Why collect this

information?

As part of its commitment to creating a safe and healthy working environment and in accordance with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, the Uniting Church in Australia, New South Wales Synod (the church) will ensure church properties are maintained in a good and safe condition in order to reduce potential exposure to workers1 within workplaces2 and places of worship.

The Uniting Church in Australia Regulations

articulate the responsibilities of presbyteries and congregations in relation to the management of

church property. The Synod office is committed to providing the tools and information they need to fulfil their duty of care and legislative obligations.

Through creating safer places for all workers and visitors the church can reduce the risk of injury and illness occurring within workplaces and places of worship.

Duty of care

“The Uniting Church has a deep concern for the

wholeness and well-being of each individual. Our

church seeks to safeguard the welfare of all people regardless of age, who come in contact with the church and its organisations. It is the responsibility of each individual within the fellowship of the church to ensure the physical and emotional safety of all people.”

(The Uniting Church Duty of Care – Adapted policy statement endorsed by the Queensland Synod in 1998)

Legislative and regulatory

compliance

In addition to its duty of care, the church has legal obligations to ensure health and safety and property management/maintenance as follows:

The main object of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 is “… to secure the health and safety of workers and workplaces by protecting workers and other persons against harm to their health, safety and welfare through the elimination or minimisation of risks arising from work or from particular types of substances or plant”

(Section 3 (1)(a)).

Presbytery Property Committee

Regulation 4.3.2 (a)(v) of *The Uniting Church in*

*Australia Regulations states:*

“A Presbytery Property Committee, subject to any

relevant by-laws and directions of the presbytery

shall regularly inspect or arrange for the regular

inspection of properties for which the presbytery

and church councils and other bodies within the

bounds of the presbytery are responsible and

propose and report to presbytery such action as may

seem desirable to ensure that the properties are

maintained in good and safe condition.”

Church council

Regulation 4.4.1 of The Uniting Church in Australia Regulations states:

“Subject to the Regulations, the by-laws of the

Synod and the rules of presbytery, the church

council shall be responsible for the management and administration of all property of the church acquired or held for the use of the congregation, and without limiting the generality of the foregoing shall:

(a) be responsible for the care and maintenance of

property;

(g) do such other things as are necessary or

appropriate for the use and management of all

property acquired or held for the congregation.”

To comply with these legislative and regulatory

expectations each presbytery and congregation must

ensure annual property inspections are conducted

and property maintenance checklists are completed.

Inspections of each presbytery/congregation

property must be completed to identify issues

relating to health and safety, property maintenance and insurance.

How should this

information be used?

This information should be used to identify property maintenance, health and safety concerns and other insurance exposures that may require attention within workplaces and places of worship.

Once completed, each presbytery/congregation

should identify any risks or exposures and develop

an action plan or steps to take in order to rectify or

repair any areas of concern at each property.