UCA Synod of Victoria and Tasmania
Synod Ministries and Operations (SMO)
DISASTER RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS

Table:

Period	**Arrangements**
A. Regular preparation	1. Governance and Administration (GA) staff to be provided with Senior SMO staff leave arrangements during 'peak' holiday periods, including delegated Acting staff and contact details. 2. Clarify that staff members delegated to an Acting role are able and expected to step up (even if they are technically on leave) for disaster / crisis response. 3. General Secretary (GS) to inform presbyteries by mid-December of primary Synod emergency contact(s) for the Christmas-New Year-January period. 4. All GA staff have access to Moderator, General Secretary (GS), and Associate General Secretary (AGS) emails during peak leave periods.
Period	**Response**
B. First 24 Hours	1. The GS / AGS (or their chosen nominee) will contact each affected presbytery initially through the Presbytery Secretary to establish initial communication. 2. If a Presbytery Secretary is uncontactable the GS will contact in order: a. Presbytery Chairperson, or b. Presbytery Minister.

C. First 48 Hours	1. GS / AGS to convene and chair the Disaster/Crisis Response Group (DRG) 2. The DRG will initially be comprised of: Moderator, GS, AGS, Executive Officers (EOs), Head of Communications, and any other people as invited by GS (including GA staff for minuting). 3. The DRG will establish initial triage, actions, and communication logging processes. 4. Following on from B. 1 and 2. (above), the GS (or their nominee) will contact each affected presbytery to establish initial operational and coordination support and request contact and other details as appropriate for ongoing communication, coordination, and engagement. 5. The GS (or their nominee) will contact relevant UCA agencies, establish initial operational support and request contact and other details as appropriate for ongoing communication, coordination, and engagement. 6. The GS (or their nominee) will contact the UCA Assembly and other Synods as appropriate regarding operational matters. 7. The Moderator will provide initial pastoral and spiritual support to each affected presbytery and general pastoral Synod-wide response using social media, website, etc. 8. The Moderator will contact the Assembly President and other Moderators as appropriate regarding spiritual and pastoral leadership matters.
D. 48 Hours to 7 Days	1. The GS (or their nominee) to continue to chair the DRG. 2. At 48 hours (or as soon as possible after) the DRG to: a. be amended as appropriate to include relevant SMO staff, presbytery membership (if presbyteries want this), UCA Agency membership– using operational and contact processes established in the first 48 hours b. review and amend triage, actions, and communication logging processes as appropriate, and c. contact / liaise with VCCEM / TCCEM / or any relevant NSW body as appropriate. 3. Moderator to continue to provide spiritual and pastoral support through personal contact, social media, and/or other media as appropriate. 4. eLM (through the EO) to develop pastoral / liturgical / theological resources webpage in coordination with

	presbyteries and agencies. 5. Synod units to provide presbyteries and congregations with relevant expertise and assistance in response to identified ministry, mission, operational needs. 6. The GS (or their nominee) will continue contact with the UCA Assembly and other Synods as appropriate regarding operational matters. 7. The Moderator will continue to contact the Assembly President and other Moderators as appropriate regarding spiritual and pastoral leadership matters.
E. From 7 Days	1. Maintain the steps indicated in D (above). 2. Between 7-9 days the GS (or their nominee) will contact the relevant presbytery/ies to ascertain their response to DRG membership. 3. If DRG membership is *not* taken up by the presbytery/ies, the GS (or their nominee) will issue a reminder that invitation for membership will remain open at any stage. 4. DRG to identify matters as appropriate, including: a. Ongoing contact with the affected presbytery/ies as indicated regarding frequency and contact points/s (office bearers, committees, etc.) b. Particular areas for assistance from SMO to presbyteries / congregations c. Particular areas for assistance from agencies to presbyteries / congregations d. Recovery steps / initiatives for recommendations to other parts of the church e. Learning points and process for future disaster / crisis responses, and f. When to conclude DRG activities including appropriate transition steps to relevant parts of SMO or other entities.
F. Throughout the Response	1. Conduct face-to-face and/or videoconference meetings where possible. 2. Consult with the affected presbytery/ies and agency/ies regarding any initiatives and communications that are

	being shared Synod-wide about the disaster / crisis. 3. SMO to coordinate / review all public / church-wide communications from agencies and the Assembly. 4. Maintain clear processes for the reversal of delegation / responsibilities of staff who return from leave, regarding whether or not a staff member in an acting role should continue engage with the disaster response
G. Concluding the Response	1. The DRG will determine a concluding date for its activities 2. In the conclusion process, the DRG shall take steps including: a. Ensuring that any outstanding matters which it is dealing with have been allocated to an appropriate part of SMO or other entity b. Undertaking a "lessons learnt" process for potential application of future disaster responses and modifications to this Disaster Response Arrangements document, and c. Informing the affected presbytery/ies of its conclusion and indicating the allocation of any outstanding matters and key contact/s for further related matters.
H. Moderator's Emergency Response Fund	1. The Moderator shall determine whether or not use of the Fund is activated. 2. Use the Moderator's Emergency Response Fund for non DGR donations from councils of the church and individuals for use in the impacted areas for ministry and pastoral responses. 3. Ministry and pastoral grants / financial responses to include coordination with the affected presbytery/ies. 4. Depending on circumstances and resourcing needs, some funds may be donated to UCA agency/ies.

Abbreviations:

AGS Associate General Secretary

DRG Disaster / Crisis Response Group

eLM equipping Leadership for Mission

EO Executive Officer

GA Governance and Administration team

GS General Secretary

NSW New South Wales

SMO Synod Ministries and Operations

TCCEM Tasmanian Council of Churches Emergency Ministry

VCCEM Victorian Council of Churches Emergency Ministry