



National Council of
Churches in Australia



Safe Church Training Agreement

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

Information Pack

2016



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.

The SCTA provides:

- National SCTA Standards for Safe Church Programs and Training Presenters
- Continuing review and periodic updates as necessary that inform SCTA Members of changes to the National SCTA Standards
- An 'SCTA Manual'
- A co-endorsement process for Safe Church workshop presenters
- National coordination of our Training Partners Safe Church workshops via the online SCTA Calendar
- A National Register of attendees at SCTA co-endorsed workshops
- A National Register of SCTA co-endorsed Training Presenters
- SCTA website: www.safechurches.org.au with current information, workshop dates, resources and legislative changes
- A voice into the wider Australian community regarding Vulnerable Adult and Children matters.



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 vulnerable people 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 young people and vulnerable people 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 vulnerable people 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 SCTA. Over 20,000 people have undertaken a SCTA Awareness workshop.

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 and vulnerable people.

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 of NCCA manages the Safe Church Training Agreement and provides support to SCTA Members.

Endorsed Training Partners

Endorsed Training Partners are Safe Church Training Agreement Members who are willing to offer their training to the wider Christian community.

Cost of Annual Membership

100 or fewer active ministry sites:	\$600
101 to 200 active ministry sites:	\$1500
200+ active ministry sites:	\$2750

- 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

In 2016 – 2017 the NCCA Safe Church Training Agreement will:

- Provide revised National SCTA Standards for Safe Church programs and presenters
- Continue to review the National Training Standards and update as necessary and inform SCTA Members and Training Partners of changes
- Provide a new 'SCTA Training Manual' based on the revised National Standards
- Oversee the co-endorsement process for Safe Church training presenters
- Provide national coordination of Training Partners Safe Church workshops and training via the online SCTA Calendar
- Maintain a National Register of attendees at SCTA co-endorsed workshops
- Maintain a National Register of SCTA co-endorsed trainers
- Administer the SCTA website: www.safechurches.org.au with current information, workshop and training dates, resources and legislative and compliance changes in State, Territory and Federal jurisdictions
- Inform SCTA Members of relevant legislative and compliance changes by State, Territory and Federal authorities
- Provide a voice into the wider community regarding child safety, protection and care matters.



2015 SCTA Members

- Anglican Diocese of Bathurst
- Anglican Diocese of Bendigo
- Anglican Diocese of Brisbane/Rockhampton/North Queensland/Northern Territory
- Anglican Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn
- Anglican Diocese of Gippsland
- Anglican Diocese of Grafton
- Anglican Diocese of The Murray
- Anglican Diocese of Newcastle
- Anglican Diocese of Sydney
- Australian Christian Churches VIC
- Australian Christian Churches WA
- Baptist Churches NSW & ACT
- Tasmanian Baptists
- Baptist Union of Victoria
- Baptist Churches Western Australia
- Boys Brigade
- Catholic Diocese of Bathurst
- Catholic Professional Standards Office Queensland
- Christ Evangelical Church Australia
- Churches of Christ NSW
- EV Church
- 4 Square
- International Network of Churches
- Lutheran Church Australia
- Presbyterian Church Australia NSW, SA, NT, WA
- Presbyterian Church Victoria
- Riverview Church
- Seventh Day Adventist Church Australia
- Salvation Army Australian Eastern Territory
- Safe Ministry Resources Pty Ltd.
- Uniting Church NSW & ACT
- Uniting Church SA
- Uniting Church VIC & TAS
- Uniting Church WA

2016 sees the Safe Church Training Agreement enter the 10th year of operation across Australia.

We invite Australia's churches and Christian organisations to participate in this collaboration to serve together in ministry as safer churches.

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