

# Safe Ministry Representatives

## Safe Ministry Records - A guide

August 2016

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### Introduction

The introduction of the Working With Children Check (WWCC) in 2014-15 for all paid and volunteer workers in child-related work has given parish Safe Ministry record systems a new focus, due to the additional information required to be stored as part of our compliance with WWCC requirements.

For this reason, it is very important to ensure that proper record systems are in place in our parishes for the accurate and consistent recording of safe ministry information in a way that is **up-to-date, comprehensive, accessible, sustainable, long lasting and secure.**

This document seeks to set out the basic requirements for proper record systems and the options available to parishes in this area from a 'best practice' perspective.

### Implications for parishes

1. *Accuracy.*
2. *Security/Privacy*
3. *Bare minimum v best practice.*
4. *Choosing your record keeping method*

### Accuracy

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The highest priority is to make sure that you are **keeping (or start to keep!) the highest quality records that you can**, using whatever system you are currently using, or upgrading to a better system (see later).

A common situation in churches is that the actual data entry is often delegated to an admin person in the church office. This is perfectly acceptable, but it is still the responsibility of the Safe Ministry Rep to make sure the data is accurate and up to date.

Here are some tips:

- Plan to regularly check the actual records yourself

### Safe Ministry – Care and protection for everyone

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- Design a simple process/procedure to ensure accurate and consistent data entry.  
EG: All WWCC and Safe Ministry Training information for the records **must** come through you first, then go to data entry, then is checked by you, say once a month, or a couple of times a term.
- When checking the records, if it is a standalone file (ie: a spreadsheet or similar) take the opportunity to back it up. Create an organised approach to backups, making sure at least one back up is kept in a location other than the church.

## Security/Privacy

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With the presence of sensitive personal information (D.O.B. and potentially, addresses and other contact information), we need to be confident in the level of security around these records.

So, for all electronic records, password protecting access to the Safe Ministry record file/system is essential.

Any paper records should be stored in securely locked cabinets – preferably fire resistant.

Access to the Safe Ministry records should be restricted to the Safe Ministry Representative, Rector and perhaps a Warden. The exception to this would be if Safe Ministry records are kept as part of a church management system that ministry staff all have access to.

## Bare minimum v best practice

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This is a description of exactly what data is required to be kept as a bare minimum to satisfy both Diocesan and State Government requirements.

‘Best Practice’ includes additional information that helps to ‘flesh out’ those records, making future analysis and referencing of the data easier and more useful.

### Bare minimum

Name, address, phone and email details – plus:

#### WWCC

Name	WWCC No.	D.O.B	Expiry Date	Date verified	Result
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#### Safe Ministry Training

Name	Date of last training	Type of training (Essentials or Refresher)	Name of Trainer	Location of training	Expiry date of training
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## Best practice

Name, address, phone and email details – plus:

## WWCC

Name	WWCC No.	D.O.B	Expiry Date	Date verified	Result	Who verified by
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## Safe Ministry Training

Name	Date of last training	Type of training (Essentials or Refresher)	Name of Trainer	Location of training	Expiry date of training
Ministry Position	Date of application	Interviewer	Date commenced ministry	Previous training – date	Previous training - type
Previous training – Expiry date	Interstate or overseas workers – police check and references				Note field (for additional unstructured info)

Obviously, the more information that is added, the greater the complexity, and the more care needed to be taken in maintaining the records.

The ‘best practice’ approach is best suited to the more sophisticated church management systems such as Elvanto or Church Community Builder (CCB).

In addition to the above, you will almost certainly need a paper file for miscellaneous documents such as: Volunteer Application Forms, Safe Ministry training certificates, copies of police checks, references, etc.

If using an online database system, you may be able to store many of those documents as part of a person’s record by scanning them to pdf documents.

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## Choosing your record keeping medium

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This is a strategic, long term decision (unless you are a very small church), and so careful consideration should be given to the choice of recording method to avoid potential loss of data and time consuming re-entry of data.

At present, there is no practical limit to the time we need to keep such records – due largely to the very long time between an offence occurring in a church and the reporting of that offence (currently an average of 22-23 years). So **HOW** we record this information needs to take into account the ability to maintain the integrity of the data over a very long period of time.

### *Elvanto and Church Community Builder for mid-large sized churches.*

Many middle-sized and larger churches are now using powerful cloud-based, subscription Church Management Systems such as *Elvanto* or *Church Community Builder*.

These offer great flexibility and power in the way information can be stored and reports generated. They offer flexible layout options, excellent access control, powerful reporting functions, and access from any internet-enabled device and provide backup redundancy, ensuring that the data is safely backed up.

You can even minimise the paper aspect of your Safe Ministry Records, because these tools allow you scan documents as pdf's and upload them to form part of an individual's records.

So if your church is using one of those CMS's, you are probably in a good position in terms of using a system that can grow with you, is secure and safely backed up.

See the *Appendix* for sample screenshots as examples of how these systems can be used for recording a person's safe ministry data.

### Smaller churches

If your church is not large enough or chooses not to use systems like Elvanto, what are your options?

- ***Paper-based records.***

There are two types of paper-based records:

*Records of WWCC and Safe Ministry Training*

These really need to be phased out. 'Backing up' is difficult and messy, security is hard to control, reporting options to be alerted to expiring WWCC and Safe Ministry Training dates are non-existent.

*Auxiliary paper records.*

These are the copies of documents like: Safe Ministry Training certificates, volunteer application forms, references, police checks, WWCC clearance screen prints, etc. Even in fully electronic recording systems, it is hard to escape these, so provision needs to be made for them. Just keeping a manila folder in a filing cabinet is not really sufficient, they should be organised in a manner that makes documents easy to find, they need to be kept securely with access limited to the Senior Minister, the Safe Ministry Rep. and perhaps Wardens.

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- **Spreadsheet**

This is the most common tool used by smaller churches. It is perfectly acceptable in terms of having the capacity to store the required data – even *best practice* level data – and can provide a level of alerting to expiring dates, etc.

But they do require careful attention in order to make organised and consistent backups, securing the file(s) with strong passwords. Key limitations are: lack of ability to store electronic version of paper documents and no data checking on entry.

- **Google Docs.** Some churches who use the free Google software internally for rosters and the like, have also adopted it for safe ministry records. However, this is **not recommended**, as there are significant privacy issues related to the Terms and Conditions of Use that Google impose on users. This is also the case with most other companies that offer free cloud-based applications. Because Safe Ministry records include sensitive personal information, it is strongly recommended that an alternative system is adopted.
- **Other non-cloud software (eg: Pastoral Care, Access database, etc)**

This kind of software is less flexible and is unlikely to provide the kind of features needed to store Safe Ministry records.

**But the best solution for smaller churches or larger churches wishing to separate out Safe Ministry Records from other church data is:**

***Safe Ministry Records – A centralised record storage system provided by the Diocese***

This is a free, online accessible database under active development at time of writing.

The PSU will make it available for any parish to use, all set up with all the fields necessary to be completed for comprehensive records.

Each parish has its own login, and with the following features:

- All the fields for *best practice* records set out in an easy to use format on the screen.
- Reports can be generated to show you the people coming up for renewal in the next x months, lists of all your people sorted by ministry, etc. etc.
- Automatic reminder emails sent to the individual and the church Safe Ministry Rep. when Safe Ministry Training refresher or WWCC renewal is six months, three months and one month away.
- People who leave your church or die can be ‘archived’, so that their details remain in the system, but they don’t clutter the lists you use every day.
- Backups of data done automatically.

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August 2016

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**Appendix 1 - Sample screenshots from Elvanto – two different churches**  
**Church 1**

Working with Children	
Currently working with children at Church by the Bridge?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Ministry Position	<input type="checkbox"/> Kids Church <input type="checkbox"/> Tues Creche <input type="checkbox"/> Soul <input type="checkbox"/> Playtime <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Pastor <input type="checkbox"/> Warden
Interviewed by	<input type="checkbox"/> Naomi de Vries <input type="checkbox"/> Paul Dale <input type="checkbox"/> Dan Webster
Date commenced working with children at Church by the Bridge	<input type="text"/>
Signed Working with Children Declaration form	Sunday, August 28, 2011 <input type="text"/> 3 yrs
Sighted ID	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Staff or Volunteer?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Staff <input type="radio"/> Volunteer
<b>Government Requirements</b>	
Full Legal Name	Paul David <input type="text"/>
Date of Birth	Sunday, April 5, 1973 <input type="text"/> 45 yrs
Registration Number	WWC004 <input type="text"/>
Registration Expiry Date	Tuesday, July 31, 2018 <input type="text"/> -4 yrs
Date Verified	Thursday, August 1, 2013 <input type="text"/> 1 yrs
Working with Children Outcome	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Cleared <input type="radio"/> Barred
<b>Safe Ministry Training</b>	
Safe Ministry registration on file	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Date completed Safe Ministry Training [?]	Friday, June 6, 2014 <input type="text"/> 11 mths
Provider of Safe Ministry Training [?]	Youthworks <input type="text"/>
Name of Trainer for Safe Ministry Training	Kylie William <input type="text"/>
Expiry Date of Safe Ministry Training	Tuesday, June 6, 2017 <input type="text"/> -3 yrs
Child	First Aid
Name of Emergency Contact	<input type="text"/>
Allergies?	<input type="text"/>
Special Needs?	<input type="text"/>
Consent to photos being taken?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Completed Kids Church registration form	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Completed Playtime registration form	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Completed SOUL registration form	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
	Current first aid certificate? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
	Expiry date of first aid certificate <input type="text"/>

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## Appendix 2 - Sample screenshots from Elvanto – two different churches Church 2

### People / Searching "dominic steele" / Steele, Dominic

**Steele, Dominic**  
Village Member  
Senior Minister, Village Member



« Previous Person   Next Person »

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**Actions**

- Contact Dominic
- Change People Category
- Hide from Member Directory
- Member Directory Settings
- Mark as Contact
- Archive Dominic
- Mark as Deceased
- Delete Dominic

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**People Flows** 

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**Groups** 

-  Parish Council (no position) ✕
-  Youth - Public (Parents) (no position) ✕
-  Staff Leader ✕

+ Show More

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**Volunteering** 

Make person a volunteer [?]

**Meeting Leader**  
Ministry of the Word @ 9:30am »  
Ministry of the Word - 9:30am

**Address**  
Ministry of the Word @ 9:30am »  
Ministry of the Word - 9:30am

Edit Person   Activity   Notes   Family Members   Account

Save Person

**Personal Information**

These are the main personal details for this person.

First Name * [?]	<input type="text" value="Dominic"/>	Date of Birth [?]	<input type="text" value="Sunday, July [redacted]"/> 49 yrs <a href="#">No year of birth?</a>
Last Name * [?]	<input type="text" value="Steele"/>	Place of Birth	<input type="text"/>
Email Address [?]	<input type="text" value="dominic@christiansinthemedia.org"/>	School Grade [?]	<input type="text" value="-- None --"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Receive general emails [?]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Receive emails when scheduled on a service [?]	Marital Status [?]	<input type="text" value="Married"/>
<b>Subscriptions</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Christians in the Media email list <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Village Church Emails	Anniversary [?]	<input type="text" value="No anniversary year?"/>
Mobile Number [?]	<input type="text" value="(0409) 4[redacted]"/>	<b>Access Permissions [?]</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Childrens & Youth Team <input type="checkbox"/> Financial <input type="checkbox"/> Magnification Leaders <input type="checkbox"/> Magnification Team <input type="checkbox"/> Maturity C Grp Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Membership Leader
Home Number [?]	<input type="text" value="(02) 95[redacted]"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Receive general messages [?]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Receive messages when scheduled on a service [?]
Gender [?]	<input type="text" value="Male"/>		

**Mailing Address**

The mailing address for this person.

Address [?]	Postal Code [?]
<input type="text" value="11 [redacted]"/>	<input type="text" value="2048"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Update family mailing address [?]	Country [?]
<a href="#">View Map</a>	<input type="text" value="Australia"/>
City [?]	<input type="text" value="Stanmore"/>
State [?]	<input type="text" value="NSW"/>

**Locations**

Village Church or Christians in the Media

Locations [?]

- Village
- Christians in the Media

**Demographics**

Choose the demographics of this person.

Demographics [?]

- Adults
- Youth
- Children
- Creché
- Village Pre School
- Village Kids

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## Appendix 2 - Sample screenshots from Elvanto – two different churches Church 2 (cont)

People / Steele, Dominic • Village Church

7/05/2015 11:53 am

Bible Reading  
Ministry of the Word @ 9:30am >  
Ministry of the Word - 9:30am

+ Show More

Family Members



Steele, Catherine  
Spouse



Steele, Hannah  
Child



Steele, Solomon  
Child

+ Show More

### Significant Dates

### Network Members

Church Attended   
Employer

### Working with Children Check (Aust & NSW Governments)

WWCC Comments <input type="text" value="Paid &amp; unpaid roles"/>	Previous WWCC Comments <input type="text"/>	
WWCC Number <input type="text" value="WWCC [REDACTED]"/>	Previous WWCC Number <input type="text"/>	
WWCC Commence <input type="text" value="Thursday, September 19, 2013"/> 1 yrs	Previous WWCC Commencement <input type="text"/>	
WWCC Expiry <input type="text" value="Wednesday, September 19, 2018"/> -4 yrs	Previous WWCC Expiry <input type="text"/>	
Date verified with <a href="https://wwccheck.ccp.nsw.gov.au">https://wwccheck.ccp.nsw.gov.au</a> as Village Children's Volunteer or Worker <input type="text" value="Friday, March 21, 2014"/> 1 yrs		
Old WWCC documents (prior to June 2013)		
Old WWC Attachment 4 Submitted <input type="text" value="Sunday, October 11, 2009"/> 5 yrs	Old WWC Attachment 5 Submitted <input type="text" value="Sunday, October 11, 2009"/> 5 yrs	Old WWC Attachment 2 Submitted <input type="text"/>

### Sydney Anglican Safe Ministry Certification

Ministry Position <input type="text"/>	Previous Certificate Type <input type="text" value="Safe Ministry Attainment Certificat"/>
Date of Appointment to Ministry Position <input type="text"/>	Previous Commencement Date <input type="text" value="Monday, August 27, 2012"/> 2 yrs
Certificate Type <input type="text" value="Safe Ministry Vulnerable People"/>	Previous Expiry date <input type="text" value="Thursday, August 27, 2015"/> -1 yrs
Commence Date <input type="text" value="Friday, June 6, 2014"/> 11 mths	Previous Training Location <input type="text" value="Annandale"/>
Expiry Date <input type="text" value="Tuesday, June 6, 2017"/> -3 yrs	Previous Trainer <input type="text" value="Robyn Powell"/>
Training Location <input type="text" value="Annandale"/>	
Trainer <input type="text" value="PSU - Faithfulness in Service"/>	

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