



Uniting Church in Australia
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA



Mission Resourcing Unit

Property Services

Essential Safety Measures

Consolidated presentation

Property Services September 9, 2021

ESM presentation overview

1. Why do we need Essential Safety Measures ?
2. What are ESMs?
3. What buildings do ESMs apply to?
4. ESMs and OHS
5. Why are Church Councils responsible for ESMs?
6. What must we do?
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Why do we need Essential Safety Measures?

For the preservation of people and life.

Why do we need Essential Safety Measures?

- They are the safety features required in a building to protect occupants in the event of a fire or emergency.
- First line of defence in an emergency.
- And, yes, we have had fires in UCA buildings.



What is an ESMs?

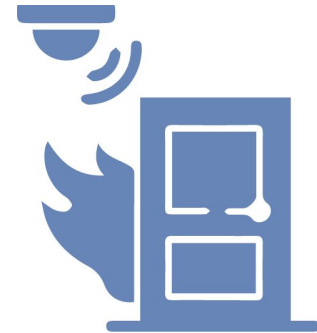
The term “essential safety measure” is defined in Part 15 of the Victorian Building Regulations 2018 and includes items listed in Schedule 8 of the Regulations, such as:



Exit signs



Fire extinguishers



Smoke alarms

What is an ESM?



ESMs include fire safety systems installed to protect building occupants.



They also include exit doors, emergency lighting, exit signs and fire hydrants.



Adequate maintenance will ensure ESMs operate reliably if an emergency arises.

What is an ESM?



Non-compliance puts occupants, passers-by occupants and adjoining buildings at risk.



Non-compliance may result in fines.

Essential Safety Measures

- Mandated by federal and state Acts/regulations (the law).
- ESMs are determined by a Registered Building Surveyor.
- Compliance ensures safe building egress (**getting people out**) and operational fire-fighting capability at the time of need.



Essential Safety Measures

- Each building has its own unique list of ESM items - unique by type, quantity, installation and level of servicing.
- ESMs include other items which have been determined by the Registered Building Surveyor as an ESM (eg result of alternative solution). Such additions will be listed on the building's Occupancy Permit and/or Maintenance Determination.
- ESMs are to be maintained regardless of whether a building is occupied or unoccupied, eg lockdowns. An increased risk of fire can occur in an unoccupied building – testing ESMs is an essential service.



What buildings do ESMs apply to?

ESMs apply to commercial and public buildings.

Class 9

Public buildings - includes three sub-classifications:

- Class 9a - healthcare buildings such as hospitals and day clinics.
- Class 9b - buildings where people assemble for social, political, theatrical, religious or civic purposes, e.g schools, universities, sports facilities, night clubs.
- Class 9c - aged care facilities.



Class 6

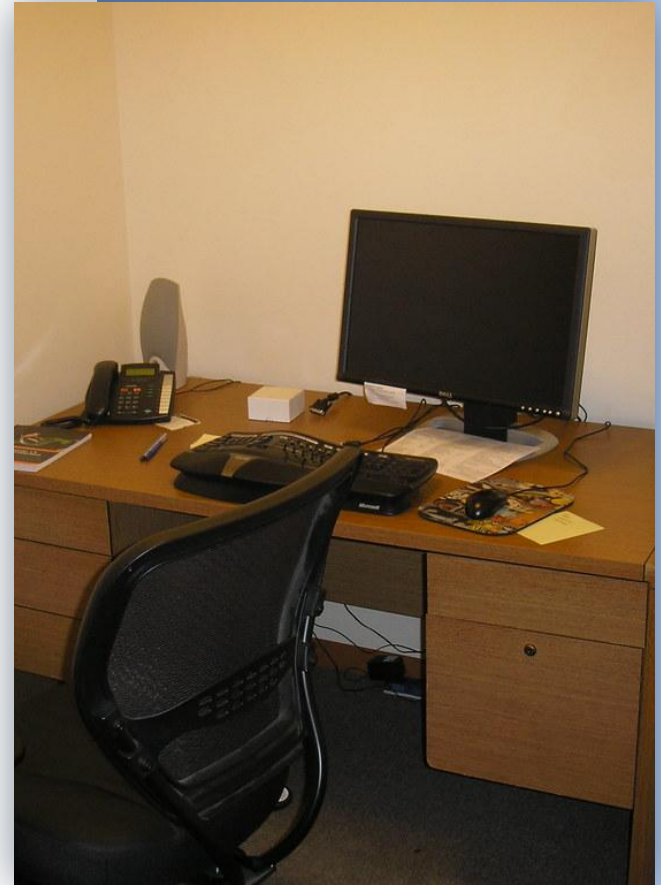
Buildings where retail goods are sold or services are supplied to the public, such as shops or restaurants. This class may include:

- Hairdressing salon.
- Public laundry.
- Shopping centre.
- Funeral parlour.
- Showroom.



What buildings do ESMS apply to?

- Essential safety measures apply to all buildings apart from a house or outbuilding. Building Classifications are under the National Construction Code.
- They do not apply to a manse unless the house is not being used as a place of residence, eg office, medical rooms.



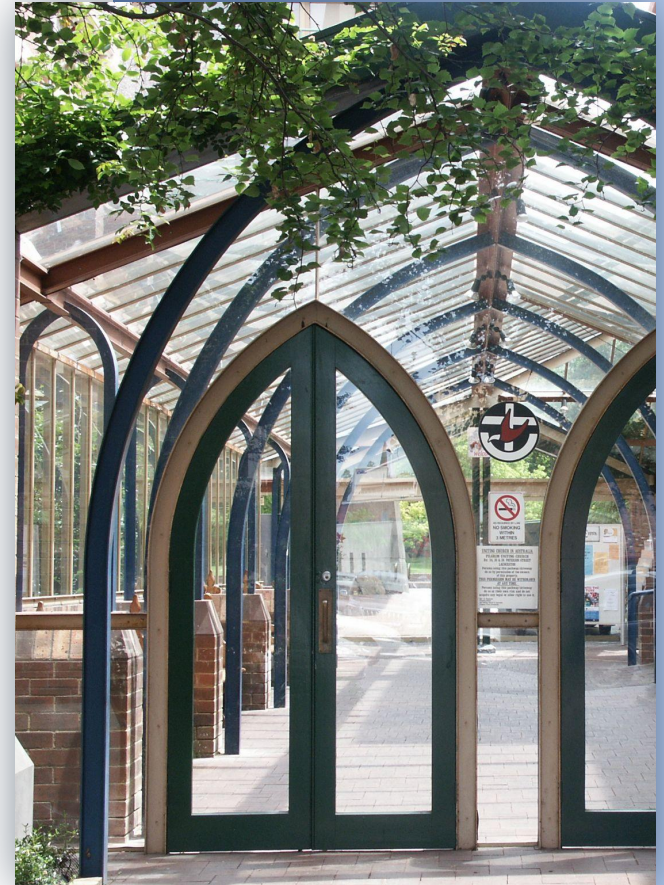
Why are Church Councils responsible for ESMs?

UCA Regulations and Responsible Body

- Responsible body means any body of the Church to which specific responsibilities are assigned by the Constitution or by any UCA Regulation, bylaw or rule;
- **4.1** Responsible body means a body that is responsible for the management and administration of property, and which either itself carries out those responsibilities or appoints another body to undertake them either in whole or in part;

Why are Church Councils responsible for ESMs?

- **4.4.1** Subject to the UCA 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 Church property acquired or held for the use of the congregation.





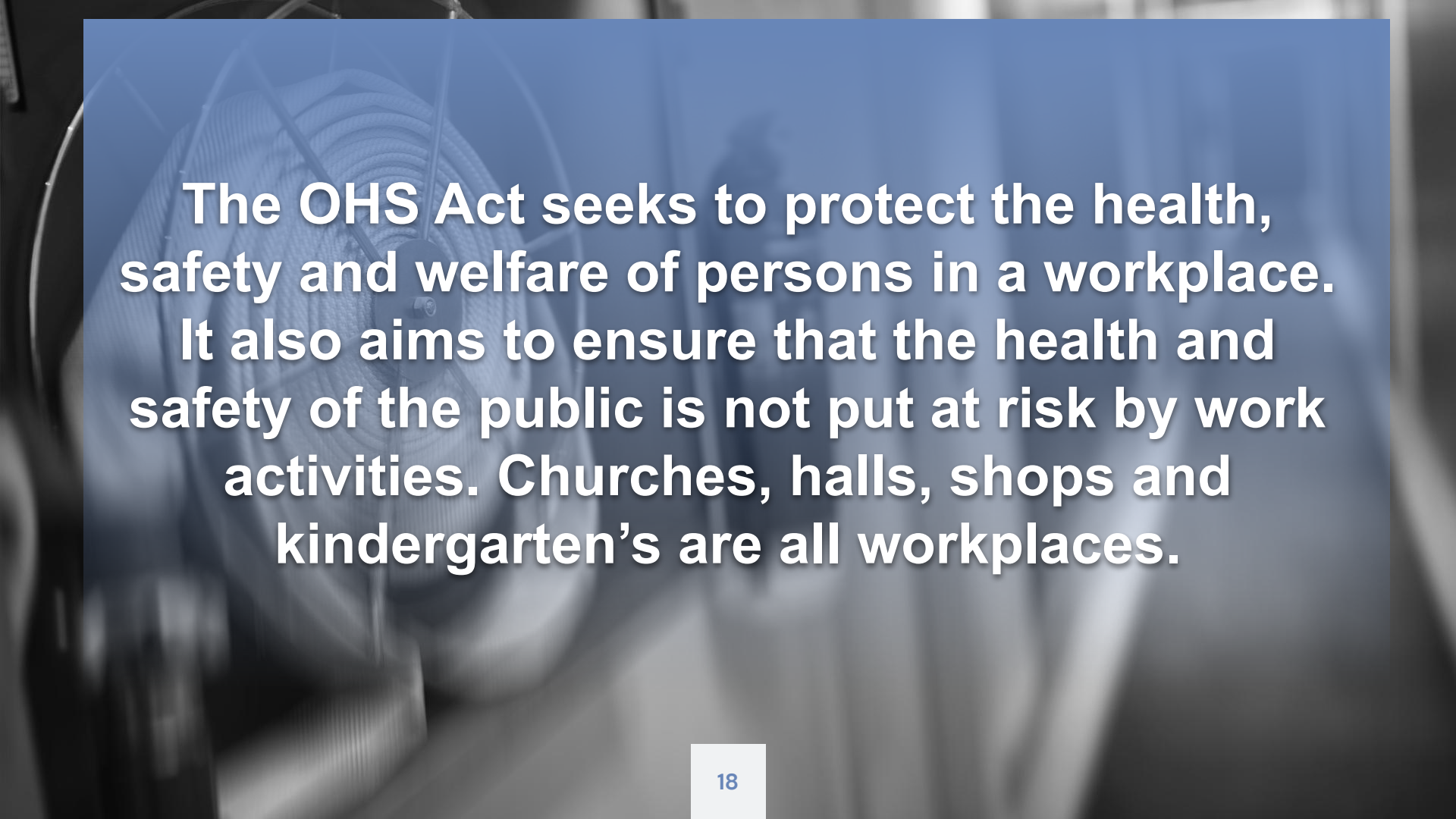
We already do OHS. Is this the same as an ESM?

ESM and OHS are not the same, but both support the protection of people in buildings.

We already do OHS. Is this the same as an ESM?

- ESMs are installations, fixtures and fittings in a building that support people in an emergency evacuation.
- OHS relates to anything that may cause injury or harm.
- ESMs and OHS come under different legislation.





The OHS Act seeks to protect the health, safety and welfare of persons in a workplace. It also aims to ensure that the health and safety of the public is not put at risk by work activities. Churches, halls, shops and kindergarten's are all workplaces.

We already do OHS. Is this the same as an ESM?

- Continuous access to exits and paths of travel in the event of an emergency is a requirement under both OHS legislation and the Building Regulations.
- “Test and tag” of portable electrical items is under OHS legislation in making a workplace safe.

WHAT WE MUST DO: OVERVIEW

Owner's responsibilities

- Maintain ESMs so that it fulfils its purpose.
- Ensure ESMs have been inspected, tested and maintained in accordance with the Occupancy Permit or Maintenance Determination.
- Maintenance records must be kept and made available.
- This includes a record of rectification of deficiencies.

WHAT WE MUST DO: OVERVIEW

Occupier's responsibilities

(TENANT IF RENTED)

- Responsible for continuous access to exits and paths of travel prepared for an emergency.
- Ensure no interference with the ESMs.
- Note: new commercial lease arrangements where UCA is landlord can recover the cost of testing ESMs from the tenant – owner remains responsible.

What we must do? Overview pathways

There are two distinct pathways in setting up your ESM program:

Occupancy Permit

Testing your ESMs in accordance with the ESM schedule from your Occupancy Permit.

OR

Maintenance determination

Testing your ESMs in accordance with the ESM schedule from your Maintenance Determination.

Step 1

ESM Schedule from Occupancy Permit

- For buildings built after July 1, 1994: display your Occupancy Permit in the foyer of the building.
- An Occupancy Permit is a document that confirms your Building Surveyor is satisfied that the new building is suitable for occupation. Additional parts of the building upgraded after 1 July 1994 may also have Final Inspection Certificates.
- An Occupancy Permit issued after July 1, 1994 will specify the ESMs and their required maintenance schedule.

Or Step 1

ESM Schedule from Maintenance Determination

- For buildings built before July 1, 1994 where no upgrades have been undertaken:
- Obtain a Maintenance Determination from a Registered Building Surveyor who will determine your ESM Maintenance Schedule.
- A Maintenance Determination and Schedule sets out the level of performance required to enable the ESM to fulfil its purpose and the frequency and type of maintenance required.

Step 2

Maintain your ESMs according to ESM Schedule

- Install and maintain the equipment for testing of ESMs in accordance with either your Occupancy Permit ESM Schedule or Maintenance Schedule.
- Keep records in a log book of all ESMs maintenance and repair work.
- Church Council to engage qualified contractors for the testing, repair and replacement of items such as emergency and exit lighting, fire hydrant systems, fire hose reels and portable fire extinguishers. Statcom Systems do not provide these services.

Step 3

Annual ESM Report (AESMR)

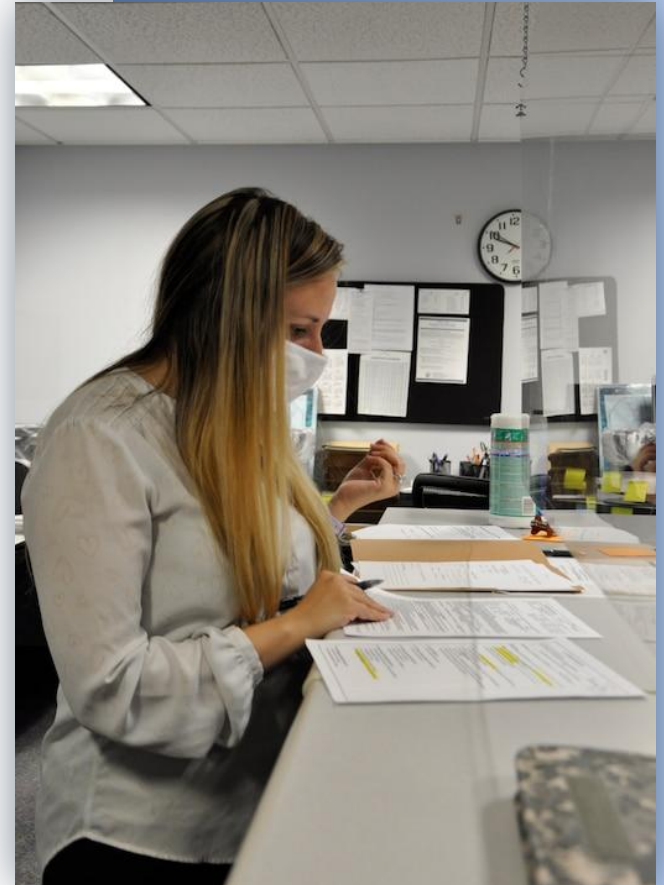
- On each anniversary date of the Occupancy Permit or the Maintenance Determination, prepare an Annual Essential Safety Measures Report (AESMR). 12 months' evidence of testing is required to complete an AESMR and there must be no outstanding compliance items. The AESMR must be in the prescribed form.

AESMR sign-off

- Property Services recommends the engagement of a contractor (such as Statcom Systems) for the sign off of the AESMR, a legal document, as they have the required experience. The AESMR does not need to be signed by a Registered Building Surveyor.
- An AESMR is signed off where all reasonable steps to ensure that all ESMs have been maintained in a state that enables them to fulfil their purpose and ESMs have been inspected, tested, and maintained in accordance with the Occupancy Permit or Maintenance Determination.

How do we start? ESM self-guided process

- Refer to the Property Services letter and information sent to your Church Council and this document.
- All available on Property Services website.
- See “Forms & Resources”.
- See “Key Information Sheets”.





Early preparation

Getting organised

Gather building-related documents that you may already have

- Building certificate of occupancy/Occupancy Permit.
- Building permits/final inspection certificates.
- Planning permits relating to change of use.
- Major works documents.
- Building maintenance documentation.
- ESM servicing and repair documentation.

Clear the way. Check points of exit

- All paths of travel toward emergency exit doors are free from obstructions.
- Emergency exit doors free from obstruction, can swing fully open.
- External discharge paths are not obstructed by vegetation or stored items and do not lead into locked off areas.
- Paths of travel, location of exit signs and the emergency evacuation diagram must all be consistent.

If the building was built or significantly altered after July 1, 1994, do you have the Occupancy Permit?



YES

Go to next stage.



NO

Follow these steps:

To find your Occupancy Permit

Contact local municipal council office (building department) for a copy of all building permits and occupancy permit.

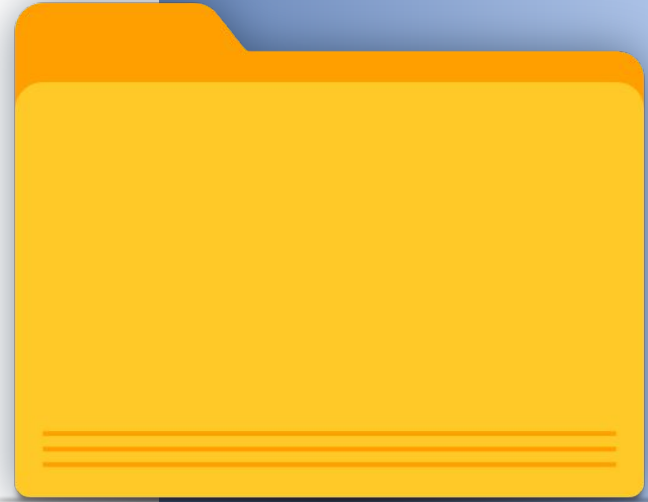
You may need:

- to pay a fee for this service.
- a signed letter from Synod office authorising retrieval (see ESM Info pack sent to Church Councils or website).

Retrieval from municipal council office usually electronic – email or download.

Display the Occupancy Permit

- Display a copy of Occupancy Permit on the wall in clear view near the main entrance (eg church foyer).
- Keep a printed copy of the Occupancy Permit with the Church Council's property records, and safely store the electronic copy. Send a copy to AESMR.



Do you have a Maintenance Determination?

Yes?

- Place a copy of your Maintenance Determination with your Church Council's property records and have this available for reference for all ESM contractors and authority inspectors.
- Send a copy to AESMR.



Do you have a Maintenance Determination?

No (built pre-July 1, 1994)

- Engage a Registered Building Surveyor to visit your church property to prepare a Maintenance Determination and Schedule and advise if ESM modifications are required.
- Place a copy of Maintenance Determination with your Church Council's property records. Send a copy to AESMR.
- Budget for about \$2000 if property is small to medium and multiple church sites can be visited on the one day.
- Whilst discounted rates have been negotiated with Statcom Systems, Maintenance Determinations are unique to the building and costs will vary.

Or an alternative Registered Building Surveyor

- Request a quotation for a Maintenance Determination and Schedule before engaging a Registered Building Surveyor of your choice.
- We anticipate those costs to be greater than the rates already negotiated with Statcom Systems.
- Property Services are available to assist with quote collation and comparison.

Do you require ESM upgrades or improvements?

This can only be determined for the unique building on the inspection and advice of a Registered Building Surveyor (RBS). Do not commence upgrades without RBS advice. You will be required to provide the RBS advice to these contractors to enable them to make the modifications or improvements.

- Emergency lighting and exit signage
- Fire extinguisher, fire blanket and Hose reel
- Fire hydrant
- Evacuation diagram
- Fire doors or emergency exit doors
- Smoke or heat detection
- Fire input panel

Evacuation diagrams

- Updated every five years or when building improvements are made.
- Comply to Australian Standards and include “You are here” location.
- ESM equipment locations and evacuation pathway must be displayed correctly on the evacuation diagram.
- Printed in full colour at A3 size, be specific to the location in a building and include date of revision.
- Recommend engaging contractor (eg Statcom Systems) to ensure compliance with Australian Standard 3745.

Set up ESM Maintenance routine with Registered Electrical Contractor

- ESM testing and inspections such as installed emergency lights, illuminated directional signs and illuminated exit signs. Frequency of testing per Maintenance Determination or Occupancy Permit.
- REC supply an ESM electrical testing logbook to be completed and signed.
- Suggest Electrical Safety standards checks, including switchboards, can be completed when REC is on site for ESM testing.

Best practice suggestions

- Keep building electrically safe and have your electrician perform safety switch (RCD) and earth circuit tests regularly.
- Conduct general switchboard safety inspection, all GPOs and switch plates.
- Have your REC conduct an annual Infrared Thermography of the switchboard under load.

Note these best practice items are not a requirement of the ESM or the AESMR.



Set up ESM Maintenance routine with Fire Services Contractor

- Frequency of inspections as directed by the Occupancy Permit or Maintenance Determination, for all installed fire safety measures such as extinguishers, fire reel hoses, fire hydrants, smoke and heat detection, fire or smoke doors, etc.
- If you do not have a preferred contractor, obtain more than one quote from contractor such as EFFS, ALEXON, Chubb, Wormald, FES.
- Have your Fire Services Contractor supply an ESM inspection and testing logbook. Ensure the logbook is completed and signed by the Fire Services Contractor.

Best practice tips for Fire Safety ESMs

- Do not furnish near or around fire extinguishers and their signage. Furniture can move and block access or visibility.
- Do not permit shelving, furniture or storage to be placed directly under a sprinkler head.
- Always allow a clearance of 1m between the sprinkler head and stored items.



Set up ESM monitoring and audit

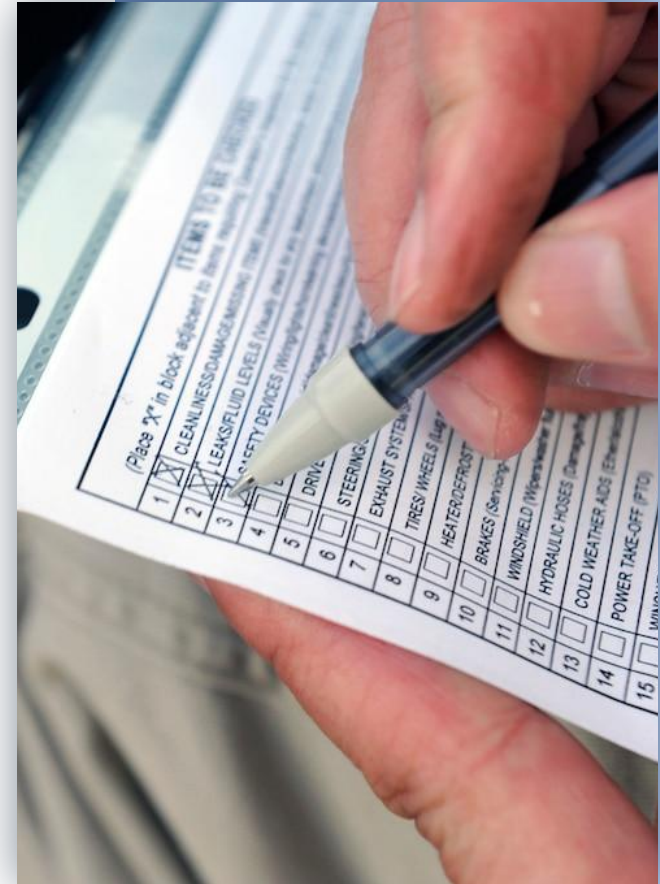
- Notify Presbytery of intention to start ESM compliance program and pathway chosen.
- Presbytery encourages all congregations to use the services of Statcom Systems.
- Engage Statcom Systems or your chosen contractor to undertake ESM monitoring.
- Only a Registered Building Surveyor can determine the ESMs for a building.

Statcom Systems can:

- Conduct quarterly visits to church property and inspect ESM testing records of fire services and electrical contractors have been completed in accordance with the ESM Schedule and Australian Standards.
- Check contractors have recorded maintenance and inspections into logbook. Any incomplete or outstanding tasks will be alerted to the contractor and the congregation via the Statcom Systems automated email system.

Statcom Systems can:

- Prepare log books at their first visit and provide observation report. Begin upgrades to ESMs only on the advice of Registered Building Surveyor.
- Provide a Registered Building Surveyor to carry out on site inspection and determine the ESMs in accordance with the Building Act and Regulations.



Red cabinet on the wall

- Recommend all UCA properties should have a red ESM cabinet affixed to the wall near to the main entrance.
- The cabinet is the central repository for all ESM logbooks. You will have multiple logbooks (electrician, fire services contractor) as well as the Statcom Systems summary logbook.
- Liaise with Property Services or Stacom Systems regarding the number and placement of red cabinets for complex sites (if applicable).

Red cabinet best practice

- Logbooks need to be available for inspection upon request of the Fire Brigade or Municipal Building Surveyor.
- Makes it easy for contractors to locate and update logbooks.
- ESM cabinets can be purchased from your nearest safety suppliers retailer (eg RSEA, Seton, SafetyQuip) but ensure the cabinet is fit for purpose (holes for fixing to wall and depth for quantity of log books).
- Recommend Statcom Systems supply and install for convenience.

Who is permitted to undertake ESM works?

- Only qualified persons should undertake repairs to ESM fixtures, fittings and equipment.
- Your local handyman, domestic builder or domestic plumber are **NOT** permitted to undertake repairs if they do not hold the appropriate licence to perform those repair works.
- The work of fire and building safety is for specialists who are trained, certified, and registered within their profession or trade.
- In the event builders or plumbers are required, they must be licenced for commercial building work as Church buildings are commercial buildings. Domestic licences are not applicable.

Monthly door inspection

- Can be undertaken by a member of the church council or delegated responsible person.
- Record in Exit Door logbook the same as any other ESM check into its respective logbook.



Check

- All paths of travel including passageways towards the emergency exit doorways are free from obstructions, ie pews, stacked chairs, furniture, uneven carpets or damaged floor coverings, general clutter, trip and slip hazards.
- All emergency exit doors are free from obstruction and clutter in and around the doorway, ensure that all emergency exit doors can swing fully open outwards and freely.

Check

- Ensure external pathways away from the emergency exit doors are not obstructed by vegetation or stored items, trip hazards, uneven or damaged stairs and pavement.
- Ensure external walkways maintain direct access to the emergency assembly point. This may include reviewing walkways, courtyards, and locked gates.

Preparing the Annual ESM Report

- On each anniversary date of the Occupancy Permit or the Maintenance Determination, prepare an Annual Essential Safety Measures Report (AESMR). 12 months' evidence of testing is required to complete an AESMR and there must be no outstanding compliance items. The AESMR must be in the prescribed form.
- Statcom Systems is a recommended provider who can supply the service to prepare the AESMR. They will review quarterly testing compliance and visit the site around the anniversary date to inspect the buildings for compliance and sight the maintenance recorded in the logbooks.

- The AESMR can be completed and signed by the Building Owner or a person signing for the building owner. This person takes responsibility for the AESMR and gives an undertaking as part of the report. Property Services recommends Statcom Systems is engaged for the preparation and sign off of the AESMR. It is not **recommended** that any church council member takes on this responsibility and it is best that issuing of the AESMR is passed onto a Fire Services Professional such as Statcom Systems.
- Statcom Systems will digitally store the AESMR and make copies downloadable via their Web Portal.
- If not using Statcom Systems, forward copy of AESMR to Presbytery and Synod Property Services.

Ensure your contractor agreements are all in place for ongoing servicing

- All ESM contractor arrangements should be reviewed annually to ensure ongoing testing is carried out in accordance with the Occupancy Permit or Maintenance Determination.
- Where the congregation is satisfied with contractor service ongoing/rollover arrangements provide convenience.
- Church Councils are invited to be part of a tender process for maintenance/testing contractors. Please complete the ESM Maintenance Contractor plus “Test & Tag” Tender Enquiry form supplied in the ESM Info pack sent to all Church Council secretaries.

Property Services and Presbytery Support

- Letter sent to all Church Councils.
- Presbytery and Property Services available for advice.
- ESM information sessions.
- Discounted rates with Statcom to assist with Annual Report, monitoring, log books, access to web based portal.
- Assistance with contractors who perform the testing, maintenance and repairs – seeking response from Church Councils for collective tender/procurement, including test and tag.

Property Services and Presbytery Support

- Property Services Development Managers and Project Managers will assist in setting up your ESM program at the conclusion of new constructions.
- Available to assist with new retail lease negotiations where costs of ESM can be passed to tenant. Landlord remains responsible for ESMs.
- Property Services can assist with discussions with Uniting regarding ESMs.
- We will continue to review ESM log books as evidence of ESM maintenance during site visits.

In future:

- AESMRs will become standard attachments for property applications to Lease Commercial Buildings and for Church Renovations/Developments.
- ESM costs should become standard items in congregation's annual budgets and forecasts.
- **Closing comment:**
- Remember, **only** a Registered Building Surveyor may identify the ESMs for your building and prepare the ESM Maintenance Determination and Schedule if there is not an existing Occupancy Permit that sets out the ESMs.

Contractor suggestions

- **Emergency lighting and exit signage** – registered electrician.
- **Fire extinguisher, Fire blanket and Hose reel** – Fire Services contractor such as EFFS, ALEXON, Chub, Wormald, FES, Geelong Fire Services.
- **Fire hydrant** – Fire-certified plumbing contractor.
- **Evacuation diagram** - Fire Services contractor. Statcom Systems provides this service, some drafting and architectural firms can provide these diagrams.

Contractor suggestions

- **Fire doors (if applicable) or Emergency exit doors** - Fire Services contractor or Registered Commercial Builder such as EFFS, ALEXON, Chubb, Wormald, FES, Geelong Fire Services.
- **Smoke or heat detection** - Fire Services contractor such as EFFS, ALEXON, Chubb, Wormald, FES, Geelong Fire Services.
- **Fire indicator panel** - Fire Services contractor such as EFFS, ALEXON, Chubb, Wormald, FES, Geelong Fire Services.



ESMs are for the Preservation of People and Life

**Thank you for the work you are doing to keep
our church buildings safe**