



# SWEET ADELINES NEW ZEALAND REGION 35 HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR CHORUSES

## PURPOSE

To ensure that Region 35/New Zealand choruses are aware of the actual and potential safety hazards and risks associated with various chorus activities, and with any preventative or mitigating actions identified that may remove or minimise such hazards and risks.

This document is intended as a comprehensive list of procedures for choruses to:

- Facilitate management of all aspects of personal safety
- Strengthen situations involving safety enquiries or litigation
- Be aware of and compliant with the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (HSWA)  
<https://hsu.caa.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Worksafe-HSWA-quick-reference-guide.pdf>

## SCOPE

These guidelines involve:

- All members, associated volunteers and any other persons involved in any chorus activities
- All choruses and quartet personnel

## HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK ACT 2015 (HSWA)

- As a group of volunteers, a chorus is likely to *not* be a "person conducting a business or undertaking" (PCBU)
- In order to clearly place a chorus into the non-PCBU category, all choruses with director and external coaching contracts should ensure that those contracts are expressed as independent contractor arrangements, for an honorarium or similar (eg reimbursement of expenses etc). Such contracts should not be expressed in terms that could be regarded as giving rise to a traditional employment relationship.
- An independent contractor could also be somebody the chorus engages to provide casual assistance, e.g. helping to erect or dismantle risers. As with directors, any arrangement that a chorus may have with such a contractor should not be expressed in terms that could be regarded as a traditional employment relationship.

## SAFETY POLICY

It is recommended that chorus Management Teams ensure that:

- All members have access to these guidelines, including new members prior to and during their induction
- All chorus members and volunteers undertaking specific tasks on behalf of the chorus, all guests and all other participants are made aware of areas relevant to their involvement
- Personal safety is routinely considered in all new and revised activities and procedures
- Health and Safety remains on chorus Management Team agendas and is reviewed as required, at least annually.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of Management Teams to:

- Ensure these guidelines remain current and all chorus members are aware of them
- Ensure all chorus members are aware of their personal safety and the safety of those around them
- Ensure that all equipment used is safe for use e.g. extension cords should be checked annually
- Ensure that the building they are using is secure from unlawful entry and/or occupation by third parties.

It is recommended that Management Teams arrange for specifically nominated delegate(s) to look after the safety needs of new members, visitors and others who may be unaware of the requirements.

## **HAZARD IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT, PREVENTION / MITIGATION**

### **General Hazards**

- Management teams must make chorus members aware of the health and safety rules that apply to the building they are occupying, whether at the regular chorus rehearsals or at different venues. These include rules regarding fire hazards, gas leaks, earthquake, evacuation and any other emergency procedures.
- When hiring other venues it is the responsibility of management teams to ensure chorus members understand and abide by the venue's health and safety schemes. In performance situations, the emcee should announce important details.

### **Earthquake Emergency Response Procedures**

The following procedures are published by Worksafe New Zealand and apply to occupancy of any buildings being used as a venue for activities.

#### **During An Earthquake:**

##### **If Inside –**

- Keep calm
- Move away from windows
- Use stairs, not lifts
- Walk, never run
- Stay indoors unless otherwise directed by person in charge
- Take cover under solid furniture or doorways if possible
- Move off the risers swiftly in an orderly fashion
- Curl into 'turtle position' and protect the head

##### **If Outdoors –**

- Stay clear of buildings and tall structures, trees, high walls, electricity lines – anything that could fall on someone
- If evacuated, remain at assembly point or as directed by person in charge until all clear is given

##### **After an Earthquake**

- Look out for live electric wires and any other hazards
- Prepare for aftershocks - more things could fall
- Turn off electricity, gas, and water at mains
- Treat any injuries

## **RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH USING THE RISERS**

### **Routine Preventative Maintenance**

- It is recommended that Management Teams arrange maintenance surveys of the risers by a suitably qualified person at regular intervals
- Appropriate action/s should be taken as indicated in the maintenance report

### Transporting by Trailer

- Management teams should ensure towing vehicles have adequate towing capacity
- Drivers needs to be experienced in towing

### Unloading/Loading

- Strap risers into or onto trailers tightly to avoid movement during transit
- Unstrap risers carefully after moving
- Use correct lifting techniques to avoid back injuries

### Setting up/dismantling

- Ensure the area is clear of everyone except workers when moving risers
- One experienced person to be in charge
- Inspect for damage as risers are set up
- Check that each riser section is securely in place with no difference in height between sections
- Ensure the back rails are firmly in position, in the correct order
- Stand on each section to ensure stability

### Members Using the Risers

- Do not lean on the back rails
- Every care should be taken to ensure that risers are free of all tripping hazards such as water bottles, walking sticks, crutches, sheet music, folders, clothing etc
- Particular care must be taken with members who need to use personal supports. It is suggested that they may be asked to stand on the floor or no further up than the first riser step. Members using riser chairs must ensure that they are safe on the risers and not a hazard to themselves or other chorus members. Many such situations may be temporary and the Management Team (or their designated representative) should be advised of all such situations
- Assist those who need help.

### HEALTH

- If you have a cough, the sniffles, a cold or flu-like symptoms, you must stay home
- If you feel unwell on the risers, sit out until it is safe for you to go home (arrange a ride if necessary)
- If a member's condition is known to be contagious, they must stay at home.

**Regional Management Team, Region 35, July 2025**