

What Does Reasonably Practical Mean?

As an employer, the Church is required to ensure the physical and mental health and safety of our workers including volunteers and contractors, so far as reasonably practical.

Reasonable refers to something is or was at a particular time reasonably able to be done to ensure health and safety, taking into account the relevant matters including:

- **The likelihood of the hazard or risk**
If the harm is more likely to occur, then it is reasonable to expect more actions taken to reduce or eliminate the hazard.
- **The degree of harm that might result from the hazard or risk**
If the resulting injury is severe rather than a minor injury, more would be expected to reduce or eliminate the hazard.
- **What the person concerned knows or to reasonably know about either the hazard or risk and the ways of either eliminating or reducing this**
This includes the knowledge about a risk, how to minimise or eliminate it as well as what a reasonable person would be expected to know.
- **The availability and suitability of ways to eliminate the risk**
This includes a consideration of what is available and also what is suitable to either eliminate or reduce risk.
- **The cost associated with ways of eliminating the risk and**
This should be considered after identifying the extent of the risk and ways to minimise or reduce the risk. Cost will not be the key factor in determining what should be done to eliminate or minimise a risk unless it can be shown to be grossly disproportionate to the risk.

This information has been adopted from **Safe Work Australia Interpretive Guideline – Model Work Health and Safety Act the Meaning of ‘Reasonably Practical’**. The full document is available from the Safe Work Australia website:

<http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/swa/about/publications/Documents/607/Interpretive%20guideline%20-%20reasonably%20practicable.pdf>