



Department of Education and  
Early Childhood Development

# DEECD Emergency Management Guidelines

October 2010

*Every  
child,  
every  
opportunity*



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# 1. Context

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) aims to ensure a safe and secure environment for all children, young people, staff and volunteers who work or participate in schools and Licensed Children's Services (LCS) facilities.

Throughout these guidelines continual reference will be made to schools and LCS locations; for ease of reference these will be jointly referenced as the 'facility'.

Every facility in Victoria is required to have an Emergency Management Plan (EMP) as part of its normal 'better practice' operations. The purpose of the EMP is to:

- Reduce the likelihood of emergencies and critical incidents;
- Minimise the impact of these events on children and young people, staff, volunteers and visitors;
- Facilitate the return of the workplace to normal operations as soon as possible; and
- Provide staff with the tools that, if faced with an emergency situation, will enable them to cope.

Effective planning and management of emergencies helps minimise trauma and distress to those within the facilities and allows teaching, learning and care services to be maintained or resumed as a priority.

Natural disasters such as floods, fires and storms can strike a community with little or no warning. Children and young people rely on and find great comfort in the adults who protect them. Staff must therefore know how to help them through an emergency and support their recovery.

The time to plan is now. If you don't have an EMP in place, develop one using the guidelines and template provided. If you do have a plan, review it against these guidelines and use the appropriate template and tools to ensure it is up to date. Practice the emergency procedures in the plan regularly.

Taking action now can save lives, prevent injury and minimise property damage in the moments of an emergency. The importance of reviewing and revising facility EMPs cannot be emphasised enough and these guidelines aim to help you navigate this process. The guidelines are intended to give facility managers and staff the critical concepts and components of good emergency planning, stimulate thinking about the emergency preparedness process, and provide examples of good practice.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to help prepare you and your facility for an emergency. Appended to the guidelines are a number of tools including a template for developing an EMP.

The template does not suggest a one size fits all approach to emergency preparedness and planning. Each community has its own history, culture, and way of doing things. Facilities will vary in size, for example from a secondary college with a number of campuses and a large number of staff, to a small LCS with only two staff members. This will impact on the nature of the response to an emergency. However, there will be many actions required that are essential no matter how big or small the facility is or where it is located. It is also recognised that facilities are at risk from different types of emergency events and incidents, depending on their local context.

For your EMP to be effective, it must reflect the risks, needs and resources available to your facility and your local community. The best plans are local and based on the risks you face, the resources available to you and the steps you need to take. Questions or feedback about any of these issues should be directed to your local contact:

- Regional Offices for government schools;
- Local Diocese for Catholic schools; or
- Local Government Areas (LGA) for Licensed Children's Services.

## 3. Overview

### Introduction to Emergency Management

Emergency management is the discipline of preventing and dealing with risks. It involves preparing for emergencies before they occur, responding to emergencies, as well as supporting and rebuilding after the emergency has occurred.

Emergency management is a dynamic process that can be described as:

- the process of planning to prevent the impacts of an emergency;
- preparing for the broadest ranges of emergencies;
- being able to respond safely, quickly and effectively; and
- being prepared and capable of recovering from the emergency.

### Duty of Care

DEECD and all facilities and staff have a duty of care to our children, young people, staff and visitors to ensure that they are kept safe from harm. This duty of care is embodied in several areas of legislation including the: *Education and Training Act 2006*, *Children's Service Act 1996*, *Children's Services Regulations 2009* and the *Emergency Management Act 1986*. The development of emergency management plans across DEECD will assist in ensuring the safety and well being of our children, staff and visitors.

### Emergency Defined

Emergencies range in scope and intensity from incidents that directly or indirectly affect a single child or staff member to ones that impact on the entire community. Emergencies can happen before, during or after children and young people's attendance and, on or off the facility grounds. The definition of an emergency varies with the unique needs, resources and assets of your facility and community. It is, however, crucial that all Victorian facilities use the one definition for an emergency, which is outlined as follows;

**An Emergency is considered an event (actual or imminent) which endangers or destroys life, property or the environment, and which requires a significant and coordinated response. It is any event which has an impact on your ability to care for or educate children under your supervision.**

This is the definition DEECD will use when considering an emergency. Where it is referenced in these Guidelines and the EMP keep this definition at the forefront of your mind.

EMPs need to address a range of events and hazards caused by both nature and by people, such as but not limited to:

- Natural disasters, flood or fire;
- Severe weather;
- Chemical or hazardous materials spill;
- Bus crashes;
- Bomb threats;
- Medical emergencies;
- Student or staff deaths (suicide, homicide, unintentional or natural);
- Acts of terrorism; and
- Outbreak of disease or infections.



## 4. Key Emergency Management Principles

### Safety

It is critical that emergency management planning focus on the safety and wellbeing of our children and young people, staff, volunteers and visitors to the facility. All decisions made during the planning stages of the development of the EMP should prioritise the safety and wellbeing of our children, our young people and our staff. This is a non-negotiable outcome and all plans should articulate the steps towards how this will be achieved.

### All Hazards

Those developing and preparing plans must consider the broadest range of hazards that could affect the normal operation of the facility. This will allow those developing the EMP to consider these hazards and to prepare facilities to respond to a wide range of predictable and unpredictable threats and dangers. These could be major incidents whether caused by natural disasters, man-made incidents, a health pandemic or terrorism. These hazards are not only those that occur on the facilities grounds but also those that occur outside the grounds. It could include events that occur at a regional level or those at a national level. DEECD recognises the need for consistency, but also recognises the need for flexibility.

### All Agencies

The all agencies concept is about engaging as many relevant agencies in the planning and development of your EMP. This might be the local fire brigade, police, ambulance or other state and local government agencies. DEECD is generally a support agency during an emergency, so it is good practice to get to know and involve the relevant people from other agencies and departments. Your Regional Office or LGA will have established contact with emergency services on a regional basis, and this will assist local DEECD facilities with the involvement of these agencies.

## 5. Stages of Emergency Management

### PPRR Framework – A Comprehensive Approach

Emergency management plans document the actions to be taken when responding to an emergency as well as how to recover following an incident. The planning stage is vital as this will have the respondents prepared for the event; they will have rehearsed actions within the plan to be better prepared for emergency situations.

Experts say there are typically four stages of Emergency Management that exist within your business, which are continuous and evolving. The four stages are Prevention, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery they are typically referred to as PPRR. Consideration should be given to all of these stages not one in isolation. Emergency Management Planning is a continuous process in which all phases of the plans are regularly reviewed and revised.

These four stages are illustrated in the 'PPRR' diagram below and discussed in further detail throughout these guidelines.



### Prevention

Prevention is the key to emergency management. It is widely accepted that it is better to prevent the event rather than to manage its impact on our children, young people, staff, communities and facilities. The development of EMPs and the instigation of policies and procedures go a long way to reducing the immediate and long-term impact of such events.

Prevention requires taking an inventory of the hazards and risks to the facility and community and identifying what actions need to be taken to prevent and reduce their impacts on our children, young people, staff, communities and property. To do this effectively the role of the Emergency Management Planning Team becomes a vital component. The use of risk identification tools such as the Risk Assessment Matrix (refer EMP Template) can make this process much less demanding and more thorough.

It is important to recognise that there are departmental and other resources in every community that can help with this process. Emergency services organisations, public works staff, facilities managers and insurance representatives can all help with information for your risk assessment. As an example you could rely on emergency responders, public health agencies and school nurses to help with the development of your first aid responses.

## Preparedness

Although facilities may have little control over some of the hazards that may have an impact on them, they can be prepared by developing proactive measures to mitigate the impact or to respond to such events.

Principals and managers should set a realistic timetable for planning. It is also important to break the planning down into manageable steps and to find the right balance when assigning roles and responsibilities.

Don't reinvent the wheel; if a plan already exists for your facility but hasn't been updated for some time, then work with a planning team to update and reinvigorate the plan using these guidelines so that it reflects your current needs and requirements.

Planning should also consider how and where the facility will operate during an emergency, and who should do what and when. These may seem like obvious steps, however when faced with an emergency, logic does not always prevail.

Planning and preparation work should also consider how you will communicate with the children, young people, staff and parents as well as emergency services authorities and other stakeholders. It is worthwhile discussing your options with emergency agency responders to ensure you are on the right track.

## Response

When faced with an emergency this is the time to enact your EMP not start developing it from scratch. However, when an emergency occurs, you may not get time to reach for your EMP. Knowing what to do comes with testing and regular rehearsal of emergency procedures. This is the key to emergency response.

No matter how prepared your IMT is to manage the emergency be prepared to be surprised as you may not be able to prevent and prepare for every possible event. The members of the IMT should know that there will always be an element of surprise and accompanying confusion when your facility is faced with an emergency situation.

Since the IMT has rehearsed the procedures in the plan they will be able to assess the situation and choose the appropriate response:

Schools should notify the appropriate emergency service (dial 000), DEECD Emergency & Security Management Unit (ESMU (03) 9589 6266) and their DEECD regional office regarding the nature of the emergency.

Licensed children's services should notify the appropriate emergency service (dial 000) and their DEECD regional office.

One common mistake is to delay calling emergency services, as people believe the situation can be handled in-house. Early notification of emergency services can potentially prevent considerable loss and damage. It is better to have emergency services on hand early than have them arrive too late risking further injury or damage.

During an emergency, leaders need to project a calm and confident demeanour to reassure all stakeholders that the situation is under control and of the wisdom of the directions being given.

## Recovery

As the final part of the PPRR framework and the planning process, recovery is about returning and restoring the facility back to normal as quickly as possible. It is important to plan for recovery in the preparedness phase. The focus should always be on our children, young people, staff and communities, then our facilities and infrastructure. One of the major goals of recovery is to provide a caring and supportive environment. History has shown that the recovery time for an individual may relate to past and present experiences, the thoughts and actions that contribute to these experiences, and an individual's own coping strategies.

Good communication is vital. Everyone affected by the emergency needs to be kept fully informed of the recovery program and progress. It is important to consult with DEECD before major decisions or public statements are made.

If you're unsure of the appropriate response don't make it up, refer to your Regional Office, LGA or local Diocese for clarification prior to responding. Parents and caregivers should be informed when their children and young people are able to return to the facility. This can be through the media (e.g. community radio), by telephone, or by other predetermined means.

Recovery may seem like the end, but in fact it can be the beginning. You must complete the cycle by capturing the lessons learnt from the experience. This is where you evaluate what worked and what didn't and on how the planning process, preparation, prevention, response and recovery can be improved. Take what has been learnt and start to update your response plan accordingly as this will strengthen your plan and your Emergency Management Team for any further events.

## 6. Prevention & Preparedness

Planning for an incident is crucial. It will help those involved to better handle it and ensure that decisions that are made have been considered previously with possible outcomes already known. There are many stages of planning and preparation that are vitally important. Some of these include:

- Establishing a planning team;
- Analysing your capabilities;
- Determining possible risks and hazards; and
- Communicating the plan to emergency services, parents and the local community.

Once completed this should address all incidents that occur inside your facility's building(s), on your grounds, and in the broader community.

It is important to ensure that consistent language around emergency management is used. This will ensure that when a directive is given at any level everyone is expecting the same response; there is no room for interpretation or confusion.

At the beginning of each year parents and caregivers should be advised of your facility's EMP and safety policies –the 'rules' you expect parents and caregivers to follow. The likely consequences of inadequate communication of the EMP to parents and caregivers are:

- A flood of telephone calls (if the system is working);
- A major traffic jam in front of your school (if the roads are open); or
- People (neighbours or friends) volunteering to take children home resulting in confusion who is accounted for etc.

Best practice suggests EMPs should be developed in partnership with other state and local government agencies, emergency service organisations, community groups and any other relevant stakeholders. These groups know what to do in an emergency and can be helpful in the development of your plan. Get their help to develop a coordinated EMP and response.

### **Local Knowledge**

Your EMP should be developed using local knowledge – this is often the best form of intelligence about the risks the facility might face. Remember though, to ensure that you balance this local knowledge with your own knowledge and experience. History is a great teacher; it is useful to consider incidents that have previously been experienced at your facility.

### **Offsite Activities**

The Emergency Management Plan should extend to and incorporate all off-site activities and include the impact on student supervision if staff are required to assist injured students or go for help.

All excursion staff and, where appropriate, students need to be familiar with the procedures for dealing with emergencies on each excursion.

Emergency procedures pertaining to campsites should be explained as soon as practicable after arrival and a trial evacuation exercise should be carried out immediately to familiarise staff and students with emergency evacuation protocols and ensure the procedures are appropriate.

On days of extreme fire danger, Principals may need to cancel excursions at short notice. Where excursions are not cancelled, special fire safety precautions will be required.

#### **Student Activity Locator (SAL) Database**

Relevant details about approved excursions must be entered into the Student Activity Locator database using the online notification form (edumail password required) available at:

[www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/forms/school/sal](http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/forms/school/sal)

This will allow the school and other DEECD or emergency staff to quickly locate and identify the numbers of staff, chaperones and students potentially affected and take action to ensure their safety if required.

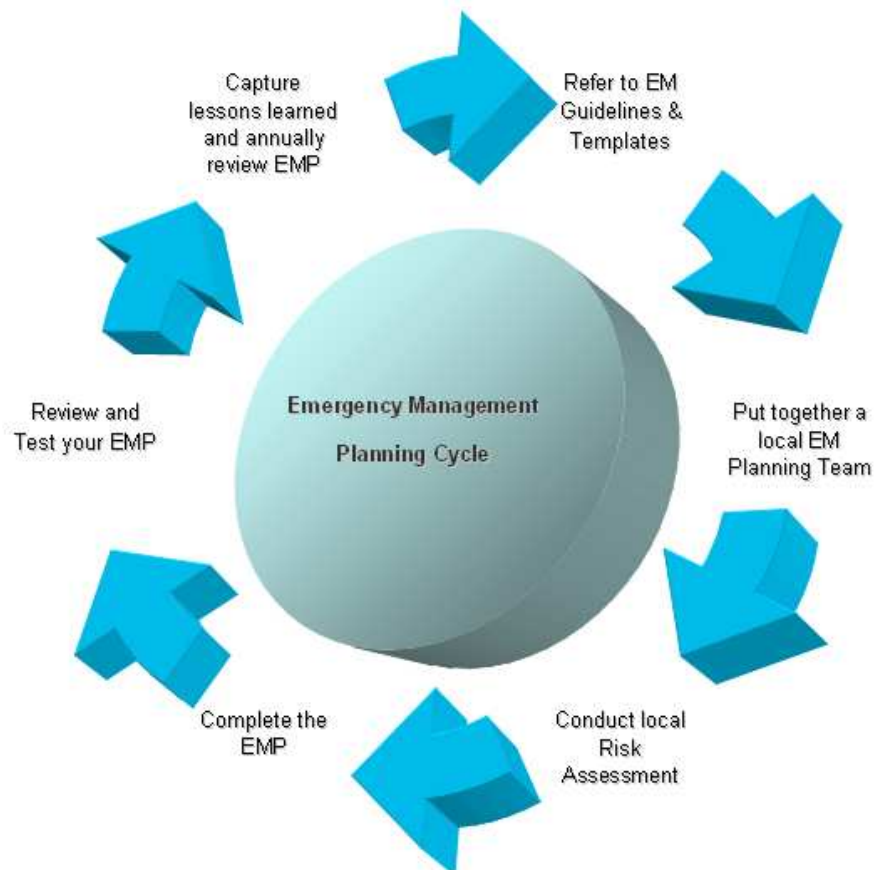
The database should be updated at least three weeks prior to the activity.

Schools should register overseas travel plans with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). DFAT will assist in ensuring the safety and security of staff and students should dangerous or exceptional circumstances arise while travelling overseas.

If you require assistance with the database contact the Emergency & Security Management Unit (ESMU).

## Emergency Management Planning Cycle

The following steps should be undertaken to assist you in the development of your EMP:



## Establishing the Teams

It is important that in the development of the facility EMP that a team based approach is adopted. We recognise and acknowledge that facilities will have differing capacity to achieve this and DEECD, through Regional Offices or LGAs, will be able to support those with capacity challenges in the development of their EMP.

Where appropriate, all facilities need an Emergency Management Planning Team to develop the EMP in addition to an Incident Management Team to respond to incidents as they occur. This ensures that the EMP is developed considering the perceptions, skills and experiences of a broad range of people. DEECD acknowledges that this may not always be possible.

### Emergency Management Planning Team

One of the key functions of the Emergency Management Planning Team is to identify the type of risks and emergencies that may occur in your local area and facility and defining the types of events that would activate the plan in your facility. The planning team may also consider

factors such as your ability to handle the situation with your internal resources and their experience in responding to past events.

The size of the planning team will depend on the size and capacity of your facility, its requirements and the resources available to you.

Involving a group of people is best because it:

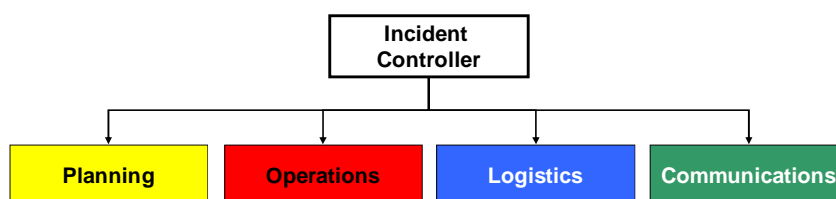
- encourages participation and gets more people invested in the process;
- increases the amount of time and energy participants are able to give;
- enhances the visibility and stature of the planning process; and
- provides for a broad perspective on the issues.

You need to determine who can be an active member and who can serve in an advisory capacity. In most cases, one or two people will be doing the majority of the work. At the very least, you should obtain input from all functional areas of your facility.

### Incident Management Team (IMT)

DEECD has adopted the Australian Inter-service Incident Management System - Incident Control System (AIIMS ICS) as its method of managing incidents. This is a team based system that has four key functional areas of responsibility: Control, Operations, Planning and Logistics. These functions can be performed by a single person or a large team depending on the size, nature and complexity of the incident. Under an IMT framework these standardised roles and positions are assigned depending on the incident, allowing separate entities involved in a disaster to communicate effectively with one another. In an emergency, people may have to perform tasks and supervise areas and staff that are not in their job description but are within the scope of their responsibilities under the IMT.

The typical IMT structure is outlined in the diagram that follows:



In this diagram:

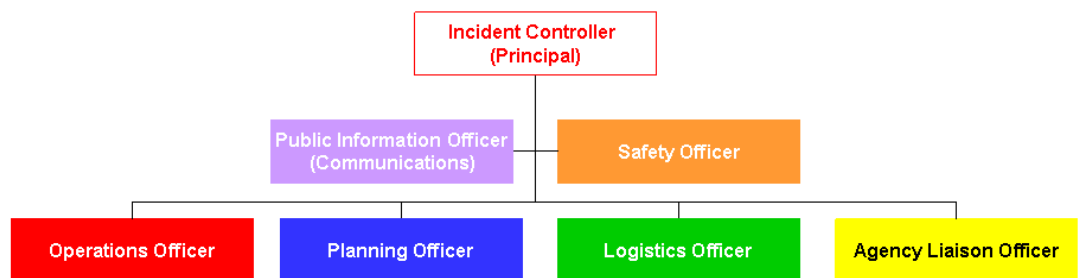
- One person is always in “Control” of an incident.
- The Controller is normally assisted by people responsible for
  - Planning – forward planning regarding the nature & impact of the incident
  - Operations – response activities



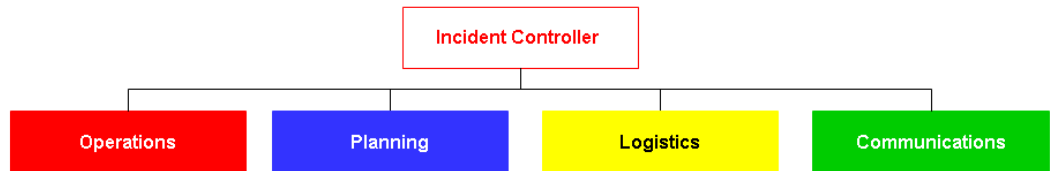
- Logistics – provision of technical and resource support
- Communications – internal/external communications

The tasks of an IMT are 'scalable' and can be performed in large or small facilities. Examples of IMT structures in large and small facilities follow:

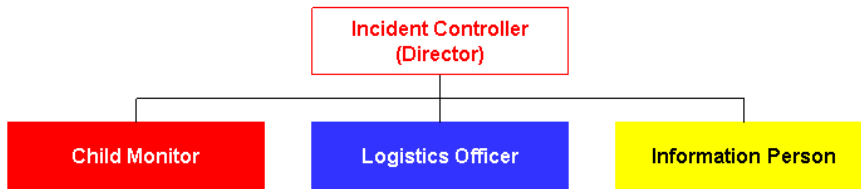
*Example of an IMT Structure in a large school*



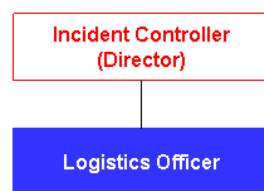
*Example of an IMT Structure in a small school*



*Example of an IMT Structure in a large licensed children's service i.e. kindergarten*



*Example of an IMT Structure in a small licensed children's service*



### Incident Controller

An IMT will have a structure reflecting who does what in an emergency. Every IMT has a “controller”, or person responsible for making decisions during an emergency.

Your IMT will depend on the size of your facility, the staff available, the children and young people in your care and the risks identified. In a school or licensed children's service setting this system puts one individual from the facility's staff in charge of the emergency and decision-making process.

This individual, usually the principal or licensed children's service Director/Manager or designate, is the Incident Controller. The person with this title may vary depending on the staffing, the time and type of incident. However, regardless of the incident or when it occurs, the role of the Incident Controller will be activated.

## Risk Assessment

Your EMP must be developed by assessing the most current risks and hazards that you understand to be present. Not all facilities face the same range of hazards, for example the threat of bushfires doesn't apply to all facilities, so it is important to be pragmatic but thorough. It is recommended that the EMP is revisited regularly (every year or after a major event).

As each facility has its own characteristics, EMPs must be tailored for different:

- design features between buildings;
- activities conducted within buildings;
- access arrangements; and
- populations with varying needs.

When assessing the risk of your facility consider:

Demographic factors

- number of children and young people
- staff numbers
- cultural factors
- disability / health factors

Geographic factors:

- roads into and away from the facility
- access to public transport
- distance to parent homes
- distance from the facility to other community facilities

Specific risk factors:

- natural emergency risks (e.g. severe storms, snow, bushfires, earthquakes and floods)
- other risks identified for the facility

See the Risk Assessment Matrix in the EMP Template to determine the risks that your facility faces.

## Exercise and Implementation

Training and practice are essential for the successful implementation of the EMP. Most children, young people and staff know what to do in case of a fire because they participate in routine fire drills, but would they know what to do in a different emergency?

Exercises also allow children, young people, staff and facilities to evaluate what works and what needs to be improved.

Preparedness includes emergency drills and exercises for staff, children, young people and emergency responders. Desktop exercises are very useful in practising and testing procedures specified in the EMP. Desktop exercises are generally informal and should be stress free learning environments, intended to facilitate the testing of the facility emergency management and response plans. Best practice desktop exercises typically involve facility staff and emergency responders sitting around a table discussing the steps they would take to respond to an incident.

This group style exercise often identifies issues that need to be addressed in the EMP and any issues with plans for communication and response. Staff will also need training in how to manage children and young people during an emergency, especially those experiencing panic reactions. Careful consideration of these issues will improve your EMP and better prepare you to respond to an actual incident.

## 7. Response

### Activation of your Plan

Implementation of the EMP begins when the person-in-charge (Incident Controller) becomes aware of a situation that may be considered an emergency. The responsible person will assess the situation utilising all immediately available information. Once the decision is made that an emergency exists, he or she will choose the most appropriate response. Once appointed, the Incident Controller may choose from one of the following responses:



### Lockdown

- The incident controller may choose to lockdown the facility when he or she has identified an external and immediate danger and determined that it is safer for children and young people, staff and visitors to remain inside the classroom and/or building.
- The Incident Controller announces the lockdown with instructions. These may be to close internal doors and windows, sit below window level or move into corridors and remain outside the classroom, or a combination of these instructions.

### Lockout

- Is used when an internal and immediate danger is identified and it is determined that children and young people, staff and visitors should be excluded from buildings for their safety.
- The Incident Controller will announce the lockout with instructions.
- In line with the next response, planning should have been undertaken to determine where the children and young people, staff and visitors will evacuate to.

## Evacuate

- The decision to evacuate will be based on the need to have children and young people, staff and visitors leave the building for their safety.
- Once receiving the announcement to evacuate, all children and young people, staff and visitors will be required to follow either the predetermined protocols or the explicit directions of the Incident Controller. This depends on the circumstances of the facility and the critical incident or emergency.
- Incident Controllers must exercise their judgement but, as a general rule, if a threat is external to the facility (and evacuation to a distant safer place is not feasible) it is safer to remain in the facility.
- If the threat is internal to the facility (e.g. a chemical hazard) it may be safer to be outside of the facility.
- The EMP should contain a minimum of two external evacuation points and at least one internal evacuation point depending on the nature of the emergency hazard. These assembly points should be clearly signed in and around the site.

## 8. Recovery

Recovery encompasses the health and wellbeing of staff and students within your facility as well as the restoration of your facility to full operation as quickly as possible. Recovery from an emergency begins almost as soon as the emergency itself.

During emergencies, the ESMU provides assistance with the provision of psychosocial response/recovery support to government schools and early childhood services. The ESMU works directly with regions, schools, early childhood services and Victorian emergency services to maintain the safety and wellbeing of staff, children and adolescents.

Psychosocial response/recovery support can include the coordination and provision of specialist psychological services to children, adolescents and staff following exposure to a large scale disaster, emergency or critical incident. In addition, the ESMU is responsible for the provision of training to school/early childhood service and regional support staff in trauma response and recovery.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's resources to assist support recovery functions can be found online at the following link:

[Click here for DEECD recovery assistance resources](#)

Following an emergency, if longer term support for staff, volunteers, students or young people is required, your Regional Office, Diocesan Office or LGA should be able assist with the deployment of specialists. It is important that you make every effort to engage persons with specialist expertise to manage trauma within your facility – people often suffer most in the aftermath of an emergency.

Other elements of recovery include capturing the lessons learned and improving your plan and infrastructure so that your facility is better placed to manage future emergencies. Treat every incident as a learning experience and ensure that your facility is able to return to 'business as usual' as soon as possible.

### Review

### Reporting Requirements

#### Critical Incident Reporting

A critical incident is any event which has the potential to adversely affect the children, staff, or community and interrupts the normal flow of daily events.

Examples of critical incidents include suicide and death of a child or member of the community. Other traumatic events such as fires or flooding can have a significant impact on the facility's ability to provide an effective learning environment for a period of time.

A critical incident is likely to affect the physical, psychological and emotional well being of staff and children and may have a minimal or significant impact on the community. Some people will be more emotionally affected than others, but no-one involved should be ignored.

If handled properly, a critical incident can make a community stronger in the long-term. If not, it can tear the community apart. In times of

crisis, direction from professionals coupled with trained compassionate staff help contain the emotional disruption associated with a traumatic event.

## Schools: Reporting Requirements

Where the safety of staff or students is at risk, there is criminal activity, a threat to property or the environment, it must be reported immediately to emergency services on 000. It must then be immediately reported to ESMU (03) 9589-6266.

Report the following incidents to ESMU:

- Fatality resulting from illness, suicide and suicide attempts;
- Serious injuries (involving visiting a GP, ambulance transportation or hospitalisation);
- Transport accidents;
- Assault, threat of assault or offensive behaviour;
- Firearms, weapons or bomb threats;
- Siege, hostage, disappearance or removal of a student;
- Outbreak or incidence of disease;
- Fires, floods, major disasters or natural events;
- Chemical, biological or radiological spillage or contamination;
- Criminal acts (violence, theft, arson, vandalism, graffiti); or
- Sexual assault or allegations involving inappropriate sexualised behaviour.

## Licensed Children's Services: Reporting Requirements

The Act under section 29C and the Children's Services Regulations 2009 (Regulations 90) require a proprietor of a children's service, including a family day care service, to notify the Secretary of DEECD of a serious incident within 24 hours of the incident – initially by telephone and then followed by written notification as soon as practicable. The Act requires that the proprietor must notify a Children's Services Adviser at the appropriate DEECD Regional Office once emergency actions have been taken.

Proprietors are also required to notify parents or guardians of a serious incident as soon as is practicable (Regulation 91).

Licensed children's services with a funding and service agreement with DEECD are also required to notify regional DEECD staff of a category one incident through the DEECD reporting process. The Regulations require that the proprietor must ensure that emergency procedures are

developed and regularly practiced with staff members, volunteers, family day carers and children being cared for or educated by the children's service (Regulation 76).

The proprietor (other than a family day care service) must also ensure that details of emergency evacuation procedures are displayed prominently at the main entrance to the children's service (Regulation 40). This could include displaying emergency procedures, a site plan and Standard Fire Orders. (See Metropolitan Fire Brigade Posters outlining the actions to take in case of fire).

The proprietor of a family day care service may require that a family day carer display an emergency procedure plan together with the emergency evacuation procedures at their residence or venue.

The development of emergency procedures will provide information to parents, guardians and staff, including the practice of evacuation of the children's service.

## Record Keeping

This is an often overlooked aspect of managing an incident; however it is a critical component of managing any incident. This is especially important for incidents that impact on our children and young people, staff or visitors, or incidents that result in a significant loss of departmental infrastructure or assets, or public scrutiny of a departmental activity.

Record keeping does not need to be an impost on those managing incidents or on the IMT. Simple incident log sheets, as found in your Template Appendix, can be a useful tool for the IMT to record incident information, such as, but not limited to, time of calls or emails; time and basis for the decisions that are made; the time that the IMT receives information; and other relevant incident information.

DEECD recommends that all Incident Controllers and IMTs complete and maintain their own records, as these provide a valuable source of information during the post incident debriefs and reviews and where necessary investigations.

## Debriefs and Reviews

DEECD is committed to a continual learning and improvement process in the way we manage incidents and as such are committed to conducting post incident debriefs and reviews. These activities whilst daunting and sometimes difficult provide a valuable opportunity for people to heal, for people to reflect and for people to learn about the future.

Debriefing needs to be carefully managed as it is a perfect learning and development opportunity. It should not be used as an occasion to apportion blame or fault. If managed well, these post incident activities will improve our systems and processes and most importantly make it safer for our children, young people, staff and visitors to our facilities.

The typical questions that should be asked during a debrief are:

- What went well?
- What didn't go so well?
- What would we change before next time?



## 9. Further Information

### Response to Specific Hazards

#### Bushfires and Localised Fire Events

Bushfire preparedness is not just a concern of rural and regional facilities. Metropolitan facilities may be at risk from site specific factors (e.g. located in a leafy area) or because their students may attend activities or camps in bushfire prone areas. In case of bushfires or a localised fire event, Incident Controllers will be expected to:

- Listen to the local radio or TV and monitor the CFA/Emergency Services Websites for bushfire or weather warnings and advice
- Make a decision to externally or internally relocate children. If early evacuation advice is not issued or the fire is approaching the facility and it is unsafe to evacuate, everyone should remain in the building after the following precautions are taken:
  - Phone 000 for Fire Brigade (dial an additional 0 for an outside line, if required) and follow advice. Inform 000 / fire brigade operator which building/s the staff and children will be housed in.
  - Check attendance against class rolls at assembly area.
- The primary responsibility of staff is the safety of students and staff. For an internal evacuation;
  - Move everybody inside, assembled away from the part of the building that will be initially exposed;
  - Turn off power and gas, close all windows, doors and block crevices, with wet materials (e.g. towels);
  - Fill gutters, all sinks, washbasins and drums with water;
  - Stay inside in the identified area (preferably bricked and tiled) away from windows;
  - Once the fire has clearly passed, evacuate the building, assess and remain in a safe area;
  - Contact ESMU on 9589 6266 to report the incident and the Region for advice and support;

- Direct all media enquiries to the DEECD Media Unit on 9637 2871; and
- Implement procedures to resume workplace activities, including arranging counselling support.

## Internal Fires and Smoke

Fires affect everyone. Early notification and action can prevent considerable risk to property damage and personal injury. There are some specific actions that should be considered prior to attending to a fire. The first priority, however, is the personal safety of children and staff. In case of internal fires and smoke, Incident Controllers will be expected to:

- Remain calm and raise the alert;
- Immediately evacuate the room where the internal fire/smoke occurs;
- Assist people in immediate danger – in particular people with disabilities;
- Notify the Fire Brigade, phone 000 (dial an additional 0 for an outside line);
- Implement partial or full evacuation procedures if necessary;
- Close doors and windows on departure if possible to prevent the spread of fire and smoke;
- Check student attendance against class rolls and account for all visitors at assembly area;
- Designate a staff member to ensure the fire brigade has access to the site of the fire e.g. gates are open and vehicles are not blocking access;
- People with disabilities who require help should be moved to a predetermined fire-protected stairwell or safe place and await assistance from Fire Brigade Officers along with a teacher/warden;
- Conduct a final check in pairs, if it is safe to do so, on the floor to ensure all staff and students are accounted for. Advise the Chief Warden of the results;
- Contact the Region for advice and support, as appropriate;
- Direct all media enquiries to the DEECD Media Unit – 03 9637 2871; and

- Implement procedures to resume workplace activities, including arranging counselling support for anyone affected by the fire.

## Severe Storms and Flooding

Facilities need to prepare for both external and internal storm and water damage caused by torrential rain, low lying grounds, drainage issues, burst water pipes etc. When planning a response to storms and internal flooding consideration should be given to actions required before the storm and after the storm. In case of severe storms and flooding, Incident Controllers will be expected to:

- Direct staff/children to assemble inside buildings;
- Stand against interior walls or hallways on lowest floor possible (tops of buildings may be damaged);
- Stand away from windows;
- Avoid auditoriums, gymnasiums and other enclosures that have long roof spans;
- Avoid rooms that will bear the full force of the wind;
- Close windows and blinds on the windward side and secure loose objects in open areas e.g. garbage bins;
- Check attendance against class rolls and account for all visitors at internal assembly area;
- Close down any utilities that may cause additional hazards, e.g. electricity, gas, water;
- Contact the Region for advice and support, as appropriate;
- Once the storm passes check for damage and listen to the local radio for official warnings/advice;
- Beware of fallen power lines, damaged buildings and trees, flooded watercourses;
- Keep staff/students on the premises until it is safe to return to normal activities or go home;
- Implement procedures to resume workplace activities, including arranging counselling support for anyone affected by the storm;
- Contact the Region for advice and support, as appropriate;
- Direct all media enquiries to the DEECD Media Unit on 03 9637 2871;

- Where the building is damaged contact the Regional Facilities Management immediately; and
- Contact the ESMU on 9589 6266 to report the incident to the DEECD.

## Pandemics and Communicable Diseases

Victoria is now in the 'Protect' phase of its plan to manage the impact of the H1N1 strain of influenza in our community. This illness is classified as 'moderate', with the majority of cases being mild. However, five per cent of cases are severe, which means that those affected may require hospitalisation and intensive care. The best defence against all influenza viruses – including H1N1 – remains good general hygiene.

In case of Pandemics and communicable diseases, Incident Controllers will be expected to implement a facility wide approach to personal hygiene ensuring children and staff:

- Cover their nose and mouth with a tissue when they cough or sneeze;
- Wash their hands regularly;
- Keep a large step away from other people when they are in public;
- Understand the signs of flu: sudden onset of fever, cough, extreme tiredness and body aches are the main signs of flu. Other common signs are headaches and a sore throat; and
- Stay at home if they notice they have flu-like symptoms.

## Intruders

Facilities need to prepare for an Intruder event where a person enters a school or licensed children's service premises without permission and who does not have good cause to be on the premises. In case of intruders, Incident Controllers will be expected to:

- Lockdown the facility;
- Supervise children at all times;
- Approach the intruder and determine their reasons for being there;
- Request the intruder to leave the property;
- Notify the Emergency Services by dialling 000; and
- Observe the intruder from a distance, noting full description of intruder: Height, Eyes, Hair, Complexion, Sex, Clothing Voice, Approximate Age, Baggage, Jewellery, Vehicle Registration.

## Criminal and Violent Incidents

Violent incidents can occur in schools and licensed children's services. They can involve children, visitors or staff members. Crime against schools can be managed by developing systematic and cost effective approaches to reduce the risks. Applying a situational approach to crime prevention based on locally identified risks aims to reduce the opportunity for people to commit crimes. In case of criminal incidents, Incident Controllers will be expected to implement situational crime and violence prevention strategies through:

- Target hardening - locks, window film, grills, and computer-locking mechanisms;
- Environmental design - trimmed foliage, lighting, natural surveillance, fences, signs;
- Electronic systems - alarms, detection devices, closed circuit television;
- Policies - asset marking, equipment storage, equipment location; and
- Procedures - checking procedures, window and door locking, regular equipment audits.

## Earthquakes

Earthquakes are a natural hazard which cannot be prevented but the effect that an earthquake has on your facility can be reduced if you have a plan. In case of Earthquakes, Incident Controllers will be expected to ensure children and staff:

- Have a safe internal area to shelter during an earthquake;
- Shelter under (and hold onto) a sturdy table, bench or interior doorframe;
- Stay clear of windows and outer walls;
- Keep well clear of buildings, overhead structures, walls, bridges, power lines and trees;
- Watch for hazards and tend to injuries; and
- Evacuate if the building is damaged.

## Hazardous Substance Release

### **Hazardous Substance Release - Inside Facility Grounds:**

The Incident Controller will assess the need to evacuate the facility based on all immediately available information and hazardous substance guidelines. Material Safety Data Sheets should be kept in a readily accessible location in accordance with OH&S regulations. In the case of a hazardous substance released inside the facility grounds, Incident Controllers will be expected to:

- Move staff /students to a safe area;

- Check attendance against class rolls at assembly area;
- Contact Fire Brigade and Emergency Services if the nature of the emission/spill is unknown or it is unsafe for staff to deal with (000);
- Ensure the spill is cleaned up by staff if safe to do so; and
- Give the all clear so staff /students may return to classes.

#### **Hazardous Substance Release - Outside Facility Grounds:**

An event such as fire, motor vehicle accident, train derailment, industrial incident or a natural disaster may cause a hazardous substance release. As a result, emergency responders may request that you secure and seal the building. Those who have been advised to secure and seal the building will be notified if additional measures are required and when it is "all clear." During such an event, it is important to maintain communications with the emergency services and DEECD Regional Offices or LGAss. In the case of a hazardous substance being released where the contamination is confirmed as outside the buildings, Incident Controllers will be expected to:

- Move all staff /students into buildings immediately;
- Call Fire Brigade, Police and Emergency Services Authority, phone 000;
- Check attendance against class rolls at assembly area;
- Occupy rooms furthest from emission source, close to an exit and upwind if possible;
- Close all external doors and windows. Draw curtains/blinds and seal ventilators, turn off air conditioners and extinguish any naked flames, including pilot lights;
- Contact the ESMU on 9589 6266 to report the incident to the Region seeking advice and support, as appropriate; and
- Evacuate if directed by Emergency Services or forced to by extraordinary circumstances such as a building being full of fumes. In this instance move to an area upwind of the incident.

## **Bomb threats**

The facility plan should include policy and procedures in dealing with bomb threats. In case of bomb threats, Incident Controllers will be expected to develop the plan by including the following:

### **Bomb Threat Checklist**

- This list is used by the person who answers the phone to obtain and record as much useful information as possible.

### **Notification Procedures**

- All threats must be taken seriously.
- The Incident Controller may choose to notify police or direct someone else to do so and make the decision to evacuate the facility or isolate everyone to their classrooms. The facilities administration should be notified based on established policy and procedures.

## **Off-Site Facility Emergency**

In the case of an off-site facility emergency, Incident Controllers will be expected to:

- Identify someone as the person-in-charge any time an activity is being conducted away from the facilities building(s);
- Ensure that this person has the responsibility to activate the Emergency Management Plan; and
- Ensure the EMP includes any alterations to the plan required to accommodate the activity, location, and available staff.

## **School Bus Accident / Vehicle Incident**

In the case of school bus accident or vehicle incident, Incident Controllers will be expected to:

- Maintain a bus folder for each bus servicing the school containing rosters and emergency telephone numbers for all children assigned to ride the bus; and
- Ensure the teacher in charge of a special activity or trip prepares trip bus folders. One copy of the student manifest should be placed in the trip folder and a second copy should accompany the teacher on the trip.

## Regional Office Contacts

Regional Office	Details
<b>Barwon-South Western</b>	Postal address: PO Box 2086, Geelong VIC 3220 Location: 5A Little Ryrie Street, Geelong VIC 3220 Phone: (03) 5225 1000 Fax: (03) 5225 1099 Email: <a href="mailto:bswr@edumail.vic.gov.au">bswr@edumail.vic.gov.au</a> Website: <a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/region/barwon">www.education.vic.gov.au/region/barwon</a>
<b>Eastern Metropolitan</b>	Level 3, 295 Springvale Road, Glen Waverley VIC 3150 Phone: (03) 9265 2400 Fax: (03) 9265 2444 Email: <a href="mailto:emr@edumail.vic.gov.au">emr@edumail.vic.gov.au</a> Website: <a href="http://www.emr.vic.edu.au">www.emr.vic.edu.au</a>
<b>Gippsland</b>	Postal address: PO Box 381, Moe VIC 3825 Location: Corner Kirk & Haigh Streets, Moe VIC 3825 Phone: (03) 5127 0400 Fax: (03) 5126 1933 Email: <a href="mailto:gippsmail@edumail.vic.gov.au">gippsmail@edumail.vic.gov.au</a> Website: <a href="http://www.gippsland.vic.edu.au">www.gippsland.vic.edu.au</a>
<b>Grampians</b>	109 Armstrong Street North, Ballarat VIC 3350 Phone: (03) 5337 8444 Fax: (03) 5333 2135 Email: <a href="mailto:c0988311@edumail.vic.gov.au">c0988311@edumail.vic.gov.au</a> Website: <a href="http://www.grampians.vic.edu.au">www.grampians.vic.edu.au</a>
<b>Hume</b>	Postal address: PO Box 403, Benalla VIC 3672 Phone: (03) 5761 2100 Fax: (03) 5762 5039 Email: <a href="mailto:hume.region@edumail.vic.gov.au">hume.region@edumail.vic.gov.au</a> Website: <a href="http://www.hume.vic.edu.au">www.hume.vic.edu.au</a>
<b>Loddon Mallee</b>	37-43 Havlin Street East, Bendigo VIC 3550 Phone: (03) 5440 3111 Fax: (03) 5442 5321 Website: <a href="http://www.lcmdoe.vic.edu.au">www.lcmdoe.vic.edu.au</a>
<b>Northern Metropolitan</b>	Postal address: Locked Bag 2001, Coburg VIC 3058 Location: Level 2, 189 Urquhart Street, Coburg VIC 3058 Phone: (03) 9488 9488 Fax: (03) 9488 9440 Email: <a href="mailto:c0989601@edumail.vic.gov.au">c0989601@edumail.vic.gov.au</a> Website: <a href="http://www.nmr.vic.edu.au">www.nmr.vic.edu.au</a>
<b>Southern Metropolitan</b>	33 Princes Highway, Dandenong VIC 3175 Phone: (03) 9794 3555 Fax: 9794 3500 Email: <a href="mailto:c0988341@edumail.vic.gov.au">c0988341@edumail.vic.gov.au</a> Website: <a href="http://www.smr.vic.edu.au">www.smr.vic.edu.au</a>
<b>Western Metropolitan</b>	Level 4, 369 Royal Parade, Parkville VIC 3052 Phone: (03) 9291 6500 Fax: (03) 9291 6565 Email: <a href="mailto:wmro@edumail.vic.gov.au">wmro@edumail.vic.gov.au</a> Website: <a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/region/western">www.education.vic.gov.au/region/western</a>



## Terms and Definitions

Terms	Definitions/ Descriptions	Acronyms
Bushfire	A fire in vegetation.	
Critical Incident	Any event which has the potential to adversely affect the students, staff, and/or school community and which interrupts the normal flow of daily events. Examples include suicide, death of a student or member of the school community. See also Emergency.	
Chief Warden	The person in charge of responding to a fire emergency, in most cases the principal. May be used interchangeably with Incident Controller.	
Department	Department of Education & Early Childhood Development	DEECD
DEECD OHS Management System	The DEECD OHS Management System developed to clarify management of OHS and improve workplace safety for DEECD schools and other workplaces. <a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hr/ohs/health/ohsms">www.education.vic.gov.au/hr/ohs/health/ohsms</a>	
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	Commonwealth Department which provides travel information for overseas trips made by staff and students. <a href="http://www.dfat.gov.au">www.dfat.gov.au</a> <a href="http://www.smarttraveller.gov.au">www.smarttraveller.gov.au</a>	DFAT
Department of Human Services	Has primary responsibility for coordinating recovery activities following emergencies or major disasters, although in most cases, responsibility for recovery from emergencies affecting schools remains with DEECD. <a href="http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au">www.dhs.vic.gov.au</a>	DHS
Emergency	An event, actual or imminent, on or off site, which endangers or threatens to endanger life, property or the environment; and requires a significant and coordinated response. See also Critical Incident.	

Terms	Definitions/ Descriptions	Acronyms
Emergency Kit	<p>Contains a range of equipment or material that may assist in an emergency. It may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student and Children Data</li> <li>Children and staff with special needs list</li> <li>Student / Child Release Forms</li> <li>Staff Data</li> <li>List of staff with emergency management or training skills</li> <li>Traffic safety vest and tabards</li> <li>Keys</li> <li>Standard portable First Aid kit</li> <li>A charged mobile phone</li> <li>Torch with replacement batteries (or wind up torch)</li> <li>A megaphone</li> <li>Portable battery powered radio</li> <li>Bottled water</li> <li>Portable non perishable snacks</li> <li>Copy of facility site plan and evacuation routes</li> <li>Sunscreen and spare sunhats</li> <li>Whistle</li> <li>Plastic garbage bags and ties</li> <li>Toiletry supplies</li> </ul>	
Emergency Management	The discipline around preparing for and dealing with emergencies. The management function covers all aspects of emergencies including planning, preparedness, response and recovery phases.	
Emergency Management Plan	<p>Document used to detail assigned responsibilities, actions and procedures, required in the event of an emergency.</p> <p>A template for an EMP is located as an Appendix to this guide.</p>	EMP
Emergency & Security Management Unit	DEECD business unit responsible for operating the DEECD 24 hour emergency contact centre, providing security and emergency assistance, guidance and support.	ESMU
Emergency Services	Refers collectively to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Victoria Police</li> <li>Metropolitan Fire Brigade</li> <li>Country Fire Authority</li> <li>Ambulance Victoria</li> <li>State Emergency Service</li> </ul>	
Employee Health Unit	<p>DEECD business unit responsible for developing OHS and WorkCover policy and strategy for the DEECD. Provides general advisory support to schools and other workplaces in managing health and safety, WorkCover and rehabilitation.</p> <p><a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hr/ohs">www.education.vic.gov.au/hr/ohs</a></p>	EHU

Terms	Definitions/ Descriptions	Acronyms
Family Fire Safety Plans	Family plan that includes alternative care arrangements for children in the event of school or children's services closures. Where practical, encourage parents and caregivers to have one in place. May also be referred to as a Bushfire Survival Plan.  See: <a href="http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au">www.cfa.vic.gov.au</a>	
Hazard	A source of potential harm or a situation with a potential to cause loss or injury.	
Incident Control System	A framework emergency management agencies and providers use to respond to an incident or emergency.	ICS
Incident Controller	The person on the school staff designated in the ICS as in charge of the emergency and related decision-making. The Incident Controller and the Chief Warden are roles usually performed by the principal.	
Incident Log	Details of an incident including who, what, when, where and how.	
Incident Management Team	The group identified in the EMP, it usually reflects the ICS structure.	IMT
Municipal Emergency Coordination Committee	Committee established to coordinate and organise emergency provision of council and community resources within the municipal area or, by agreement, to a neighbouring district.	MECC
Neighbourhood Safer Places	Designed as places of last resort, normally designated as part of Township Protection Plans (TPP).	NSP
Personal Support	Stage 1 – Psychological First Aid Stage 2 – Entry and Engagement Stage 3 – Assessment Stage 4 – Specialised Trauma Support Stage 5 – Follow Up	
Principal	Normally fulfils the role of Incident Controller or Chief Warden.	
Psychological First Aid	Is the first of the five stages of Personal Support. It involves approaching and offering support, reassuring and ensuring safety, comforting and communicating.	
Region(s)	DEECD geographical regions for administration and coordination purposes. A listing can be found in Appendix ___ with their contact details.	
Regional Emergency Management Coordinator	Normally an Assistant Regional Director whose role is to coordinate response and recovery actions to deal with an incident or emergency	

Terms	Definitions/ Descriptions	Acronyms
Regional Emergency Management Plan	The Emergency Management Plan for an individual region	
Risk	The chance of something happening that will have an impact upon objectives. Generally measured in terms of consequences & likelihood.	
Schools Incident Reporting Requirements	Details can be found under Section 6.15.1 of the Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide.	
State Coordinator	The State Coordinator of response is the Chief Commissioner of Police.	
Student Activity Locator	Database of relevant details about approved excursions and off-site activities.	SAL
Strategic Engineering Risk Assessment Tool	An online survey regarding the relative level of bushfire risk of schools and licensed children's services. Developed by DEECD in conjunction with the Victorian Managed Insurance Authority (VMIA)	SERA
Township Protection Plan	Normally refers to emergency planning in high risk areas, including the identification of Neighbourhood Safer Places (NSP), where available.	TPP
Victorian Bushfire Information Line	24 hour telephone line (1800 240 667) providing information about bushfires.	