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## Fire and Evacuation Policy

### Purpose

The purpose of this Fire and Evacuation Policy is to clearly articulate the requirements and procedures for Fire and other emergencies which require an organized evacuation of any part of the Facility.

This Policy is intended to cover all church properties, including the church worship spaces and meeting rooms, the offices rented in The Hub area, the undercover carpark areas and the commercial properties owned by the Church.

### Preamble

While we hope that most of the provisions of this policy will never need to be enacted, it is prudent that plans and procedures are in place in the event of a fire or similar hazardous event occurring on church premises. These procedures are to aim to provide for:

- legal compliance;
- fire and hazard prevention;
- safe and orderly evacuation of people from the Building / Area in an emergency;
- early control of the fire or emergency; and
- speedy “return to normal” once the emergency is brought under control.

Evacuation from buildings may be necessary as the result of fire, explosion, chemical leak, structural fault, equipment failure or bomb threat. These procedures have been prepared principally for fire emergencies, but they are suitable for use in other emergencies.

Specific instructions based on these procedures should be prepared for each Building/Area. The features of a particular Building / Area, its occupants or fire alarm system may require modification of these procedures.

Given the layout of the facilities and interconnected nature of the buildings, there is a very high risk of any incident affecting the adjacent buildings. Therefore, vigilance on the part of all occupants is paramount and where any incident has the potential to impact other buildings, the occupants of the other buildings at risk must be alerted of the incident.

### Policy

#### 1. Structure

There must be put in place:

- A Building Warden for each Building / Area.
- Fire Wardens assigned to particular floors or areas for larger facilities, such as the Church itself.

Organizations responsible for particular buildings may best decide how many additional wardens (if any) they require to safely cover the entire Building / Area of their responsibility.

#### 2. Building Wardens

The Building Warden, during emergency situations, will be in control of the occupants of the whole Building / Area until the arrival of the Fire Service.

It is the Building Warden's responsibility to:

*Before Fire or Emergency:*

- Assist in training wardens under their command.
- Direct occupants of the Building / Area to assemble in the designated area when required to evacuate the Building / Area in an emergency. This will facilitate checking that all occupants are safe and enable the speedy return to the Building / Area when the "all clear" is given.
- Ensure that on each floor, or in each area, a current emergency floor plan is displayed. The emergency floor plan shows all rooms, exits, assembly area to be used in case of fire or emergency, fire alarms, extinguishers, fire hose reels and special emergency equipment.
- If undertaking a prolonged period of absence, ensure that a suitably trained Acting Warden is on duty.
- Ensure that all regular occupants in the Building / Area (not just the wardens) are given instruction in relation to:
  - Evacuation procedures;
  - Means of escape from the Building / Area and location of assembly areas;
  - The location and operation of fire alarms; and
  - The location and operation of fire extinguishers or other emergency equipment required in the Building / Area.
- Arrange for annual Fire Drills to be conducted for their Building / Area, in compliance with State law.

*In the case of Fire or Emergency:*

- Respond immediately to an alarm; determine the nature of the emergency.
- Initiate Emergency Evacuation Procedures for the Building / Area.
- Direct the actions of Fire Wardens within the Building / Area.
- Check that all occupants have proceeded to the designated assembly area.
- If possible and safe to do so, advise the occupants of immediately adjacent buildings of the emergency.
- In consultation with the Fire Service, advise occupants when it is safe to return.

### 3. Fire Wardens

It is the Fire Warden's responsibility to:

*Before Fire or Emergency:*

- Familiarise themselves with the floor or area for which they have responsibility, including strong-rooms, rooms leading off blind passages, doors leading to dead ends, toilets or changing rooms.
- Identify people who will require special assistance during an evacuation.
- Identify means of egress and alternative means of escape.
- Identify location of push button alarm points and firefighting or emergency equipment.
- Ensure that staff are conversant with these Emergency Evacuation Procedures and the correct use of fire fighting and emergency equipment.
- Carry out monthly inspections of their area and remove hazards or advise the organisation or church leadership (as appropriate) of the hazards.
- Ensure that firefighting and emergency equipment is in its correct position (as shown on the displayed floor plans) and ready for use.
- Ensure that passageways and exits are kept clear at all times.
- Ensure that notices required by these Procedures are kept current and prominently displayed.

*In the case of Fire or Emergency:*

Until the arrival of the Fire Service, the Fire Warden, under the direction of the Building Warden, will control all evacuation and the use of firefighting equipment on their floor or in their area. The Fire Warden should:

- Check the source, type and severity of the emergency.
- Order the evacuation of the floor if necessary.
- Advise the Building Warden of the emergency on the floor and the proposed action to be taken.
- Ensure that all occupants of the floor are aware that evacuation of the floor is necessary, and direct the occupants to the nearest accessible exit or escape stairs, through which they should proceed to the designated assembly area.
- Ensure that evacuation from the floor is orderly.
- **MAKE SURE PEOPLE DO NOT USE THE LIFT.**
- Ensure that necessary assistance is given to disabled and other persons in need of special care.
- Check fire doors to ensure that they are closed.
- Provided it is safe to do so, make a thorough search of the whole floor or area to ensure that no persons remain.
- Advise the Building Wardens when evacuation is completed.
- Assist the Building Warden in checking that all Building / Area occupants have arrived at the assembly area.

It should be emphasised that the primary role of wardens is not to combat fire and emergencies, but to ensure, as far as practicable, the safety of occupants and their orderly evacuation from emergencies.

#### 4. Assistance for Persons with a Disability

Evacuation procedures for Buildings / Areas should include procedures for caring for persons with a disability.

For the purposes of evacuation procedures, people should be considered as disabled if they are unable to evacuate the Building / Area without assistance, or if their time to exit the Building / Area would be much greater than the average building occupant.

Wardens should be aware of persons with a disability within their area. In the case of permanent occupants of the Building / Area who are disabled, wardens should make a record of their name and their location to ensure that assistance can be rendered should evacuation be necessary. It will be necessary to periodically update this information.

Arrangements should be made for a person to be assigned to assist each disabled person in an emergency. This person should be someone working in close proximity to the disabled person and should assist the disabled person to a predetermined "safe" area. The Fire Service will determine the method of evacuating disabled persons from safe areas.

Where disabled visitors may be present, procedures should be implemented so that nominated staff can assist such persons

During evacuation, disabled persons should be assisted to "safe" areas which should be adjacent to fire isolation stairs. Where possible, procedures should provide for alternative "safe" areas. If no "safe" area is available, it may be necessary to move disabled people into fire-isolated stairways. This should not be done until other people have been evacuated so as not to impede a smooth evacuation.

The Fire Wardens should inform the Building Warden of the number of disabled persons, the location and the nature and extent of their disability at the completion of the general evacuation of the floor. The Building Warden should advise the Fire Service, on its arrival, of the situation on each floor. The Fire Service will determine what further action should be taken for the safety of disabled persons and whether lifts can safely be used for their evacuation.

It is important that disabled persons participate in the regular fire drills conducted for the Building / Area.

#### 5. Building/Area Occupants

*Before Fire or Emergency:*

All occupants should make themselves familiar with the Emergency Evacuation Procedures for their Building / Area, the location of fire exits and the operation of firefighting and emergency equipment. Regular occupants should participate in the annual Fire Drill.

*In the case of Fire or Emergency:*

If you **discover** a fire or emergency:

- Sound the fire alarm system (if there is a push button alarm).
- Notify the Fire Service by calling 000, giving:
  - Details of location, type and scale of the emergency, and
  - The name and location of the caller.
- Alert other people in the vicinity and notify any Fire Wardens present.
- If it is safe to do so, use the appropriate fire extinguisher to put out any fire (do not attempt to fight a fire if the fire is large or if you are not familiar with the use of the fire extinguisher).

During normal working hours or when a regularly scheduled meeting or event is taking place:

If you **hear the fire alarm** or are instructed to evacuate by a Fire Warden:

- Walk quietly but quickly to the nearest exit and proceed to the assembly point outside the building to await further instructions.
- Listen and follow instructions from the Building Warden or Fire Wardens.

In order to prevent injury and possible panic during evacuation:

- Do not run, push, or overtake
- Use stairs; Do not use the lift.
- Do not return to your desk, office or room
- Do not return to your building until the "all clear" is given by the Building Warden or Fire Service.

Outside of normal working hours or when working alone in the Building/Area:

On hearing the fire alarm, all occupants should evacuate the Building/Area.

## Definitions

<i>Building / Area</i>	means a discrete building or area in the Facility that is the responsibility of an individual organisation. The Hub space is to be considered a single Building / Area in relation to this policy.
<i>Church</i>	means <b>Church@TheGabba</b> and also includes the associated ministries and activities of the church.
<i>Church Leadership</i>	means the primary governing group of the church such as the board, elders or deacons.
<i>Emergency Evacuation Procedures</i>	means the specific fire and emergency instructions for a specific Building / Area.
<i>Facility</i>	means all internal and external areas belonging to the Church@TheGabba property, including all buildings, spaces, rooms and carparks.