

# Melbourn United Reformed Church

## Fire Risk Assessment

FRA 3 – Occupation of Balcony  
*Additions and Variations to FRA 2*  
*(Usage of Sanctuary / Upper Room)*  
*due to such occupation*

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(Issue 18<sup>th</sup> October 2017)

(reviewed October 2019 - no changes required)

# Fire Risk Assessment FRA 3

## Additions and Variations to FRA 2 (Usage of Sanctuary / Upper Room) due to Occupation of Balcony

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#### 1. Introduction

The format of the original Fire Risk Assessments (completed in 2007) identified any risks, recommended actions to mitigate them, recorded actions placed by the Elders in respect of the recommendations and recorded the date when such actions were completed. These are retained in our archives for record purposes.

The format of **this** Fire Risk Assessment, which has been conducted to update the document in light of current usage and changes to equipment in the intervening period, records fire risks and the measures currently in place to mitigate them. Any recommendations for further risk reduction measures are recorded at the end of the "Risk Reduction Measures" section.

Fire Risk Assessments are primarily about people and their safety - not about protecting the building. Where there are issues regarding the latter that arise as a result of this assessment they will, however, be noted.

#### 2. Preamble

This Risk Assessment deals with usage of the Church Sanctuary and Upper Room when the Balcony **is occupied**. This occurs rarely and only on occasions when the main (ground floor) of the Sanctuary is in use. This Fire Risk Assessment, therefore, details only those issues that are additional to or cause variation from those issues identified in FRA 2.

#### 3. Current Assessment

##### 3.1 Potential Sources of Ignition

- i) There are no heaters in the balcony and only standard 13 amp sockets located along the long sides.
- ii) The main speakers for the Digital Hymnal are located adjacent to the organ pipes and are powered from a 13 amp socket adjacent to the Digital Hymnal below.

##### 3.2 Sources of Fuel

- i) There are no obvious sources of fuel in the balcony area. It is the custom for moveable benches and chairs to be situated along the organ side limb (A) of the balcony with chairs only along the opposite limb (B) leading to one of the entrances to / exits from the Upper Room. Fixed pews exist along the limb (C) of the balcony that looks directly toward the pulpit.

### 3.3 Alarms & Escape Routes

- i) There are no automatic smoke detectors in the balcony area.
- ii) Normal access to and egress from the balcony is via the outer door of each of the two pairs of inward opening double doors which are the main entrances to the sanctuary. When these (outer) doors are open, stairs lead to the balcony and there is, sensibly, no route to the lower floor of the sanctuary. Of these two escape routes the one that leads from the balcony limb (B) is currently signed. This is due to the fact that it forms one escape route from the Upper Room and, as a result, along this limb a clear passage is also marked adjacent to the outer wall. Indeed, this normal escape route *from* the Upper Room may also be considered to form a third possible escape from the balcony *through* the Upper Room.

### 3.4 People

- i) By virtue of the stairs, only people who are reasonably physically able are likely to be in the balcony area. Sometimes young children are in this area but this should only be when accompanied by an adult.

### 3.5 Other Issues

- i) Following recommendation from Chubb Fire Protection there is a water fire extinguisher located at the top of the stairs in the Balcony adjacent to the signed fire exit route.

## 4. Risk Reduction Measures

### 4.1 Potential Sources of Ignition

- i) The Digital Hymnal and speakers are switched off after service and the Digital Hymnal normally removed for programming for the next service.

### 4.2 Sources of Fuel

- i) Keep the area tidy.

### 4.3 Alarms & Escape Routes

- i) As with FRA 2, the absence of automatic smoke / fire alarms is not considered an issue.
- ii) The normal exit / escape route from the balcony area would be via the most appropriate of the stairs used for normal entry. Within the "Sidesman's Duties" it is advised that, on occasions when the balcony is in use, the outer door of each of the two pairs of double doors which provide access to the balcony stairs be latched open (as is the normal custom) so as to provide an unimpeded escape route and that at least one (additional) sidesman is on duty at the elevated level which is the balcony area.  
As stated in para 3.3 ii) only the normal exit from limb (B) of the balcony is signed. This is because it forms an escape route from the Upper Room when these stairs would not have been the normal means of entry.

### 4.4 People

- i) The "Sidesmen's Duties" state that unaccompanied young children should not be allowed in the Balcony area.

### 4.5 Other Issues

- i) No issues identified.

(BGM 4<sup>th</sup> July 2017)