

The PPC previously reported that the Wandoan manse had sold. This did not eventuate. However we now have another contract on the property and now awaiting (again) settlement.

The committee continues to support Pastor Jennie Feldmeier through maintenance assistance of the new Charleville manse. A new carport will be erected soon. This will be useful for housing additional vehicles or a caravan.

Advice and/or support has also been provided to Dalby UC in the use of MDF monies to install air conditioning into the church building and to the Warwick Killarney Freestone Parish as they continue to pursue affordable housing options in the Southern Downs.

New vehicle/driving guidelines have been drafted by the PPC. These give guidance to all travelling in the more remote areas of our presbytery region. The draft document has been reviewed and accepted in principle by the Presbytery Standing Committee. There are some

“final touches” required, however the guidelines are attached to this report for those who may be interested and offer comment.

A new lease vehicle for the CBW RAM will be received by the end of February.

As we all get busy in another year, the PPC reminds the congregations that property checks are meant to be conducted annually. Please schedule a property inspection somewhere in your 2024 plans. A template is available on the Queensland Synod website and duplicated in the documents for this Presbytery gathering.

Due to his latest role in Ipswich Uniting Church, Rev Rob Callow is no longer eligible to be the chairperson of the PPC. The committee looks to the Presbytery to appoint a new chairperson.

Recommendations

1. That this report be received.
2. That the Presbytery notes the need for annual property checks as determined by the Queensland Synod.
3. That the Presbytery appoints a new chair for the PPC.

Report Submitted by:

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If you have questions, please email before the meeting.

Policy-- **DRAFT** --

Presbytery of the Downs

Driving in Remote Areas of Queensland

1. Purpose

This policy outlines guidelines and procedures for Presbytery staff and Ministerial Agents who are required to drive in remote parts of Queensland as part of their employment or ministry. It is designed to enhance safety and well-being of employees and Ministerial Agents while operating in these environments while maintaining compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

2. Scope.

This policy applies to all employees, ministerial agents and any other personnel who may be required to work or exercise ministry in remote areas of Queensland. It is also strongly recommended that any Church Members travelling in remote areas for or on behalf of the Church also follow these guidelines.

For the purpose of this policy, all areas west of the Leichhardt Highway are considered remote (as per the Australian Standard Geographical Classification System Remoteness Areas).

3. Responsibilities

a. Ministers/Employees/Drivers

It is the responsibility of employees and Ministerial Agents to:

- i. Be aware of this policy and comply with all the guidelines and procedures outlined in this policy.
- ii. Ensure their vehicle is well-maintained and roadworthy.
- iii. Adhere to speed limits, traffic rules and regulations.
- iv. Report accidents and any incident that threatened injury to persons or damage to vehicles to their supervisor.
- v. Carry essential safety and survival equipment as appropriate to each journey. (See Appendix C.)

b. Supervisors

Supervisors and managers are responsible for:

- i. Ensuring that employees and Ministerial Agents are aware of and follow this policy.
- ii. Reviewing and approving travel plans for remote areas.
- iii. Providing necessary resources and support for remote travel.
- iv. Providing training and regular updates regarding policy updates and current safety issues.

c. Presbytery Standing Committee (and relevant sub-committees)

Presbytery is responsible for:

- i. Ensuring that employees and Ministerial Agents receive appropriate training.
- ii. Monitor and update this policy as required.
- iii. Review all accident and incident reports with regard to enhancing training or revising this policy.
- iv. Ensuring compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

4. Vehicle Requirements

- a. Vehicles used for remote travel must be well-maintained, roadworthy and in good working order.
- b. Regular maintenance must be performed in a timely manner by qualified persons.

- c. Vehicles must be equipped with communication equipment appropriate to the area of use (e.g. satellite phone, UHF radio, personal locator beacon). See Appendix A.
 - d. The vehicle will be inspected daily when in use. (Appendix D.)
5. Travel Planning
- a. Assess the risk of any proposed trip. (Appendix E.)
Check local conditions, plan accordingly and prepare more detailed notification for higher risk trips.
 - b. Employees and Ministerial Agents must prepare a travel plan before embarking on any journey likely to involve driving more than 2hrs from home to reach their destination.
 - c. The plan should include details of departure point, destination, stopping points, expected duration and contact information.
 - d. The plan must be communicated to a supervisor or responsible person. For low-risk trips a simple SMS notification will be sufficient. For higher risk trips an itinerary should be provided.
 - e. The extent of planning information provided will be commensurate with the level of risk determined for each trip.
6. Safety and Survival Equipment
- a. Vehicles being used for remote travel must carry:
 - i. Safety and Survival equipment (Appendix B.)
 - ii. Adequate supplies for dealing with extreme weather conditions. (Appendix C.)
 - b. When vehicles are travelling in company it is not necessary for all vehicles to be fully equipped provided the equipment is present in the group taken as a whole.
7. Training and Awareness
- Employees and Ministerial Agents must receive training in:
- a. Vehicle systems and operation relevant to the vehicle they use.
 - b. First Aid with remote area component.
8. Reporting
- a. All accidents must be reported to a supervisor and the relevant Synod or UnitingCare insurance contact person. (See Queensland Synod website: ucaqld.com.au.)
 - b. All serious incidents must be reported to Presbytery for review.
9. Compliance with Laws and Regulations
- Employees and Ministerial Agents are required to adhere to all local, state and commonwealth laws and regulations at all times.
10. Review and Updates
- This policy will be reviewed biennially or as needed to ensure its relevance and compliance with changing legal requirements.
11. Conclusion
- Remote travel has unique requirements for additional vigilance as compared to other travel. It is important to apply common sense whenever working in a remote area and particularly so on the roads. Employees and Ministerial Agents should exercise caution and adopt a conservative approach to driving when they first travel remotely. With experience it is expected that drivers will acquire additional knowledge and skills to enhance safety.

Appendix A. Communication Equipment

Choose communication equipment to suit areas of travel. These may include:

1. UHF Radio fitted to vehicle to ensure optimal operating range.
2. Satellite Phone with messaging capability
3. PLB (EPIRB) preferably with tracking and messaging capability
4. Mobile phone

Appendix B. Safety Equipment

1. Compressor – portable or fitted.
2. Fire Extinguisher – 1kg minimum.
3. Working Jack suitable for vehicle (and has extra travel for vehicles with lift kits)
4. Basic Tools (Screw drivers, Spanners, Pliers, Side Cutters, Multi Grips, Socket Set, etc)
5. First aid kit.
6. Snake bite kit.
7. Backup Battery Starter – optional
8. Recovery boards/tracks – minimum of two.*
9. Shovel – long handled.*
10. Snatch Strap.*
11. Equaliser Strap.*
12. Bow Shackles – minimum of two.*
13. Fuse Shackle.*

* Recovery equipment is optional except for travelling in areas west of Mitchell and Landsborough Highways.

Appendix C. Survival, Extreme Conditions

1. Water (5lt/person/day) stored in multiple containers.
2. Food. (Biscuits will do)
3. Sun protective clothing
4. Sunscreen
5. Sunglasses
6. Sun shelter (tarp, sheet of some sort)
7. Blanket or coat.
8. Insect repellent.

Appendix D. Daily Inspection

1. Engine Oil
2. Coolant and Fluids
3. Tyres.
 - a. Pressure.
 - b. Tread and general condition.
 - c. Spare.
4. Windscreen.
 - a. Check for damage.
 - b. Glass clean for visibility.
5. Engine bay for loose connections, foreign material.

6. Under body for foreign objects or loose components.
7. Belts.
 - a. Condition.
 - b. Tension.
8. All lights working.
9. UHF radio check.
10. Phone battery charged.

Appendix E. Risk Assessment

1. Self Assessment.
 - a. General health and wellbeing.
 - b. Fatigue.
 - c. Experience/confidence.
2. Distances.
3. Night Driving Requirements.
4. Familiarity with route.
5. Towing.
6. Remoteness.
7. Road Surfaces.
8. Weather.
9. Road Conditions.
10. Wildlife.
11. Other Hazards.

Revision History

7 Nov 2023	First Draft
14 Nov 2023	Second Draft
28 Nov 2023	Third Draft
9 Jan 2024	Fourth Draft



Annual Property Maintenance Checklist

Church properties must be maintained in a good and safe condition in order to meet the requirements of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and to ensure the health, safety and well-being of all people associated with the church. *The Uniting Church in Australia Regulations* require a Presbytery Property Committee to regularly inspect or arrange for the regular inspection of properties for which the presbytery and church councils are responsible, and to ensure that such properties are maintained. The church council is responsible for the management and administration of all congregational property, including the care and maintenance and other things as are necessary or appropriate for its use and management.

For more details about the checklist below, refer to the attached supplementary information.

Presbytery:	
Congregation:	
Address:	
Date inspected:	
Inspected by:	
Contact phone:	

General information / documentation

Questions	Yes	No	Additional comments
1. Do you have a Work Health and Safety Policy?			
2. When was your last Asbestos Audit undertaken?			
3. Is there any asbestos present in any of your buildings? Please provide details of known areas and areas that are assumed to contain asbestos in the additional comments field.			
4. Is the location of all asbestos labelled?			
5. Is a copy of the report easily accessible to workers and contractors?			
6. Have you implemented ChildSafe™?			
7. Is a copy of your Child Protection Policy readily available to parents?			
8. When was training last provided to your children's and youth leaders?			

Building environment – internal/external

Questions	Yes	No	Additional comments
9. Is plant life blocking visibility of the property by passers-by or impeding safe entry or exit from the property by vehicles or pedestrians?			
10. Are car parks and footpaths lit during night meetings?			
11. Is there security lighting in place and are there lights on throughout the night? Include details about the type of lighting in the additional comments field.			
12. Are paths and/or walkways free from trip hazards and other obstacles?			
13. Is there disabled access into the facility (ramps etc.)?			
14. Are any windows cracked or broken?			

Annual Property Maintenance Checklist

Questions	Yes	No	Additional comments
15. Do all doors and windows open easily and shut completely?			
16. Are floor surfaces, carpets or mats in good condition?			
17. Are floor surfaces even, level and free from trip and slip hazards?			
18. Are internal/external steps and staircases in good condition and fitted with anti-slip tread?			
19. Are handrails or balustrades installed where required (i.e. on stairs or balconies with a fall of more than one metre)?			
20. Are all aisles, exits and access ways clear of obstructions?			
21. Are all electrical cords kept in a safe manner (i.e. clear of all aisles, exits and access ways, not dangling loosely from raised surfaces)?			
22. Are ceilings and walls in good repair (no water leakage, flaking paint, mould or mildew etc.)?			
23. Have gutters been cleaned in the past six months?			
24. Are building materials, timber pallets, cardboard, loose boards, bricks or tiles stored anywhere on the property?			
25. Are rubbish bins stored inside the buildings or secured away from the buildings?			

Electrical

Questions	Yes	No	Additional comments
26. Is a residual current device (RCD) or safety switch installed on each building?			
27. Have the RCDs been tested in the past six months?			
28. Have there been any alternative energy systems (solar, wind etc.) installed at your property?			
29. Are all light fittings, switches and power points clean and in good repair (i.e. not cracked, loose or improperly fixed to walls)?			
30. Are power boards used instead of household double adaptors?			
31. If power boards are in use, are they limited to one board per outlet?			
32. Are all power boards and extension leads in good condition (not frayed or wires exposed)?			
33. Has all portable electrical equipment been inspected, tested and tagged by a qualified electrical worker?			
34. Are appliances well-maintained and operating correctly (fridges, microwaves etc.)?			

Annual Property Maintenance Checklist

Ventilation and amenities

Questions	Yes	No	Additional comments
35. Are church members satisfied with building ventilation (i.e. thermal comfort, air quality)?			
36. If property is air-conditioned, are filters and vents regularly cleaned?			
37. Are property amenities hygienically cleaned (i.e. kitchen, toilets and showers)?			
38. Is all furniture in good stable condition (chairs, pews etc.)?			

First aid and emergency procedures

Questions	Yes	No	Additional comments
39. Are fire exits clearly marked, easily identifiable and free from obstruction?			
40. Are all extinguisher and fire hoses easily accessible?			
41. Have extinguishers, hose reels and fire blankets been serviced in the past six months?			
42. Are there illuminated exit signs or emergency lights installed in buildings? If you do not have emergency lighting, use the additional comments field to detail your measures to ensure a safe evacuation during an evening meeting.			
43. Are emergency and fire evacuation procedures clearly displayed?			
44. Are workers trained in the evacuation procedures?			
45. Has a fire drill been conducted in the past year?			
46. Is there a first aid kit and is it accessible to all members?			
47. Do you have designated first aid officers and are their details kept with the first aid kits?			
48. Are contents of the first aid kits appropriate for the property and its activities, and regularly checked and maintained?			
49. Are first aid kits appropriately labelled (i.e. marked with a white cross and green background)?			

Insurance and security

Questions	Yes	No	Additional comments
50. Have there been any security issues during the year? If so have they been resolved?			
51. Is there a burglar alarm installed? In the additional comments field, advise whether this is a local alarm or monitored by a security firm.			
52. Are there key-operated deadlocks on all external doors?			
53. Have key-operated window locks or security screens been installed?			
54. Is the computer and multimedia equipment secured?			
55. Are computer systems regularly backed up, and backups kept off-site?			

Annual Property Maintenance Checklist

Questions	Yes	No	Additional comments
56. Has your key register been reviewed in the past 12 months? In the additional comments field, advise how many people have keys to the property.			
57. Are the facilities regularly used by other church groups, agencies or the general community?			
58. Is there a current UCA-endorsed rental agreement in place with all groups who use the property?			
59. Could your property be shared with other denominations or UnitingCare Queensland activities?			

Child safety

Questions	Yes	No	Additional comments
60. Do children attend your church?			
61. Has work been undertaken to make the environment child safe?			
62. Do all cupboards and drawers which store sharp and hazardous materials (cutlery, glass, plastic bags etc.) have child-resistant catches?			
63. Are electrical and gas appliances, particularly kitchen appliances and power tools, inaccessible to children?			
64. Are safety plugs used in all power points that are not being utilised?			
65. Are all sources of hot and boiling water inaccessible to children?			
66. Are all chemicals, fuels and hazardous substances securely stored?			
67. Are all hazardous substances (including poisons) properly labelled and stored in accordance with the Safety Data Sheet (SDS)?			
68. If applicable, is the children's playground and equipment regularly maintained and free from hazards and debris?			

Additional comments

For assistance to complete your checklist, contact the Synod office Risk and Insurance Team on 07 3377 9725. Please retain the original completed checklist with your congregation's own property records and forward copies to your presbytery office.