



# Managing Fall Hazards

## Introduction

The Church recognises that all fall hazards must be, so far as reasonably practicable, risk assessed and ensure appropriate controls are implemented.

Fall hazards that exist when working at heights can be extremely dangerous. Each Presbytery/Charge/Committee must not allow inexperienced workers, volunteers, or other persons access their roofs.

In addition to accessing roofs there are many instances where persons are required to work at height, these may include changing light bulbs, cleaning roof gutters, painting or cleaning buildings or lopping branches from trees. These tasks usually require the use of a ladder or other work platform and must have a risk management methodology applied prior to commencement.

## Purpose

To ensure as far as reasonably practicable that risks associated with fall hazards are eliminated or mitigated. This procedure aims to manage this risks associated with the Church activities or tasks that potentially present a fall hazard.

The following tasks are common fall hazards:

- Changing light bulbs
- Cleaning roof gutters
- Ladder use (e.g. building maintenance or working bees)
- Clearing vegetation (e.g. tree lopping)

## Legislative Requirements

WHS Act 2011 (QLD) <http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/law/whslaws/index.htm>

WHS Regulations 2011 (QLD) <http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/law/whslaws/index.htm>

Managing the Risk of Falls at Workplaces Code of Practice 2011  
<http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/law/codes/index.htm>

## Procedure

The WHS Hazard & Risk Management Procedure should be utilised prior to undertaking any work associated with fall hazards. Fall hazards relating to work tasks may include, but are not limited to work:

- On any structure or plant being constructed or installed, demolished or dismantled, inspected, tested, repaired or cleaned
- On a fragile surface
- On a potentially unstable surface
- Using equipment to work at the elevated level
- On a sloping or slippery surface where it is difficult for people to maintain their balance
- Near an unprotected open edge
- Near a hole, shaft or pit into which a worker could fall



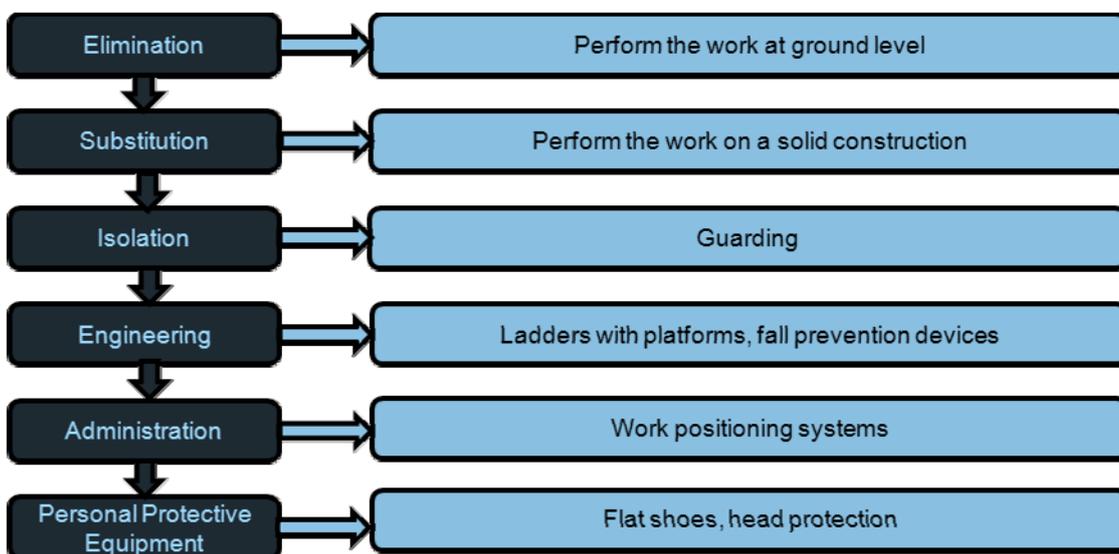
The Presbytery/Charge/Committee must also identify fall hazards through consultation with workers and inspection of workplace including:

- Surfaces - Stability, fragility or brittleness, potential to slip, safe movement of workers where surfaces change, strength and capability to support load
- Slope does not exceed 7 degrees
- Levels - Where they change and may be exposed to fall from one level to another
- Structure – temporary or permanent
- Ground – evenness and stability to support scaffolding or work platform
- Work area
- Entry and Exit
- Edges – protection from open edges of floors, roofs, work platforms, walkways etc.
- Holes
- Hand grip – places where grip may be lost.

A risk assessment must be conducted on the identified hazard(s) associated with the plant (e.g. Elevated work platforms) using the Church's risk methodology. The person conducting the risk assessment should utilise additional guidelines provided in the *Managing the Risk of Falls at the Workplace Code of Practice 2011*.

If a contractor or subcontractor has been engaged by the Church to undertake work which may be associated with fall hazards the Site Manager, Work Coordinator or person in charge of the Church site must ensure that a safety plan has been developed and provided to the Church before the work commences.

Risk should be eliminated or removed where reasonably practicable as the first option. If the risk cannot be eliminated, the hierarchy of control should be used to determine the most appropriate action. The diagram below shows examples of possible fall hazard control options. A combination of controls may be suitable.



Each Presbytery/Charge/Committee is responsible for ensuring the risk assessment is specific to their particular activity's requirements. This should be done in consultation with all workers who may be at risk of a fall hazard.



All workers who work may be at risk of a fall hazard must be provided with adequate information, instruction and training on the developed risk assessment and safe work procedure (utilising a JSA). This will include information relating to:

- The type of control measures used to prevent falls
- Procedures for reporting fall hazards and incidents
- The correct selection, fitting, use, care, inspection, maintenance and storage of fall-arrest and restraint equipment
- The correct use of tools and equipment used in the work (for example, using a tool belt instead of carrying tools)
- Control measures for other potential hazards (for example, electrical hazards).
- Emergency procedures

Site Managers, Work Coordinators or person in control of the workplace must:

- Ensure only workers who have received training and instruction in relation to the safe work procedure/risk assessment are authorised to carry out the work
- Ensure workers use any fall control measure in the correct manner
- Confirm workers ability to perform tasks (emphasis on volunteers)
- Ensure workers are physically fit for the task they are being asked to perform
- Be certain that the worker has an appropriate trade background and qualifications (if required) for the work they are performing
- Ensure the worker has the appropriate tools or safety equipment for the task they are to perform (a Church duty)
- Ensure a worker does not work alone

If there is any doubt about workers' ability to complete a task safely, they must not be allowed to proceed.

Each Presbytery/Charge/Committee must retain records of any information, instruction and training provided to workers.