

RISK CHECKLIST – CHURCHES MEN’S SHEDS

Some churches minister to men by establishing Men’s Sheds, places where men can experience Christian community in a safe and caring environment. Due to the hazards associated with using power equipment in the creative activities undertaken in most Sheds, the risk profile is quite different to other church ministries. It is important that those risks are identified and mitigation strategies are adopted in order that a safe environment is provided to Shed workers and participants.

This checklist sets out topics to consider when conducting a risk analysis of a Men’s Shed. .

Premises

Are there slip, trip or fall hazards either within the shed or in the grounds leading to the shed, e.g. carpet condition, floor level, steps, ramps, lifts, handrails, electrical leads? Are these checked on a regular basis? How are risks associated with “Working at heights’ controlled?

Have electrical equipment and appliances been subject to testing and tagging?

What protocols are in place regarding storage of heavy goods on high shelving?

Is lighting adequate within the shed, particularly exits and stairs?

Does the shed have appropriate toilet and washing facilities? Are these regularly checked to minimise possible hazards?

Are first aid kits available? Are trained first aid practitioners on duty?

Are hazardous materials (chemicals, gas bottles etc.) securely stored? Are Safety Data Sheets on-hand for all materials?

Have the fire prevention facilities been inspected and maintained as required by regulation (signage, exits, sprinklers, smoke detectors, extinguishers, alarms, etc.)?

Are fire exits clear of any obstruction?

What emergency evacuation processes are in place? Do they cater for multiple emergency types: fire, tempest, physical attack? Are volunteers trained in the procedures? Have these been tested?

Is the venue used by other organisations? Consider relevant safety measures?

How are risks associated with working at high / low temperatures managed? Are air conditioning and heating plant regularly inspected and maintained? (e.g. filters, visual inspections)

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Staff & Volunteer Workers

Are position descriptions available for all staff and volunteer roles?

Are bullying and harassment policies in place?

If any shed activities involve working with children, have all staff and volunteer workers been required to complete working with children certification?

Does the shed cater for people with physical disabilities?

Is there a policy regarding the maximum number of people in the shed at any time?

Refer to separate “Risk Information Churches - Employing Staff” on the ABIS website.

Participants

What induction processes are provided to participants? Does this include WHS/OHS responsibilities?

What processes are in place for dealing with disruptive, aggressive or abusive participants?

Security

What building access controls exist?

Is the whereabouts of all building keys known?

Has the potential for theft of material, equipment or belongings been considered? What is the potential for property damage?

If applicable, what cash handling (including banking) protocols exist? If applicable, what protocols exist in relation to security of debit / credit card data?

Do you have policies for dealing with possible physical attacks?

What emergency contact arrangements do you have in place?

People Movement

What are the risks associated with people entering or leaving the shed?

Do you have appropriate traffic management protocols in place for staff and participants moving around the shed?

Does the shed have adequate signage? (e.g. exits, equipment)

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Food Handling

If food is being prepared and/or sold, refer to the separate “Risk Checklist Churches – Church Cafes”.

Is training provided regarding the nature and efficacy of cleaning chemicals? e.g. how chemicals should be used, risks associated (caustic), etc.

Waste Disposal

Have additional waste disposal facilities been arranged in addition to normal council facilities? Do you have separate facilities for recyclables?

Does the venue have appropriate dust and fume extraction systems in place and operating?

Safety

Is access to equipment restricted to trained / certified people?

Are required / recommended guards installed on all equipment used in the shed? Is any equipment unguarded?

Are Safe Work Method Statements completed for all new items of equipment? Do proposed work practices comply with WorkSafe/SafeWork Guidance Notes, Codes of Practice and Compliance Codes?

Is equipment cleaned and maintained to manufacturers’ recommendations? Are records kept of inspections and maintenance carried out?

Are workers and participants trained in proper (safe) use of equipment? Are equipment instruction manuals / guides available for all staff and volunteers?

Are required licences held by operators of specialist equipment? (e.g. forklifts)

Are Safety Data Sheets available for all hazardous substances used in the shed (cleaning products, gases, paints, thinners etc.)? Are all hazardous substances securely stored in accordance with manufacturers and WorkSafe recommendations?

What incident reporting processes do you have in place? Does this include analysis after the fact, to support learning?

Has the venue identified instances when Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is required? Is usage mandated?

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Is equipment monitored to determine noise levels; are noise hazards controlled as recommended by regulatory authorities?

Does equipment usage result in vibration hazards; are these controlled as recommended by regulatory authorities?

Regulation / Registration

Have appropriate planning and building approvals been obtained for the shed?

Have all conditions of approvals been met?

Has the shed been inspected by local council and have any deficiencies been rectified?

Insurance

Are appropriate insurance arrangements in place for staff and volunteer workers?

Note that standard ABIS insurance will protect church staff and “authorised” volunteer workers; it does not provide cover for participants.

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References

Risk management resources provided on Australian Men’s Shed website

<http://www.mensshed.org/risk-management/.aspx>

Safety in The Work Shed – Minter Ellison

[http://www.minterellison.com/files/Uploads/Documents/Publications/Reports%20Guides/RG_2012-SafetyInTheWorkShed\[BNE120191\].pdf](http://www.minterellison.com/files/Uploads/Documents/Publications/Reports%20Guides/RG_2012-SafetyInTheWorkShed[BNE120191].pdf)