Emergency Management Procedures

Health and Safety Directorate
Note: The Emergency Management Procedures consist of this main document as well as a number of support tools, support documents and fact sheets. Page numbers are given for the main document only. Links are provided to all other documents under the sections in which they are referred.

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Introduction

Emergency Planning and Response Policy

The Department’s WHS Policy sets out the responsibilities of staff at all levels of the Department for emergency management. The policy defines an emergency as “an event, actual or imminent, which endangers or threatens to endanger life, property or the environment and which requires a significant or coordinated response.”

In accordance with the policy, each workplace must develop or revise its own emergency management plan. The plan will identify the nature and range of emergencies to which students and staff may be exposed, include preventative strategies, and provide the mechanism for effective response and recovery in the event of an emergency. Where a workplace operates from one or more sites, a separate emergency management plan is required for each site. This is to ensure that the hazards associated with each specific site have been considered and integrated into the emergency management plan. If you are unsure about whether you should lodge a separate emergency management plan for a split site, please contact your WHS Consultant.

These Emergency Management Procedures (the Procedures) have been developed as a practical tool to assist all Departmental workplaces to meet their responsibilities under the policy. Workplaces can use and adapt the templates provided in these Procedures to develop and implement their emergency plans. The Procedures have been developed with the assistance of principals, parent organisations and emergency services agencies including NSW Police, NSW Fire Brigades and the State Emergency Services.

Replacement of the Guidelines for the Management of Serious Incidents and Serious Incident Management Committees

These Procedures replace the previous Guidelines for Schools and TAFE NSW Colleges and Campuses: Management of Serious Incidents. Serious Incident Management Committees are now replaced by Emergency Planning Committees. Staff currently on a Serious Incident Management Committee should continue in the role under the new title of Emergency Planning Committee.

The importance and benefits of emergency planning

Emergency planning is a requirement under the Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011. The welfare of staff, students and visitors is the key focus of emergency planning in the Department. The extent of the response required will depend on the nature of the emergency and its impact on the workplace as a whole and on individual members of staff and students. Whatever their scale, emergencies often occur suddenly and unexpectedly. Effective planning and preparation will ensure that the workplace is able to respond appropriately to events.

Emergency planning has the benefit of preparing staff and students for a range of events providing the confidence to respond appropriately if an emergency does impact on the workplace. It also ensures the optimal response to the emergency and effective recovery and support, including returning the workplace to normal as soon as possible once the emergency has passed.
The emergency planning process

The NSW State Emergency Management Committee recommends the following approach to complete the emergency planning process:

1. Form and empower the emergency planning committee
2. Conduct a risk assessment for the workplace
3. Develop the emergency management plan and procedures
4. Communicate, train and test
5. Review and refine

These Procedures are based on this five step approach to emergency planning. The emergency planning overview provides an overview of the emergency planning process. Workplaces are encouraged to develop their emergency management plan in consultation with support teams (e.g. Student Welfare Consultants, Local Asset Management Units and WHS Consultants) local authorities (e.g. councils) and local emergency services personnel.

Reporting emergencies

Workplace managers must ensure that reporting of emergencies occurs to relevant areas of the Department in accordance with the Department’s Safe Working and Learning requirements for incident reporting. This will include submitting the relevant incident report(s) by hotline, fax or email. For incidents involving violence, weapons, illegal drugs or criminal activity schools are to contact Incident Support Unit on 1800 811 523, TAFE colleges are to contact Institute Security and State Office/Corporate Offices are to report to the line manager. Additional reports may be required in accordance with the incident reporting procedures if an employee or other person suffers injury, or where SafeWork NSW must be notified.

Liability of employees acting as emergency control organisation personnel

The NSW Employees Liability Act 1991 requires the employer to cover employees, including ECO personnel, acting in the course of their employment, in respect of any civil liability arising out of their negligence.

Support and assistance

DoE WHS Consultants can provide assistance to workplaces in developing emergency management plans. Refer to the list of support staff for contact details. Schools seeking assistance with security arrangements should contact the Safety and Security Directorate. Schools needing local support in developing and implementing their emergency management plans, such as small schools and schools wishing to network with other schools, should contact their School Education Director. See Appendix 2 (Useful websites and publications) for links to the relevant emergency management information.
Emergency Management Procedures

Step 1 – Form and empower the emergency planning committee

What is the emergency planning committee?
The emergency planning committee is the workplace committee responsible for establishing an emergency management plan, developing emergency response procedures and appointing staff with specific responsibilities in an emergency (the emergency control organisation). The workplace manager is responsible for establishing the emergency planning committee.

The emergency planning committee is a cooperative and consultative group which represents all stakeholders at the workplace. The emergency planning committee should liaise with other relevant committees in the workplace such as the WHS committee, student welfare committee, training and development committee and the student representative council to develop the emergency management plan. In some workplaces, staff may be members of one or more committees. The emergency planning checklist will assist workplaces in ensuring all steps in emergency planning have been undertaken.

For Departmental workplaces where the site is controlled by another organisation, or where a workplace operates on two or more separate sites, please refer to Appendix 1 (Variations to emergency planning) for further information.

Note: The emergency planning committee replaces the Serious Incidents Management Committee which operated under the Guidelines for Schools and TAFE NSW Colleges and Campuses: Management of Serious Incidents (now replaced by these Procedures).

Getting the emergency planning committee started

The first step in developing a workplace emergency management plan is to establish a team of people which will take on the emergency planning tasks. All Departmental workplaces must establish an emergency planning committee to assist the workplace manager with emergency planning and preparation. Staff at smaller workplaces must seek support and advice from their WHS consultant, local emergency services, and the local community in establishing an emergency planning committee.

The emergency planning committee is responsible for:
• Establishing and implementing emergency plans and procedures in consultation with staff and other relevant parties
• Determining the resources (human and equipment) required to carry out the plan in a way that is consistent with the identified risk
• Ensuring all identified roles are filled by trained and capable persons
• Ensuring the emergency management plan is rehearsed, its effectiveness reviewed and any identified changes to plans and procedures are made
• Determining who will carry out the emergency procedures
• Training members of the emergency control organisation in the emergency management plan and its implementation.

Authority of the emergency planning committee

The emergency planning committee (EPC) requires the involvement of senior management at the workplace as the work carried out by the committee will override normal activities at the workplace. Senior management should initially drive the process but may assign roles to other members of the committee. Through this process the EPC is authorised to carry out its duties.
Emergency Management Procedures

Step 2 – Conduct a risk assessment for the workplace

What is the emergency planning committee?
The emergency planning committee is the workplace committee responsible for establishing an emergency management plan, developing emergency response procedures and appointing staff with specific responsibilities in an emergency (the emergency control organisation). The workplace manager is responsible for establishing the emergency planning committee.

Adopting a risk management approach to the potential risks within the workplace is an important component of your emergency management plan. It is essential when planning for emergencies to identify all foreseeable hazards and emergencies to which the workplace may be exposed.

Once all potential emergencies have been identified by the emergency planning committee, risk controls to prevent or minimise potential risks should be identified. Eliminating or controlling risks (e.g. by removing fire hazards or implementing security controls) will reduce the likelihood of an emergency occurring, while the development of safe practices for all workplace activities will prevent some emergencies occurring and will reduce the severity of others that may occur.

It is crucial to consult with staff, the WHS committee or representative and other relevant parties throughout the risk assessment process.

Key steps in risk assessments for emergencies

- Consult with staff, the WHS committee or representative and other relevant parties
- Identify hazards
- Assess risks
- Eliminate or control risks
- Document the risk management plan (for emergencies, as part of the emergency management plan)
- Communicate the plan
- Monitor and review

Refer to Safe Working and Learning for more information about the risk management process. It is recommended that workplaces also refer to the risk assessment for emergencies: guidance and checklist for information about hazards that could impact on their workplace and to assist in completing this part of the emergency management process.
Emergency Management Procedures

Identifying hazards
In accordance with risk management principles, workplaces should consider the range of hazards to which the workplace may be exposed, the potential risks associated with those hazards, and prioritise those risks. Risk management cannot be applied directly to hazards external to the workplace, but it can be used to minimise the impact of that hazard on the workplace, e.g. preparing the workplace to minimise the impact of bushfires in the area. Workplaces should consider the types of emergency situations which may impact on their workplace, including fires, flood, chemical spills or issues such as violence. Workplaces also need to consider fixtures which may present a hazard (e.g. LPG equipment).

Assessing risks associated with those hazards
Determine the seriousness of the risks by considering both the likelihood of the incident to cause harm and severity of the outcome. This provides a priority order for dealing with emergencies. Refer to the HS Directorate’s risk management tools for more information.

Eliminating or controlling the risks
Once all hazards have been identified by the emergency planning committee consideration should be given to the existing risk controls in place for preventing such emergencies and the additional risk controls required. Examples of risk controls are provided as a guide in the emergency fact sheets. Workplaces need to also consider how to return the workplace to normal as soon as possible once the situation stabilises.

Documenting the risk management plan
The risk management process should be documented as part of the emergency management plan – see the emergency management plan template.

Communicating the plan
The risk management plan should be communicated to staff and other relevant persons as part of the emergency management plan. Ensure that all new staff, volunteers and others at the workplace receive a safety induction which includes the workplace emergency management and risk management plans. Risk management plans for specific hazards and risks will need to be communicated to employees and other stakeholders (e.g. NSW Police, NSW Fire Brigades, Parents and Citizens Association). Existing employees, casual employees and contractors should have access to the emergency management plan. Risk management plans should also be available within the relevant areas of the workplace to which they relate e.g. the laboratory, general assistants’ office etc.

Monitoring risk controls
Risk controls do not remain static and should be monitored to ensure continuing applicability to the workplace. Risk controls should be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis (e.g. every 6 months) and when there has been:

- An emergency at the workplace
- Changes to the work environment
- Changes to available controls e.g. security measures, health exposures or risks.
## Emergency Management Procedures

### Step 3 – Develop the emergency management plan and procedures

An emergency management plan provides the workplace with a workable set of arrangements for use when an emergency occurs. It outlines how prevention, response and recovery activities will be coordinated within the workplace.

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| Specialist information – hydrants |
| Media messages and strategy     |
| After hours contacts            |
| Other relevant information      |

The Department has developed an emergency management plan template procedures and an emergency management plan template with comments as well as a sample emergency management plan template – School, sample emergency management plan template – Small School and sample emergency management plan template – TAFE for workplaces to refer to and adapt when developing their emergency management plans.

The following information is an outline of what each section of the emergency management plan should address.

Consultation with local authorities and emergency services

It is recommended that the emergency management plan be developed in consultation with local authorities and emergency services. Once the plan has been developed, the local police and the fire brigade could be asked to assess the plan to ensure that the procedures are consistent with safe and accepted practice. It is also recommended that workplaces seek an ongoing involvement in relevant emergency response drills and tests (e.g. fire brigade for evacuation). It is recommended that the following overview be read in conjunction with the emergency management plan template. This will assist workplaces to understand and complete each section of the template.
Emergency Management Procedures

Overview

Purpose and objectives
State the purpose of the emergency management plan e.g. to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all staff, students and others at the workplace in the event of an emergency.

Scope of the emergency management plan
Clearly define the scope of the plan. The plan should address emergencies that can take place during activities away from the workplace (e.g. excursions or sporting events). Note that each excursion and sporting event requires a separate risk management process.

Relationship with other plans
It is essential that the plan take into account other plans within the organisation (such as School network plans and business continuity plans), and external plans such as Local Government Area disaster plans, the NSW State Disaster Plan (DISPLAN) and shared site plans. Workplaces need to be aware that in some circumstances, the State Emergency Services or other emergency services organisations will take charge of emergency operations where required. In some cases, integration may also be required with adjoining businesses or sites e.g. emergency communication with neighbours to coordinate evacuation. Workplaces may need to research what plans are in place for their local area and how that plan affects their own emergency planning, by contacting the Fire Brigades, local council, State Emergency Services or NSW Police.

Description of the workplace
The emergency management plan should describe the workplace, the type and structure of workplace buildings, the surrounding environment and the potential hazards to which the workplace is likely to be exposed. A site plan must be developed and included in the emergency management plan. The site plan must be made available to emergency services during an emergency. The site plan must show access and egress together with essential services installed within the premises.

Roles and responsibilities
Emergency procedures must indicate who at the workplace is responsible in the event of an emergency. Australian Standard 3745–2002, Emergency control organization and procedures for buildings, structures and workplaces refers to this group of responsible persons as the emergency control organisation (ECO), which consists of the roles of wardens. Once an emergency is declared, the powers of the wardens should override all normal non-emergency management procedures.

Roles and responsibilities during an emergency must be communicated to staff and students. Arrangements must be made to ensure emergency personnel are clearly identifiable during an emergency (e.g. use of warden hats).

The plan must include:
- An organisational chart; and
- Roles and functions of the:
  - Chief Warden
  - Deputy Chief Warden
  - Floor Wardens or Area Wardens
  - Communications Officer
  - First Aid Officer.

The terms used in this document are taken from Australian Standard 3745–2002. They are commonly used in business and industry but may not be familiar in a school context. Workplaces may wish to define other roles and responsibilities if they are more appropriate to the workplace, providing this is done in consultation with local emergency services and incorporated in the documented emergency management plan and procedures. For example, a small school may not use the term “floor warden”, but each teacher will need to know their responsibility in managing
the evacuation of their class in accordance with the plan. For further information about these roles, refer to the emergency control organisation.

Authority of the emergency control organisation
Once an emergency is declared, the powers of wardens should override all normal non-emergency management procedures. The emergency planning committee will ensure that, during emergencies, instructions given by ECO personnel shall overrule normal management structure. Floor and area wardens and their deputies shall have authority to marshal all staff, students and visitors to their floor area. The purpose of this is to ensure that during an emergency situation, life safety takes precedence over other normal workplace matters.

Process for notifying, alerting and reporting emergencies
The plan should outline arrangements for alerting, notifying and reporting to emergency services, relevant Departmental staff, students, parents and caregivers.

Identified evacuation assembly areas and evacuation routes
The plan should describe the identified assembly areas and evacuation routes. The identified evacuation assembly area (also known as the designated safe assembly area) is a nominated safe place for evacuees to assemble during an emergency. Several locations should be selected which are at least 150 metres from the workplace. This will ensure that alternatives are available if the emergency makes one of the selected locations unsafe or inaccessible. In addition, one identified assembly area should be selected at least 1 km away from the workplace for evacuation in the event of specific circumstances e.g. a chemical spill. See emergency evacuation and observer's checklist. The selection of these assembly areas should take place with input from emergency services (e.g Rural Fire Service, SES).

The plan showing the identified evacuation assembly areas and evacuation routes must be posted in the workplace. Evacuation maps should clearly mark all exit routes and assembly areas relevant to each building and the location of all firefighting equipment. Maps are to be displayed prominently throughout the workplace.

Location of emergency coordination centre and recovery area
Where possible the recovery venue should be a neutral location away from the incident. The essential requirements are the availability of transport to the recovery area, shelter, first aid, food and water, counselling support and supervision.

During an emergency, parents and others concerned for the safety of students may arrive at the workplace seeking information. Depending on the scale and duration of the emergency, the workplace may establish an information centre for coordination of emergency activity in an office or other suitable location. The procedures should indicate the location of the emergency coordination centre and the recovery area.

In the aftermath of an emergency it is important that the workplace has procedures for tracking the location of anyone who is taken from the workplace for medical care or to the recovery area. Consider how, when and where relatives and students are to be reunited and what counselling services will be available to facilitate this process. A student release log form requiring a parent or guardian’s signature at the time of release can assist in this process.

Review dates
Emergency procedures should be reviewed regularly to ensure their ongoing applicability to the workplace. They should also be reviewed following any emergency and when any major changes occur, for example, new buildings, major construction work or any other factors that could affect access to evacuation assembly areas.

PREPARING FOR AN EMERGENCY
Risk management strategies for prevention or control of emergencies
The key risk management strategies for preventing or controlling risks that may lead to an emergency situation should be documented. A full copy of the risk management strategies should be included in Part 2 of the plan.
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Training against emergency management plan
The plan should outline the strategy for the training and instruction of personnel. Further information is provided at Step 4 (Communicate, train and test the plan).

Frequency of emergency response drills
The emergency management plan should state how often emergency response drills are to be conducted, including both evacuation exercises and drills for other types of emergencies. For information on the minimum frequency of evacuation exercises see Step 4 (Communicate, train and test the plan).

Arrangements for disabled persons
Where there are staff or students in the workplace with intellectual or physical disabilities, arrangements for their supervision and evacuation should take into account any special communication needs and the operation and testing of evacuation assistance devices e.g. stair chairs for wheelchairs. See assisting persons with a disability for more information.

Access and egress
All access and egress from buildings, e.g. corridors, ramps, stairs or passageways, must be kept clear of equipment and obstructions at all times to allow for a clear flow of people during an emergency. Access roads and driveways are to be kept clear of obstructions so that emergency service vehicles have clear access to the workplace and its buildings.

Testing of equipment
The plan must outline the arrangements for and frequency for testing of emergency procedures and equipment. A record of emergency response drills should be maintained. All emergency exits should be inspected at least monthly to ensure they are kept clear and that exit doors are in good working order.

First aid requirements
The location of first aid supplies and emergency kits should be included in the emergency procedures. See first aid and the Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 for more information.

Communications during an emergency
An effective communications system is essential for an effective emergency response. Each workplace requires an effective emergency communications system in the event of an emergency. The emergency management committee must consider:

- What communication strategy or system(s) is currently in place for communicating emergencies, risks, evacuation announcements etc?
- Are these strategies or systems appropriate and capable of communicating awareness of the emergency to all areas of the workplace? If not, what amendments need to be considered and implemented?
- Have the agreed communication strategies been trialed and tested as part of emergency response drills?
- Is there a backup communications system in case of systems failure?
- Do all staff and students know and understand the strategies e.g. alarm signals?
- Do all staff and students respond appropriately to alerts and alarms? If not, what are the specific gaps and how can these be remedied?
- What technologies, systems or equipment are appropriate and available to remedy the gaps?

Developing emergency communications systems
Workplace managers should seek assistance from the following areas when developing emergency communications systems:

- DoE WHS Consultants (see WHS Support)
- Asset Management Officers (see Local Asset Management Units)
- H&S Directorate.
Emergency Management Procedures

See key systems for communications during an emergency, which has been developed to assist workplaces in considering the appropriate communications systems for their workplace. Information is provided on both traditional and electronic forms of emergency communication.

Emergency alarm systems in multi-level and high rise buildings are required to have alarm systems with standby, evacuate and all clear signals. As some workplaces do not have evacuation alarm systems, alert signals and announcements that apply to various emergencies must be developed. Workplaces without alarm systems need to determine how emergency announcements or signals will be made e.g. over the public address (PA) system. If there is no PA system, other means of communication must be determined e.g. a series of bell signals and/or designated manager walking through buildings with signals (e.g. a loud speaker or a bell). See immediate response actions – sample announcements for further information.

Workplace managers should ensure that the effectiveness of existing communications systems is reviewed. A further review should be conducted every 12 months or following an emergency.

Appropriate communications systems need to be considered where there is some distance between the workplace buildings and outdoor areas such as playgrounds or sports fields. Where appropriate, identify who will provide administrative support during the emergency including answering telephone queries from the community, handling media enquiries, and responding to requests from police and emergency services. Procedures should take into account the existence of emergency communications facilities or the lack thereof, and the needs of persons with disabilities and persons not familiar with the emergency procedures.

The emergency procedures should indicate what the alternate means of communication will be if electrical power and/or telephone lines are lost e.g. mobile phones, handheld radio or use of a megaphone etc.

Returning the workplace to normal
The workplace needs to consider each aspect of their business and what strategies they can put in place to proactively and reactively respond to emergency events in order to ensure minimal interruption to business activities. This involves practical planning steps such as looking at communications, keeping a backup of important records, together with seeking the immediate assistance of relevant Departmental and external resources in the event of an emergency.

Consultation with local authorities
Workplaces are encouraged to develop their emergency management plan in consultation with DoE support teams (e.g. Student Welfare Consultants, Local Asset Management Units and WHS Consultants), local authorities (e.g. councils) and local emergency services personnel.

RESPONSE
The process for making decisions
Decisions should be consistent with the circumstances of the emergency and, where appropriate, emergency services or external support must be contacted. Once an emergency is reported the emergency controller for the workplace should assess the danger, ensuring that no person is placed at risk of harm.

This involves assessing the following:
- the nature of the emergency
- the emergency services required (see Table below)
- the immediate response actions required based on the initial assessment
- the way the emergency is developing (getting closer, moving away etc).

See the assessing danger in an emergency diagram which deals with verifying reports, assessing danger, identifying safe areas and moving to safe areas.

What emergency service do you need when you dial 000?

https://education.nsw.gov.au
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Immediate response actions
Steps in managing an emergency will vary depending on the duration, severity and type of emergency, and whether the emergency was foreseeable. In general the following steps apply where a serious risk to health and safety is presented.

Immediately:
- Implement emergency evacuation, lock down or lock out procedures where required (see emergency evacuation)
- Ensure first aid is administered and medical treatment is provided as soon as possible. When injuries appear to be serious or extensive, seek medical aid urgently (call 000 for an ambulance). Unless absolutely necessary, do not move the injured person until medical aid arrives. Moving them unnecessarily may lead to further injury
- Contact and liaise with relevant emergency services
- Secure the area and make it as safe as possible while maintaining personal safety
- Establish the facts—assess the situation, plan who to contact, who will do what, what assistance is needed e.g., School Safety and Response, H&S Directorate and the Media Unit
- Provide counselling support as required
- Report the emergency in accordance with the Department's Safe Working and Learning requirements for incident reporting. For schools, report incidents involving violence, weapons, illegal drugs or major criminal activity to Incident Support Unit on 1800 811 523; and incidents involving malicious damage, break and enter, fire and security breaches to School Security on 1300 880 021
- Seek assistance from Departmental units as required. Early assistance may be of particular importance for small workplaces, and for larger scale emergencies affecting a number of workplaces where coordination is required
- Ensure telephones are not used for anything other than incident communications
- Contact the injured person’s family if required. For international students, this includes parents and family overseas.

For response actions beyond immediate response, see the recovery time line.

Evacuation procedures (summary)
Evacuation procedures need to be developed to manage effective evacuation from the workplace in a range of potential emergencies. See the example in emergency evacuation. Details of evacuation procedures must be kept on display with the site plan in appropriate locations. Each classroom and other relevant position within the school should display a plan of the floor on which it is located, with an indication of where the classroom or area is located in relation to the floor plan. The floor plan should also show the location of firefighting equipment, telephones, emergency exit doors, stairs, and the most direct means of escape to the designated safe assembly area(s).

Response procedures for specific emergencies
The tasks outlined in immediate response actions above should be implemented in response to any emergency. However, a number of emergencies may also require other specific responses (e.g. bushfire, flood, bomb threat). The Department has developed fact sheets on specific emergencies to assist workplaces in planning for the management of specific emergencies.

Finding information on specific emergencies
- Link to the risk assessment for emergencies: guidance and checklist for an overview, which can also be used as a checklist, for identifying the emergencies that your workplace needs to plan for (includes links to fact sheets for specific emergencies), or
- Link directly to fact sheets for specific emergencies (see below). The fact sheets define the nature of the hazards, risks associated with those hazards, prevention measures, response and recovery.
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Emergency factsheets

- Bomb threat or suspected device
- Bomb threat report
- Bushfire
- Cruelty to animals
- Death at the workplace or during a DoE activity
- Death of staff or student or other members of the community (not work-related)
- Earthquake or collapse of building
- Electrical hazard
- Emergency health situation
- Explosion
- Fire
- Flood
- Fumes or chemical spill or contamination by hazardous material
- Gas leak
- Letter or parcel bombs or white powder letters
- Major incidents involving violence or threats
- Outbreak of infectious disease
- Pedestrian accident
- Staff or students lost on an excursion
- Storm (including high wind)
- Suicide
- Tsunami

Note: These fact sheets will be updated on the intranet as required. Workplace managers should ensure that they refer to the most recent version by accessing it each time from the website. This list of emergencies is not exhaustive and each workplace should consider the range of possible emergencies that they may be exposed to.

Further information concerning specific emergencies can be obtained from:

- Emergency Management Australia
- State Emergency Service
- NSW Fire Brigades.

Contact your WHS Consultant if you require any additional information.

Support for the workplace following an emergency

Senior management, network directors, institute directors and directors of public schools, have a responsibility to support and provide advice to workplace managers following an emergency. It is important that they facilitate quick access to support, including access to the Employee Assistance Program and other support mechanisms as appropriate.

Emergency contacts

In addition to the general emergency services number 000, the plan should list all local and state level emergency services and contact numbers. The emergency numbers proforma can be used to list these numbers. Note: The Emergency Services section of the NSW Government website links to the various emergency services agencies.

International students

Additional response actions are required for international students such as contacting the student’s family in their home country and contacting the International Students Centre.
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RECOVERY

Recovery is the coordinated process of supporting communities affected by emergencies in the reconstruction of physical infrastructure and restoration of emotional, physical and social wellbeing. The successful management of an emergency depends on the workplace taking appropriate action and providing support during and after the emergency. The recovery time line following an emergency will vary depending on the circumstances. The following time lines should be considered by the workplace when developing its emergency management plan. Refer to the recovery time line for assistance in planning a recovery strategy. The planning needs to include what to do immediately, during the first 24 hours, within 24-72 hours, within the first month and in the long term. Planning the recovery process usually involves the following:

- Coordination of recovery
- Selection of recovery premises
- Communications
- Resumption of services and routine
- Managing media.

The recovery premises

Where possible the recovery venue should be a neutral location away from the incident. The essential requirements are the availability of transport to the recovery area, shelter, first aid, food and water, counselling support and supervision. In the aftermath of an emergency it is important that the workplace has procedures for tracking the location of anyone who is taken from the workplace for medical care or to the recovery area. Consider how, when and where relatives and students are to be reunited and what counselling services will be available to facilitate this process. A student release log form requiring a parent or guardian’s signature at the time of release can assist in this process.

Trauma counselling and description

Identify the types of emergencies which might give rise to traumatic stress in the workplace (e.g. bushfire, bus crash and suicide). Planning includes preparation of trauma counselling resources to be used during an emergency, for example, on-site critical incident debriefing or use of the Employee Assistance Program. Consider the people who may be affected by emergencies or incidents. Students, teachers and parents may have different needs and may react accordingly. Also consider the impact on different cultural groups, people of non-English speaking backgrounds and people with a disability.

The following guidelines have specific chapters for dealing with trauma:

- Australian Emergency Manual: Disaster Recovery, Emergency Management Australia, section two. This details the psychosocial effects of disaster on communities and individuals
- Managing School Emergencies: Minimising the Impact of Trauma on Staff and Students, Department of Education, Employment and Training, Victoria, 1997. This includes guidance materials on identifying and monitoring trauma reactions with examples of post incident communications with the media, students and parents, and lesson materials.

See also location of emergency coordination centre and recovery area in the Overview of these guidelines.

Counselling after an emergency

School, college or campus counsellors should be used in the first instance when providing support to students. EAP providers are contracted to provide counselling for staff immediately following an emergency or other incident (see Employee Assistance Program). Depending on the need, this counselling may be provided to individual staff or groups of staff. It may be appropriate for the workplace manager or other key staff to contact the EAP provider to arrange on-site counselling. Staff should also be encouraged to contact the provider themselves if they need individual assistance.

Workplace managers and other key staff should:

- ensure that information about the incident provided to students and staff is understood, that an opportunity is available to ask questions, and that information is provided by a trained counsellor about emotional reactions likely to be experienced by those affected by the incident
- ensure that individuals, or groups of individuals are able to speak with a counsellor immediately, if they wish
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- consider that students, teachers, and parents may have different needs and may react accordingly; also consider the impact on different cultural groups, people of non-English speaking backgrounds and persons with physical or intellectual disabilities
- ensure that individuals who need further counselling are identified and arrangements made for its future provision.

In addition, staff may wish to discuss issues of concern with the following:
- WHS Consultant
- Institute Work Health and Safety Coordinator
- Teachers Federation Welfare Officers
- Public Service Association Industrial Officers.
Further information relating to mental health response is also available.

Returning the workplace to normal as soon as possible
As the situation stabilises, the workplace manager, in consultation with relevant persons (e.g. with emergency services, Departmental personnel such as the School Education Director and appropriate directorates such as Asset Management) should work to restore normal functioning and service delivery, consistent with the welfare of staff and students.

Managing the media strategies
All enquiries from the media should be referred immediately to the Department’s Media Unit on 9561 8501. The Media Unit will assist in managing enquiries from the media for the necessary period.
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Step 4 – Communicate, train and test the plan

By educating, training and testing, workplaces ensure that the emergency management plan is dynamic and that staff and students will be able to respond effectively in the event of an emergency.

Communicate the plan

The ongoing education of staff and students in the emergency management plan and procedures is essential to its success. The following methods can be employed to support ongoing education and awareness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Induction</th>
<th>Carry out emergency training at staff induction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specialist training</td>
<td>Train for specific roles, such as mail bomb screening for reception staff, maintenance of LPG tanks for general assistants, fire extinguisher use for wardens, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refresher training</td>
<td>Regularly update specific aspects of the training e.g. floor/section/area evacuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness raising</td>
<td>Use screen savers, newsletters and reminders to support and communicate the emergency management plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Displays</td>
<td>Display floor evacuation maps and posters in common areas, mail sorting areas, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Train

The emergency planning committee must arrange and ensure training for all staff in the emergency management plan is developed for their workplace. This should include training of fire wardens and where appropriate the training of employees in the use of firefighting equipment such as fire extinguishers and fire blankets.

Emergency response plans should be included in all induction and orientation training for employees, including permanent and casual employees, contractors and volunteers. Awareness training must be provided to all new staff in relation to the emergency management plan and procedures for the site. See emergency training or more information.

The emergency planning committee should also consider the need for communication and training methods that cater for the various occupants and the abilities of the occupants to comprehend the message being delivered e.g. information printed in relevant languages, communication with students. Emergency evacuation signals and plans should be outlined at the start of all major indoor events attended by visitors e.g. at performances.

Test

The plan must outline the arrangements and frequency for testing of emergency procedures and equipment.

**Minimum frequency of evacuation exercises** (statutory and Departmental requirements)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of workplace</th>
<th>Minimum frequency of evacuation exercises</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TAFE NSW college or campus, School, Adult Migrant Education Centre or National Art School</td>
<td>Every 6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s centre or Early childhood centre</td>
<td>Every 3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative office (e.g. state office)</td>
<td>Every 12 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Workplaces should also conduct emergency response drills for emergencies not involving evacuation. In particular, schools should practice lockdown and lockout where the school has determined that these procedures may need to be used on the basis of their risk assessment. Use the record of emergency response drills or similar to document and evaluate emergency response drills.

Skills maintenance

ECO staff shall meet together at least every 6 months. These meetings shall be used as short skills maintenance sessions to maintain the interest of staff and improve their knowledge and skills. In addition to general skills maintenance on emergency procedures, sessions may include methods of assisting persons with disabilities and behaviour of people during emergencies. As part of the skills maintenance program, the ECO should be instructed on the communications system as nominated by the EPC. The conducting of a regular test by ECO staff provides the...
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necessary practice in the effective use of the system and identification of faults that need to be remedied. The regular test should be carried out at least once a month.
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Step 5 – Review and refine

The emergency management plan needs ongoing review to ensure the workplace is properly prepared in the event of an emergency. The emergency evacuation exercise: observer’s checklist and evaluating the emergency management plan can assist in this process.

At a minimum, the plan should be formally reviewed and updated:

- after every emergency that impacts on the workplace
- whenever the structure (physical or organisational) changes sufficiently to affect the ability of the emergency management plan to be implemented
- every 12 months.

When the plan and procedures are amended or updated, changes should be communicated to all staff. Training should be provided to people in key positions and exercises changed to reflect new plans and procedures.

Emergencies occurring off-site

Activities that take place away from the workplace cannot be controlled fully by the school, college or campus. Activities may take place in a public area or in an indoor or outdoor venue, and can include excursions to museums, art galleries, shopping centres or sports events. Emergencies in off-site locations may include incidents of violence, flood, bomb threats and criminal activities and crowd related incidents such as crowd surge.

Students should be appropriately supervised during all teaching and learning activities that occur off-site, including those at sporting venues and other locations of teaching and learning activities such as excursions.

Workplaces must ensure that appropriate planning for emergencies occurring off-site take place for each activity, including excursions and work placements. Please refer to emergencies occurring off-site for references to relevant memoranda and further information on managing emergencies off-site.
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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Variations to emergency planning

Emergency planning arrangements for Departmental workplaces where the worksite is managed or controlled by another organisation

The Department's WHS Policy states:

*In joint occupancy buildings the responsibility is shared, and the required planning depends on the identified potential emergency situations and the level of control over the worksite.*

There are a number of Departmental workplaces that are located on premises under the control of a site manager or another organisation. These include Education Training Units (ETU) in Juvenile Justice Centres, Hospital schools and state office administrative areas which share facilities that are managed by a tenant manager. Some TAFE courses are also delivered on other site locations such as university campuses.

In the case of an ETU, for example, where the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) has control and management of the whole worksite, DJJ will be primarily responsible for emergency management planning. An ETU will adopt the DJJ emergency plan for the site and put in place any complementary measures necessary to satisfy the Department’s emergency management procedures. A TAFE NSW campus located on a university site may, dependent on the circumstances, need its own emergency plan consistent with the university’s emergency plan.

(a) Where a Departmental workplace adopts the emergency plan of the other organisation, the Departmental workplace manager needs to ensure that any matters are addressed that are necessary in order to complement the other organisation’s emergency planning, and that this is done in consultation with the other organisation. For example, whether the Departmental workplace has adequate evacuation signage consistent with the other organisation’s plan

(b) Whether representation on the other organisation’s emergency planning committee is sufficient or whether the Departmental workplace needs its own committee to complement the other organisation’s committee

(c) Whether the Departmental workplace will use the same evacuation assembly areas as the other organisation

(d) Whether all emergency hazards identified in the Departmental workplace are covered by the other organisation’s emergency planning

(e) Who is responsible for information and instruction regarding emergency drills and who is responsible for conducting the drills

(f) Whether the Departmental workplace needs its own drills in addition to the drills conducted by other organisation

(g) Who is responsible for relevant training (e.g. fire warden training)

(h) That any Departmental workplace committee or representatives are consulted regarding the plans and these matters.

Departmental workplace managers and employees are responsible for reporting incidents or issues (such as faults in emergency equipment) to the workplace controller and cooperating with the workplace controller in the development, implementation and review of emergency plans.

Where a workplace operates on more than one site (split sites)

Where a Departmental workplace operates on two or more separate sites, for example, where a primary school has a separate campus for its school infant years, or sites are any distance apart, then the workplace should make suitable arrangements for emergency planning.

It is possible to develop one emergency plan but with major subsections dealing with the work locations as separate sites ope rated by the workplace.

It may also be the case that although two sections of the workplace are reasonably close in terms of physical distance, the potential hazards on each site are different. In this case, a separate emergency plan should also be established.

Although the workplace name will appear on the cover, the plan will then identify the site:

- Broadway Public School
- Emergency Management Plan for Smith Street campus
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If you are unsure about whether you should lodge a separate plan for a split site, please liaise with your WHS consultant.

Other enquiries about emergency planning responsibilities
Please contact your WHS consultant if you require any further information or advice.

Appendix 2 – Useful websites and publications

Websites:
- Health and Safety Directorate
- Safety and Security Directorate
- Business Continuity Planning, Administrative Services Directorate
- Emergency Management Australia
- Emergency NSW
- State Emergency Service
- NSW Fire Brigades
- NSW Health

Publications:
- Australian Standard 3745–2010 *Emergency control organisation and procedures for buildings, structures and workplaces.*
- *Emergency/Disaster Planning for Principals*, Emergency Management Australia

Appendix 3 – Sources of information

In addition to relevant legislation, codes of practice and standards, this Guide has been developed with the assistance of the following agencies and/or resources:
- NSW Fire Brigades
- State Emergency Service
- Safety and Security Directorate, Department of Education and Training
- Student Welfare Directorate, Department of Education and Training
- NSW Health
- *Planning for a School Emergency*, Broken Bay Diocese
- *On-Site Emergency Planning*, NSW State Emergency Management Committee
- Managing School Emergencies: Minimising the Impact of Trauma on Staff and Students, Department of Education, Employment and Training, Victoria, 1997.

Glossary

Chief Warden: The Chief Warden is the person selected to head the emergency control organisation. They are normally, but not always, a person in management. For schools, the Chief Warden is normally the Principal.

Communications Officer: The role of the Communications Officer is to facilitate an effective response to an emergency by providing clear, consistent information and instructions to relevant persons.

Deputy Chief Warden: The Deputy Chief Warden assists the Chief Warden in effectively implementing the emergency management plan. The Deputy Chief Warden shall be required to assume the duties normally carried out by the Chief Warden if he/she is absent from the school, and otherwise assist the Chief Warden. For schools, the
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Deputy Chief Warden is normally the Deputy Principal or Assistant Principal.

**Emergency**: An event, actual or imminent, which endangers or threatens to endanger life, property or the environment, and which requires a significant or coordinated response (definition from the Department's [Emergency Planning and Response Policy](https://education.nsw.gov.au)).

**Emergency communications system**: An emergency communications system facilitates the coordination of both communication and control during an emergency.

**Emergency control organisation**: The emergency control organisation is the team who implements the emergency management plan during an emergency. It is made of a number of positions including the Chief Warden, Wardens, First Aid Officer and Communications Officer. Once an emergency is declared, the power of wardens should override all normal workplace roles and responsibilities. Emergency control organisation personnel should have clearly defined responsibilities.

**Emergency management plan**: The emergency management plan is the workplace document that outlines the way that action will be taken to prevent emergencies where possible, and to prepare, respond and recover from emergencies.

**Emergency Planning and Response Policy**: This is the relevant Department of Education policy which regulates emergency planning and response activities in the Department. See the Department’s [Emergency Planning and Response Policy](https://education.nsw.gov.au).

**Emergency planning committee**: The emergency planning committee is the workplace committee responsible for establishing an emergency management plan, developing emergency response procedures and appointing and training staff with specific responsibilities in an emergency (the emergency control organisation).

**First Aid Officer**: The First Aid Officer(s) assisting in an emergency is/are the person(s) already nominated as First Aid Officer(s) within the school. Other staff trained in first aid may also be nominated should the need arise for extra first aid personnel. Wardens who are also trained in first aid should not be required to carry out first aid during an emergency.

**Floor Warden or Area Warden**: A Floor Warden or Area Warden is the person responsible for coordinating the emergency response and evacuation for each floor or area. Ideally, a warden should be appointed for each floor of the building.

Persons nominated as Wardens may be required to carry out a number of duties, including:

- Raising the alarm and immediately notifying the Chief Warden to advise them of the circumstances and actions taken
- Operating firefighting equipment where appropriate e.g. fire extinguishers, hose reels and fire blankets and attempting to extinguish the fire only if suitably trained and it is safe to do so.

All Wardens are responsible for performing regular and ongoing duties, including:

- Ensuring all portable firefighting equipment within their area is in its correct location and in a serviceable condition
- Ensuring that all doors corridors and stairways, particularly fire doors, are kept free of obstructions.

**Infectious disease**: An infectious disease is a clinically manifest disease of humans or animals resulting from an infection. It is a disease that can be transmitted from person to person or from organism to organism, and is caused by a microbial agent (e.g. common cold). An infectious disease or communicable disease is caused by a biological agent (e.g. virus, bacterium or parasite), as opposed to physical (e.g. burn) or chemical (e.g. intoxication) causes.

**Risk management**: Risk management is the process of identification of foreseeable hazards, the assessment of associated risks, the elimination or control of those risks using the hierarchy of controls and the review of risk.
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assessment and controls. See the Department’s WHS Policy.

**Training exercise/emergency response drill:** A training exercise or emergency response drill is an activity simulating an emergency event through the activation of alarms and deployment of personnel, in order to:
- Review/test the planning process and procedures
- Identify needs and planning inadequacies
- Demonstrate capabilities and communication
- Foster working together as a team.

**Workplace:** For the purposes of these procedures a workplace is a place where Departmental staff work including:
- A NSW government school
- A TAFE NSW college or campus
- An Adult Migrant Education Centre, conducted by Adult Migrant English Service (AMES)
- The National Art School
- An administrative office e.g. state office.

**Workplace manager:** For the purposes of these procedures the workplace manager is:
- For NSW government schools: the principal
- For TAFE NSW colleges and campuses: the campus or college director or college manager
- For all other Departmental workplaces: the senior officer at the workplace. For administrative offices and shared sites, responsibility for emergency plans may be delegated or shared.