



National Council of **Churches in Australia** Safe Church Program



Safe Church Training Agreement

An initiative of the National Council of Churches in Australia
www.safechurches.org.au

Information Pack

2018



www.safechurches.org.au

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The Safe Church Training Agreement of the National Council of Churches in Australia facilitates high quality, sustainable, accessible, Safe Church workshops for local church and ministry leaders.

The Safe Church Training Agreement (SCTA) is a service of the National Council of Churches in Australia (NCCA) with both NCCA and non-NCCA churches participating in the agreement.

The Safe Church Training focusses on helping local church leaders fulfil their pastoral, legal (i.e. child protection, duty of care, due diligence), insurance, risk management, denominational and ethical roles and responsibilities for the spiritual, emotional and physical safety of all people.

To ensure high quality both in training programs and in the calibre of presenters, SCTA Training Standards have been developed in consultation with Australian churches. These standards are used to 'endorse' both the training programs and the workshop presenters of our endorsed 'training partners'.

SCTA members agree to recognise nationally all SCTA endorsed Safe Church Training workshops, awareness programs and professional development events. SCTA endorses Safe Church Training presented by our SCTA 'Training Partners'.

The SCTA recognises that many Australian churches and Christian organisations have their own safe church training programs. The SCTA does not seek to replace these, rather, it seeks to support the good work done by these groups by facilitating inter-church training with the wider Christian community.

SCTA is a movement of Australian churches and Christian organisations keen to work together towards safer Church ministries and to protect those who are involved in our Christian faith communities.

Now is a critical time for the Church in Australia as we reflect on, and consider our response to, the Royal Commission recommendations. It is a very important time to remain closely abreast of ongoing legislative changes and current best practice, in order to ensure your church or ministry community remains up to date on safe church policy and practice.

The Final Report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, states that the "National Council of Churches in Australia is well positioned to work proactively with the independent oversight bodies to ensure that individual religious institutions are able to comply with the requirements" (Final Report, Volume 16 Religious Institutions, Book 3, page 293).

In 2018 the Safe Church Training Agreement agrees:

- To provide the National SCTA Standards for Safe Church programs and presenters
- To provide SCTA presenter workshops in any state or territory across Australia on request
- To provide a regularly updated 'SCTA Manual'-2018 now available
- To provide/facilitate an application and endorsement process for Safe Church Workshop presenters
- To provide national coordination of our 'Training Partners' Safe Church workshops via the SCTA Calendar
- To consult nationally with ecumenical partners about how the SCTA can meet the varied needs of our membership base, providing quality services that respond accordingly to those needs
- To lead in facilitating ecumenical partnerships regarding Child Safe matters nationally
- To inform SCTA Members of relative legislative changes for their state or territory
- To inform, update and review SCTA members of changes to the National SCTA Standards
- To update the SCTA website regularly: www.safechurches.org.au with information, workshop dates, resources and legislative changes



KEY VALUES

- The protection of the rights of and flourishing of all people is the shared commitment in our promotion of safe church and ministry environments.
- Protection of children and adults in the community is an imperative of our shared Christian faith.
- Inter-church training expresses our “serving together in ministry” that is safe for all people.
- Safer ministry recognises and respects the differences between our Christian traditions and State and Territory legislation and compliance.
- Common National Standards of good practice are the basis for holistic Safe Church ministry.
- Training and professional development focusses on leaders having a Christ-like attitude and behaviour in Christian ministry at all times and with all people.

KEY OBJECTIVES

To make Australian churches safer places the SCTA aims to model:

- **HIGH QUALITY:** by providing National Standards for holistic Safe Church ministry programs and training of workshop presenters.
- **SUSTAINABILITY:** by resourcing and facilitating the ongoing task of educating leaders in holistic Safe Church ministry.
- **ACCESSIBILITY:** by resourcing and facilitating the training of greater numbers of church and ministry leaders so as to minimise the risk of the potential for, and intensity of, failures in duty of care and cases of physical, sexual, emotional, financial and spiritual abuse.
- **RESPONSIBILITY:** by increasing the awareness of ‘every person’ involved in Australian churches and Christian ministry of our shared responsibility in holistic Safe Church ministry.

Safe Church Workshops are interactive, awareness-raising workshops covering: Christian foundations of safe ministry, duty of care, vulnerable people protection (abuse prevention), due diligence in relation to recruitment and supervision of all church leaders and the management of program risks.

The SCTA recommends all Church leaders and those involved in ministry to children, young people and those who may be vulnerable attend an introduction (full day) workshop in their first year of ministry and a three hour refresher course every three years.

National Standards for Safe Church Programs and Presenters

The National Council of Churches in Australia (NCCA) began the Safe Church Training initiative in 2007-2008 to assist churches in Australia to ensure that Christian ministries and Christian faith communities are safe environments, with a particular focus on the safety, protection and care of the vulnerable, especially for children.

Over 35 different church traditions, synods, dioceses and Christian organisations across Australia are currently members of the Safe Church Training Agreement (SCTA) and are committed to working together to ensure that church ministries and services to the community are safe at all times for all people.

Training is held throughout the states and territories of Australia according to national training standards developed by the SCTA. Over 23,000 people have undertaken a SCTA Awareness Workshop. The SCTA has an application and endorsement process for presenters which is currently being reviewed. For further information about the application process or updated training please contact the National Coordinator for the Safe Church Program at LCreagan@ncca.org.au or Ph:02 8259 0876 during business hours (Eastern Standard time).

The SCTA recommends that every Church and ministry leader (volunteer and paid) working with 0-18 year olds, and everyone in senior leadership positions (ministers, ministry team leaders, coordinators, senior church leaders, board/pastoral council members) attend an SCTA Awareness workshop within their first year of ministry and attend a refresher workshop every 3 years after.

The SCTA National Training Standards are reviewed to ensure that they reflect State, Territory and Federal legislative, insurance and community requirements so that those churches that are part of the SCTA continue to lead the way in ensuring that churches and Christian organisations are a safe place.

The standards assist churches to meet workplace health and safety (WH&S) requirements, duty of care responsibilities for those who participate in activities of the church, and the protection and care of children, young people and adults.

The SCTA National Training Standards apply to all those who are members of the Safe Church Training Agreement that is administered by NCCA. Church training manuals and training workshops need to meet these training standards to be eligible for membership. The SCTA facilitates the training of presenters to ensure consistency and quality in the delivery of training that meets the National Training Standards.



Members

Safe Church training Agreement (SCTA) members are churches and Christian organisations who pay an annual membership fee to the National Council of Churches in Australia (NCCA). The Safe Church program, which is part of the NCCA, manages the Safe Church Training Agreement and provides support to SCTA members. SCTA members enjoy the benefit of high quality material that is continually updated so it is in line with current legislation, policy development and standards.

SCTA member churches are able to host Safe Church Awareness training, which is open to any denomination/organisation in that region.

Endorsed Partner churches

The SCTA recognises that religious and faith-based organisations and programs address a broad range of situations and come into contact with a range of individuals and groups and can be a very nuanced space. Endorsed training partners are churches or organisations who have developed their own material in line with the SCTA standards and framework and have gained the SCTA endorsement for their denomination. SCTA endorsed partner churches can also offer their training to the wider Christian community, depending on their capacity.

Cost of Annual Membership

Stand-alone (independent) site:	\$300
100 or fewer active ministry sites:	\$750
101 to 200 active ministry sites:	\$1,650
200+ active ministry sites:	\$2,750

- Active Ministry Sites: where ministry to children and vulnerable adults occurs, ie parishes or local congregations
- The membership fee does not include the cost of sending volunteers to workshops
- If the cost of membership would cause financial difficulty for your church or Christian organisation, please contact the NCCA Safe Church Program Team
- Membership is payable from 1 July for the financial year to 30 June



2018 SCTA Members

- Anglican Diocese of Bendigo
- Anglican Diocese of Brisbane/Rockhampton/North Queensland/Northern Territory
- Anglican Diocese of Gippsland
- Anglican Diocese of Grafton
- Anglican Diocese of The Murray
- Anglican Diocese of Newcastle
- Anglican Diocese of Sydney
- Anglican Diocese of Wangaratta
- Baptist Churches NSW & ACT
- Tasmanian Baptists
- Baptist Union of Victoria
- Baptist Churches Western Australia
- Boys Brigade
- Catholic Diocese of Ballarat
- Catholic Diocese of Bathurst
- Catholic Professional Standards Office Queensland
- Christ Evangelical Church Australia
- Churches of Christ NSW
- Churches of Christ VIC & TAS
- EV Church
- 4 Square
- Fusion Australia
- Independent Fellowship[of Evangelical Church (EV Church)
- International Network of Churches
- Lutheran Church Australia
- Presbyterian Church Australia NSW, SA, NT, WA
- Presbyterian Church Victoria
- Riverview Church
- Salvation Army Australian Eastern Territory
- Uniting Church NSW & ACT
- Uniting Church VIC & TAS
- Uniting Church WA

2018 sees the Safe Church Training Agreement enter the 11th year of operation across Australia. We invite Australia's churches and Christian organisations to participate in this collaboration to serve together as the body of Christ with a commitment to see love, justice, mercy and compassion lived out in making our churches safe for everyone.

Contact Us

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