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EMERGENCY AND CRITICAL INCIDENTS:
DEFINITION:
Emergencies and natural disasters are events involving bushfires, building fires, external/internal emissions and spills, intruders, bomb/substance threat, severe weather events, earthquakes or influenza pandemics.

Overview
Schools are responsible for:
- planning for and managing emergencies
- responding swiftly to emergency incidents including medical emergencies
- reporting emergencies and incidents
- liaising with a range of support agencies including the Security Services Unit
- testing emergency procedures.

Schools:
- may implement additional security risk management measures
- may be required to provide WorkSafe notifications.

BUSHFIRE PREPAREDNESS:
PURPOSE:
To prepare for and then ensure the safety of students, staff and school visitors on days of forecast elevated fire danger taking into consideration the importance of shared responsibility and continuance of education.
POLICY:
All registered schools, as a component of their registration, must comply with the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) Guidelines for Bushfire Preparedness.

Bushfire at Risk Register (BARR)
Schools around Victoria are at varying risk from bushfire. The Department's Bushfire at Risk Register (BARR) records the schools and early childhood services most at risk from bushfire.
Entry onto the BARR considers:
- Bushfire Prone Area designation - publically available map, built on a number of criteria that maps where fire can reach under Code Red conditions, and aligns to building controls
- Bushfire Management Overlay - triggers the need for a planning permit for certain developments and requires new developments to include appropriate bushfire protection measures
- Victorian Fire Risk Register- map assets at risk from bushfire and assess the level of risk to the asset
- terrain - influences the direction and speed at which a fire will travel
- fuel type exposure - vegetation type, i.e. forest, mixed, grass.
  Schools on the BARR are further categorised based on their bushfire risk. The categorisation determines actions for individual schools on days of elevated fire danger and enables targeted treatments.

Bushfire Preparation:
The school manages the risk of fire by ensuring that the following procedures take place regularly:
Rubbish and other materials are removed from around buildings.
Flammable materials are stored in the shipping container which is located away from all buildings.
Gutters are cleaned annually.
Overhanging branches are removed.

The grounds and gardens are maintained regularly – grass is kept low, plants are pruned near buildings. Fire extinguishers are checked by an approved company twice a year.

The school ensures that emergency workers and vehicles have ready access to the school grounds if required:
Gates are kept clear of materials – the North gate allows direct unobstructed access onto the school oval. Building exits are kept clear at all times.
Assembly points are easily accessible for students, staff and emergency workers and vehicles.

Shelter-in-Place Building
All schools (regardless of their BARR status) must nominate a building or buildings on the school site that can provide temporary accommodation until emergency services arrive and/or as a building of last resort if there is insufficient time to evacuate. The school must identify the shelter-in-place in their Emergency Management Plan.
The shelter-in-place building for BARR schools must be suitable to provide a temporary protective measure from a predicted ember and smoke attack from fire or other outdoor hazardous incident for the entire school population.
There are a small number of BARR schools that do not have a building that would offer an adequate level of protection in the event of a bushfire. These schools must identify alternate arrangements in their Emergency Management Plan.
For further details see: Shelter-in-Place Building(s)
Balliang East Primary School's Shelter-in Place Building is the Mod 5 relocatable building (currently the Grade 2/3 & 4-6 classrooms).

Code Red Day
Determined by the Emergency Management Commissioner, a Code Red day is the highest level of Fire Danger Rating and signifies the worst conditions for grassfires and bushfires. Once a Code Red day has been determined this decision will not change, regardless of any changes in the weather forecast.
Schools on the BARR must close on a determined Code Red day in their weather district.
The Region wherever possible, will:
- provide schools with four to seven days notice of a planned Code Red day closure
- confirm the final decision to close a school no later than 1.00pm the day before the planned Code Red day closure.
Ahead of the fire danger period, schools on the BARR must:
- advise their school community and site users that the school will be closed on any determined Code Red day
- complete the activities outlined in the School Site Bushfire/Grassfire Readiness Review Checklist.
- notify bus travellers and parents/carers that no school bus services will operate to or from a school closed on a determined Code Red day.
Before every Code Red day closure, schools on the BARR must:
- notify staff, parents/carers and other site users e.g. contractors, of 'potential' and confirmed closures
- check proposed camp and excursion venues located in forecast Code Red districts and update the Student Activity Locator with any cancellations or changes
- notify bus travellers, parents, bus operators and client schools of potential and confirmed cancellation of bus routes.
No staff will remain on site and all out-of-school care programs (including vacation, before and after school programs) will not operate.
All school closures are published on the Department's website along with changed bus routes and/or bus service cancellations.
Note: Schools not on the BARR will remain open, unless directly threatened by fire or another emergency.
On days determined to be Code Red Days, Balliang East Primary School will be closed.

Forecast elevated fire danger

Schools on the BARR categorised at highest or higher risk will have pre-planned approved relocation arrangements in place ahead of summer. These arrangements will be enacted under localised severe and/or extreme fire weather conditions.

Ahead of the fire danger period, these schools must:

- engage/involve their school community in bushfire preparedness planning
- identify a host location
- develop a Bushfire Preparedness Relocation Plan for approval from their Regional Director.
  If all practicable relocation options are exhausted identified higher risk BARR schools will be approved by their Regional Director to close.
  Before every relocation, the relocating schools must:
- notify the Regional Director
- notify staff, parents and carers and other site users e.g. contractors
- complete the School Relocation Principal Checklist and forward to the Regional Director
- make alternate arrangements for camps and excursions that are due to depart or arrive at the school on the day of the relocation.
  Schools on the BARR, regardless of categorisation, may still apply to their Regional Director, on a case-by-case basis to have alternate arrangements for their school due to forecast elevated fire danger. These schools, in the first instance, should discuss their plans with their regional Manager Operations and Emergency Management.

Fire in the landscape

In the event of exposure to an immediate bushfire threat or other emergency, the school principal has the authority to enact the school's Emergency Management Plan.

Our school is on the Bushfire-at-risk register (BARR).

Parents will be informed of the planned closure four to seven days prior if possible.

The final decision to close the school will be confirmed no later than 1.00pm the day before the planned closure. This decision will not change, irrespective of an improvement in the weather forecast.

All families will receive a letter informing them of a potential closure. This information will also be put in the newsletter and an email will be sent to each family. The appropriate posters advising of the closure will be displayed in the Noticeboard.

No staff will attend school on a Code Red Day.

In the case of a severe weather rating, our school will operate as per normal. Staff will be on high alert and will inform parents if there is any threatening danger.

SHELTER-IN-PLACE BUILDING:

PURPOSE:

School Shelter-in-Place building(s) (SIP) must meet performance criteria based on the school's risk profile namely that schools:

- meet the minimum prescribed performance criteria for their SIP;
- consider some protection to make their SIP more resistant to bushfire and/or grassfire ember attack schools with a bushfire or grassfire risk ; and
- if on the Bushfire At-Risk Register (BARR), have protections that make the SIP more resistant to bushfire ember attack and associated consequential fires.

POLICY:

Schools, regardless of their BARR status, should nominate a building or buildings on the school site that provide a last resort temporary shelter option until either an emergency has passed or a more suitable alternative is available. In the case of a bushfire, a SIP may be used as a central assembly point prior to evacuation, or as a last resort when evacuation from the site is no longer a viable option. Leaving early is always the best option.

Schools must identify the SIP in their Emergency Management Plan and in their Evacuation Diagrams which must be printed and displayed in each building in the school. In the event the school does not

have a nominated SIP, there must be identified and suitable alternate arrangements noted in their Emergency Management Plan.

SIP performance criteria

The selection of a SIP needs to be based on existing accessible facilities. The following performance criteria should inform the choice of SIP on the school site with the criteria including additional elements as the risk from bushfire/grassfire increases.

All schools

The following performance criteria should inform the choice of SIP on the school site with the criteria including additional elements as the risk from bushfire/grassfire increases.

All schools with a nominated SIP must ensure:

o   all students and staff and visitors present on the site at the initiation of the emergency are able to be accommodated;
o   the requirements under the National Construction Code (NCC) are met for safe egress, assuming that the maximum school population occupies the building;
o   access to toilets and water from within the building(s) is considered;
o   access for emergency services;
o   safety equipment (i.e. fire fighting services and equipment) is in proper working order and meets the relevant essential safety measures (ESM) maintenance requirements applicable to the age of the building;
o   the location of the SIP and emergency management plan is shared with co-located early childhood services (and vice versa)
o   that at the time of construction, or where there is any substantial renovation to an existing SIP, works comply with the current NCC and are independently certified by a building surveyor.
▪   **NOTE:** Occupant safety is a fundamental requirement of building regulations. The NCC is a uniform set of technical provisions for the design and construction of buildings and other structures throughout Australia and allows for variations in climate and geological or geographic conditions. See **National Construction Code – All School Buildings** (link to section) below for further detail..

Schools with bushfire/grassfire identified as a threat/hazard in their Emergency Management Plan risk assessment

In **addition** to the performance criteria for **all schools**, the following should be applied. The SIP must:

o   be sited as far as practicable from sources of bushfire both within the school and beyond the school boundary;
o   have adequate building surroundings that: allow safe egress and passage to the next contingent shelter option;
o   not present an unacceptably high ignition risk;
o   not provide an unacceptably high level of toxic smoke load to the SIP building or egress routes;
o   minimise flammable elements including combustible material within 10m of the building, such as plastic equipment, rubbish skips, recycling bins, wood piles, gas cylinders and plants with the potential to produce localised flame contact with any vulnerable part of the building; and
o   have access to a static water supply i.e. a properly maintained hydrant, booster systems and/or tank water supply that ensures fire crews have adequate means to defend the SIP if they are able to attend. Where the SIP does not meet these criteria, the school's Emergency Management Plan must include alternate bushfire safety actions within their bushfire/grassfire response procedure.

Schools on the Bushfire At-Risk Register

In **addition** to the performance criteria for schools with **bushfire/grassfire identified as a threat/hazard in their Emergency Management Plan**; the SIP must:

• have sufficient doors for egress that are not able to externally combust or require passage over combustible surfaces or decking with exits that allow for the timely exit of the building under bushfire conditions with consideration of the potential rate that the building could lose tenability in a bushfire;
• have non-combustible external building elements and attachments ;
• consider specific building design details which limit the likelihood of ignition and limit the rate at which the building loses tenability (related to the effective evacuation/exit time) in a bushfire, such as avoiding:

o   hidden, unoccupied or unmonitored combustible building cavities or rooms
o   combustible external façade materials
o   attached buildings and building elements that are not built to the same requirements; (A significant structure that is located near a SIP can present a higher ignition threat to the building than an ember attack. Radiant heat and/or flames from a nearby burning structure may be enough to ignite a building. It is recommended that a registered fire safety engineer is engaged to analyse the risks and provide appropriate advice).
•   if assessed under the 2016-17 Bushfire Risk and Readiness Program, with works completed which used a combination of fire engineering principles and AS3959, continue to be maintained at this standard. The annual maintenance of the SIP is the responsibility of the school with any changes beyond the annual maintenance approved by the VSBA Operations and Programs Branch
•   under the VSBA's Rolling Facilities Evaluation Project, a Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) and condition assessment, including identification of required maintenance works, is undertaken every five years, with a desktop BAL assessment half way through the five-year cycle. If the BAL rating is higher in comparison to the original BAL rating, an on-site BAL assessment and SIP assessment may be undertaken.
o   schools that require a BAL Report, for building(s) as part of an overall risk assessment, outside this timeframe should consult with the Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA) and/or use a Bushfire Planning and Design (BPAD) accredited level 2 or 3 bushfire consultant found on the Fire Protection Association Australia (FPAA) website (or in a very limited number of circumstances, direct support from the Country Fire Authority may be requested).
•   meet essential safety measures maintenance and maintenance of exits and paths of travel based on when the building was built and may like to consider upgrades (funded by the school) that would align with newer construction dates;
•   have no combustible material within 10 metres of the building, such as plastic equipment, rubbish skips, recycling bins, wood piles, gas cylinders and plants with the potential to produce localised flame contact with any vulnerable part of the building and
•   choose plants with low flammability and locate them correctly.
    Where the SIP does not meet these criteria, the school's Emergency Management Plan must include alternate bushfire safety actions within their bushfire/grassfire response procedure.

Maintenance around the SIP and school buildings
School maintenance is a shared responsibility between the school and the Department.
Schools are responsible for their own vegetation management. Schools with bushfire/grassfire identified as a risk in their Emergency Management Plan must endeavour to ensure the below maintenance activities are met. These requirements are of increasing importance around the SIP.
•   the school site has been slashed or cleared of all flammable undergrowth such as dry grass and vegetation to the site boundary unless it is greater than 50m from buildings, evacuation routes and evacuation locations.
•   a fuel reduced zone must be established around buildings (20 metres as a guide) consistent with the following requirements:
o   grass must be short cropped and maintained during the declared fire danger period;
o   all leaves and vegetation debris must be removed at regular intervals during the declared fire danger period;
o   within 10 metres of a building, flammable objects must not be located close to the vulnerable parts of the building;
o   plants greater than 10 centimetres in height must not be placed within 3 metres of a window or glass feature of the building;
o   shrubs must not be located under the canopy of trees.
o   individual and clumps of shrubs must not exceed 5 square metres in area and must be separated by at least 5 metres;
o   trees must not overhang or touch any elements of the building.
o   the canopy of trees must be separated by at least 5 metres; and
o   there must be a clearance of at least 2 metres between the lowest tree branches and ground level.

- remove dead vegetation and other flammable elements and prune lower limbs of established trees (check with local council before removing trees)
- the fuel reduced zone, does not have plantings that are dense and typical of bushland settings (CFA's publication Landscaping for Bushfire provides information and ways to appropriately manage vegetation around buildings; additional advice may be available from CFA Community Safety in regional offices and CFA Headquarters);
- trees or branches overhanging buildings and sheds have been removed or trimmed to a height of 2 metres from building rooflines and 2 metres clear of buildings;
- all stockpiled leaves, pruning, dead limbs and trees and other combustible materials have been removed from the site;
- thick, continuous shrubs or other vegetation contacting building walls or directly under windows have been removed; and
- rooves and roof gutters are clear of leaves, twigs and branches.

Changing the nominated Shelter-in-Place

Schools on the BARR should not change their SIP unless there are extenuating circumstances. If these circumstances exist the school must consult with the VSBA Operations and Programs Branch and the Department's Security and Emergency Management Division. This will ensure that for schools on the BARR the Rolling Facilities Evaluation Bushfire Specification and any required work is applied to the correct building(s).

For all schools it is important that the school's Emergency Management Plan identifies the current SIP.

Community bushfire safety options on school premises

Neighbourhood Safer Places

There are a number of school sites where a building or land or both, with Minister for Education consent, has a Neighbourhood Safer Place (NSP).

NSPs provide an option of last resort during the passage of a bushfire. NSPs are intended to be used by persons whose primary bushfire plans have failed. They are places of relative safety only. To achieve designation as an NSP, sites go through the following process:

- the Country Fire Authority (CFA), upon the request of local municipal council assesses prospective sites site to determine if they meet the requisite **vegetation** assessment criteria.
- the council must then undertake a risk assessment which may be conducted by the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee to determine if the site is suitable for designating as an NSP.

Council may designate:

- land it owns as an NSP
- an NSP on non-council owned land, subject to approval from the owner/occupier - in the case of school sites the Department seeks authorisation from the Minister for Education (confirmed by a public notice in the Government Gazette).

The NSP may or may not be the same location as the school SIP.

The NSP is assessed annually by 31 August by the municipal council to determine if it is still suitable to be designated by continuing to meet the assessment criteria.

Designated NSPs and assessment information can be found on the CFA website

Community Fire Refuges

A Community Fire Refuge:

- provides a place of last resort for the local community in the event of a bushfire
- offers a higher level of protection than a residential dwelling
- must comply with the performance and operational requirements and required prescriptive inputs for the public construction of CFRs in accordance with Ministerial Directions for public construction

Ferny Creek Primary School and Millwarra Primary School are the only schools that have a CFR in our one of their school buildings. These buildings operate as their intended educational purpose, until activated as a CFR.

If there is a serious threat from bush or grass fire and a Watch and Act emergency warning or recommendation to evacuate is issued or if determined by the Incident Control Centre or State Control Centre, the community will be permitted to occupy the building as a fire refuge.

The only exception to this is if the CFR is activated within school hours. In which case, the School has priority access to the refuge and school staff will provide distinguishable separation between the public, school staff and students. A Community Fire Refuge Operating Procedures Manual outlines the operational procedures for the preparation, activation, opening and operation of the CFR during a fire event.

National Construction Code – All School Buildings
The National Construction Code (NCC)
- is reviewed and amended every three years to include various technical and regulatory changes
- incorporates all on-site construction requirements into a single code
- comprises the Building Code of Australia (BCA), Volume One and Two; and the Plumbing Code of Australia (PCA), as Volume Three

Schools are Class 9 buildings in the BCA.
Balliang East Primary School's Shelter-in Place Building is the Mod 5 relocatable building (currently the Grade 2/3 & 4-6 classrooms).

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANNING:
PURPOSE:
To ensure the safety of all staff, students and school visitors in the event of an emergency situation.
POLICY:
Schools must have a current Emergency Management Plan (EMP) that contains a risk assessment that addresses hazards and potential threats to the school and which covers the four components of preparedness, prevention, response and recovery.
Schools must:
- ensure that staff, students and the school community have a clear understanding of the EMP and its procedures
- ensure that staff, students and the school community are trained so that they know what they are required to do during an emergency
- test emergency arrangements at regular intervals to ensure that procedures work and everyone learns emergency protocols see: Testing Emergency Procedures.

The emergency management plan must:
- be completed by government schools using the online EMP
- describe actions to take before, during and after an emergency to ensure the ongoing safety of staff, students and others
- cover all circumstances when the school is responsible for student safety, such as school excursions to ensure staff and student safety and that students are supervised at all times
- be reviewed annually and/or following an emergency or crisis.

Schools may seek advice from local emergency service providers and local councils where available to inform the content of their EMP.

The Principal is responsible for updating the EMP and uploading it onto the Emergency Management Portal. It is also distributed to the local CFA, Bacchus Marsh Police Station and the Moorabool Shire.
An EMP is located in the Staffroom, Principal's office, the Mod 5 classrooms, the Multi-Purpose room and the Art Shed.
The Emergency Kit is located in the Mod 5 classroom which has been identified as our 'Shelter in Place'. The kit is reviewed annually and updated if required.

TESTING EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:
PURPOSE:
To ensure that schools test their emergency procedures.
POLICY:
The school's emergency management plan must contain emergency testing procedures.

Schools should regularly rehearse and exercise these procedures, quarterly per annum, completing a partial or full test under a variety of emergency scenarios. Schools should consider:

- notification and reporting procedures
- roles and responsibilities of nominated personnel
- building fire response procedures
- offsite and onsite evacuation
- shelter in place/lock down/ lockout alternatives
- communications within the school and to the school community
- emergency services liaison.

The school conducts 4 Emergency drills a year – 2 lockdowns and 2 evacuations.
The parents receive 'Test Texts' throughout the year to ensure the messages are getting through to all parents.
At the beginning of each year, the Principal conducts a Parent Information session regarding our school's Code Red and emergency procedures. The DET Emergency Management power point is used for this session. The 'School Procedures for the Bushfire Season' information is put in the school newsletter in the first week of the school year.
The staff are updated each year on their roles and responsibilities if an emergency/natural disaster was to occur.
The Principal will follow the Lock-down, Lock-out, On-site evacuation, Off-site evacuation or Shelter in Place procedure as per the EMP if the school is confronted with an emergency or natural disaster event.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND SECURITY SERVICES SUPPORT:

PURPOSE:
To ensure schools are aware of the support available to them in managing emergencies and incidents.

Definition
An emergency is the actual or imminent occurrence of an event which in any way:
- endangers or threatens to endanger:
  o the safety or health of any person
  o the environment or an element of the environment
- destroys or damages, or threatens to destroy or damage, any property.

POLICY:

Security and Emergency Management Division role
The Security and Emergency Management Division (SEMD) comprises the Preparedness Risk and Resilience Unit (PRRU), Capability and Response Unit (CRU) and Student Incident and Recovery Unit (SIRU) and the Security Services Unit (SSU).
The functions of SEMD include:
- developing and implementing emergency management policy to enable regions, schools and early childhood services (including Out of School Hours Care – OSHC) to plan for and respond to emergencies, including bushfires, floods and pandemics
- providing information, training and tools to enable regions, schools and early childhood services to prepare for and respond effectively to emergencies
- coordinating centralised response support whenever the scale of the emergency requires it
- disseminating up-to-date information about an emergency incident to regional emergency management contacts for communication to schools, early childhood services and the broader community, and to the Higher Education and Skills Group for distribution to their providers
The function of SIRU is to respond to a range of incidents that may occur in Victorian government schools, including but not limited to:
- loss of life
- sexual assault

- mental health and traumatic events
- serious criminal activity.
  Schools can contact SIRU during business hours, with after hours assistance available for urgent matters.

The Security Services Unit (SSU) operates a 24/7 communication centre and utilises an Incident Reporting Information System (IRIS) to enable schools to meet their mandatory reporting responsibilities in an emergency, or during a crisis.
Telephone: (03) 9589-6266.
The Security Services Unit monitors and responds to schools intruder detection systems and is responsible for:
- providing security risk management advice
- developing state-wide security management policy
- providing security management services to schools including alarm installation and maintenance services
- co-ordinate support from specialist agencies such as the Victoria Police Community Consultation and Crime Prevention Office, in relation to security management.

Regional emergency management support role
A dedicated officer in each region is responsible for:
- providing advice on the development of an emergency management plan
- assisting schools affected by emergencies with advice and support
- facilitating the provision of regional resources to work with affected staff and students
- coordinating regional response support, dependent on the scale of the emergency.

REPORTING AND MANAGING EMERGENCIES AND INCIDENTS:

Purpose:
To ensure expert response and management of all school emergencies and incidents, including incidents that occur during, camps, excursions or outdoor adventure activities, weekends and holidays, travel to and from school and non-school hours.
Schools, regions and central Department staff responding and managing emergencies and incidents must use the key actions outlined in the School Incident Management System (SIMS) Policy and Guidelines. The policy applies to all government schools and all services delivered by school councils within the school environment. This includes outside school care and kindergartens delivered by school councils on school premises, as well as VET programs delivered as part of a government school program.

Policy:
Schools must:
- call **000 immediately** to report any incident threatening life or property, this includes:
  o police for crime, injury that may not be accidental or assault
  o ambulance for injury and medical assistance
  o fire brigade for fires and incidents involving hazardous and dangerous materials (report all fires, regardless of state and size, even if extinguished).
- after contacting **000**, notify the Department's Incident Support and Operations Centre (ISOC) on **1800 126 126**.
  Note: Prompt incident notification enables Incident Support and Operations Centre staff at the Communications Centre to provide security related support and advice to schools. This helps to resolve emergencies quickly while minimising the risk to personal safety

The scope of this policy is limited to:
- incidents where the subject is a student who is under the care or supervision of the school;
- when an incident impacting a student is brought to the attention of the school, regardless of when or where it occurred, provided it is impacting on the student or other students within the school setting;

- incidents that impact the continuity of school operations, including property damage and emergencies;
- incidents requiring a notification to police; and/or
- incidents impacting on the health, safety and wellbeing of staff where the incident also impacts on student health safety and wellbeing and/or continuity of school operations. Note that these incidents will also need to be reported in eduSafe if the workplace health and safety policy applies.
- Principals, or their delegates, may also elect to apply this policy to incidents that impact on the health, safety and wellbeing of staff in the event that additional support is required from the region or DET Central beyond that which is available following a report in eduSafe.

Roles and responsibilities

Under this policy, the Principal is responsible for the initial incident severity rating and reporting, with support from the Incident Support and Operations Centre (ISOC) on 1800 126 126. This responsibility can be delegated to other school staff at the Principal's discretion. It is recommended that the list of delegates include at least one school staff member outside the school's leadership team.

Where an incident is rated as either Extreme (Red) or High (Orange), the Area Executive Director and/or the Director SEMD will also have governance and oversight of incident management, particularly in relation to reviewing the categorisation of the incident. The nature of this responsibility will vary depending on the severity of incident and the level of support required by the Principal, as outlined in this policy.

- Low (Blue) incidents: Principal manages and governs incident.
- Medium (Yellow) incidents: Principal manages and governs incident. Region and Central have visibility of incident.
- High (Orange) incidents: Principal manages incident. Area Executive Director governs incident and coordinates supports. Central has visibility of incident.
- Extreme (Red) incidents: Principal manages incident. Area Executive Director supports. Director, SEMD (or rostered DET Central Incident Commander) governs incident.

School Incident Management System

The SIMS provides:

- a six-stage approach to 'end to end' management of incidents
- an incident severity triaging based on the impact of the incident
- clear and consistent accountability.

The six steps are:

1. **Identify and respond**: describes how to identify an incident, and what immediate general actions should be undertaken.
2. **Reporting an incident**: describes the four incident severity ratings- low (blue), medium (yellow), high (orange) and extreme (red), including incidents that should automatically be rated as Extreme (red). A severity-rating decision matrix helps determine the severity level. The severity or seriousness of the incident determines how it needs to be reported and within what timeframe, and inform the level of regional and central departmental support. To access the matrix click here (pdf - 34.04kb)

   Note: Some incidents will trigger other internal and external reporting obligations, which are also outlined in this section.
3. **Ongoing support and recovery**: sets out the process for providing an ongoing response to incidents, and supporting any required recovery efforts. It summarises key policies and worked examples.
4. **Investigate**: sets out the process for referring a relevant incident for investigation. This policy does not create an investigation power, however, incidents captured by the policy may trigger investigations under other policies and legislative schemes. The section proves an overview of potential investigations.
5. **Review and close**: outlines what incident reviews are, when they should be undertaken and who should be responsible. Reviews are discretionary.

   It also outlines the process for incident closure, which is a formal process. An incident is closed with comments once the responsible authority is confident that appropriate ongoing supports are in place and, if relevant, pending investigations are underway and/or reviews have been completed and recorded. Closure of incidents must be determined in consultation with the principal.

6. **Analyse and learn**: provides an overview of the data analysis framework, descriptive analysis summary reports and diagnostic analysis reports which can be developed by monitoring, interrogating and acting on trends identified through the analysis of incident information.

Reporting incidents

Following notification to 000 schools must report to ISOC any incident:

- posing a risk to the safety of a student, parent, visitor or staff member including:
  o serious injury or death
  o allegations of or actual physical or sexual assault
  o threat to property or the environment
  o the use of seclusion or physical restraint of a student in response to an incident, see: Restraint of Student

Reportable incidents

As a general rule, a serious incident is one that requires medical attention or a police investigation. Examples of reportable incidents involving schools include:

- death or suicide of a student, staff member or member of the school community
- self-harm/injury or threats of suicide
- injuries requiring treatment by a doctor, transport by ambulance or hospitalisation
- concerning mental health and traumatic incidents requiring peer
- professional or clinical support
- incidents that did not lead to injury or death but very nearly did
- incidents of a sexual nature
- abuse or risk of abuse or neglect including online child abuse (mandatory reporting obligations may also apply)
- missing student
- online bullying, inappropriate use of social media and/or mobile phones.
- damage to parts of a school building or its content
- loss of essential service
- emergency situation and warnings
- bomb threats
- alleged criminal activity
- aggressive behaviour or actions or behaviours of concern
- forced marriage or human rights abuse
- family violence
- human trafficking
- sexual exploitation
- suspicious activity within or near school environment.

Note: Schools should also report any nuisance activity which may not have led to damage, but could lead to crime at a future time. This information is used to implement pro-active security measures such as targeted security patrols, temporary surveillance and intruder detection systems to prevent criminal activity.

Bomb threats or threatening calls

If a bomb threat or threatening call is received via a telephone call, follow your Emergency Management Plan.

1. call police on **000**
2. notify the Incident Support and Operations Centre on **1800 126 126**
3. implement the school's emergency management plan
4. do not search for the bomb
5. do not allow a search by students or staff
6. if a bomb or other explosive device is sighted in the school grounds, keep staff, students and other visitors to the school calm and promptly clear the area in an orderly and calm manner
7. do not impede an explosives inspector from entering school premises
8. do not handle any explosives found at school.

Note: an inspector of explosives may interview students at school on the same basis as a police interview.

Fires

All fires, including those that have been extinguished and regardless of their size, must be reported to the relevant fire service for the particular locality by contacting **000** and the ISOC.

Helicopter landings in schools in an emergency

The Department has given a general authorisation for the use of school grounds as helicopter landing sites during emergencies for the: air ambulance, fire reconnaissance or crime prevention.

The urgent nature of an emergency may preclude advance notification. The pilot is responsible for ensuring that the:

- area chosen for landing is suitable
- safety of those on the ground is not compromised.

If a landing occurs during school time, students must remain at a safe distance, clear of the departure, and approach paths.

The Department has not given approval for media, commercially or privately operated helicopters to use school grounds. They must obtain permission from the principal before landing.

Note: If the principal or school council consider helicopter arrivals or departures from the school grounds for non-emergency purposes there are stringent requirements for the safety of spectators and protection of the environment. Schools must contact the Aviation Branch of the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities and the Environment Protection Authority Victoria for advice.

Managing trauma

Exposure to trauma can have significant long-term adverse effects for students, staff, parents and carers. The Managing Trauma guide supports principals, Student Support Services (SSS) and recovery teams in leading the emotional and psychological recovery at a school following a school-based incident.

The guide supports principals and SSS to plan for, and lead an effective recovery. This can significantly reduce trauma and protect students, staff and school community members from physical, psychological and emotional harm.

SECURITY RISK MANAGEMENT:
PURPOSE:

To encourage schools to adopt situational crime prevention strategies to reduce the opportunity for people to commit criminal activity on school premises.

POLICY:

Schools may reduce criminal acts by making potential targets/assets inaccessible or unattractive and by making the activity too dangerous or unprofitable for the offender by:

- spreading the risks through physical, electronic and procedural security measures that deny, defer, delay or detect criminal activity
- reducing, removing, transferring or accepting some risks
- installing a Department funded and monitored intruder detection system (where the school meets appropriate risk criteria)
- using school funds to install a closed circuit television system (CCTV) with Departmental approval via the Manager, Security Services Unit. The installed system must comply with legislative and departmental requirements and must not be hidden or covert or used:
  - in private locations such as toilets
  - in change rooms or staff rooms
  - to monitor student or staff performance

Risk reduction strategies

Schools are encouraged to implement situational crime prevention strategies through:

Method	Examples
Target hardening	Installation of: locks window film window and door grilles computer-locking mechanisms.
Environmental design	Use of natural surveillance measures ie: trimmed foliage lighting fences signage.
Electronic systems	Installation of: alarms (intruder detection systems), communication methods CCTV
Policies	Document requirements for: asset marking secure equipment storage and location.
Procedures	Implement: regular/daily checking procedures window and door locking practices regular equipment audits.

WORKSAFE NOTIFICATION:
PURPOSE:
To ensure schools contact WorkSafe Victoria of notifiable incidents.

POLICY:
Schools must notify WorkSafe Victoria of incidents occurring at the school resulting in:
- the death of a person
- medical treament within 48 hours of exposure to a substance
- immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital (note: there is no requirement to notify WorkSafe under this provision where no treatment was provided. For example, medical diagnosis provided only)
- immediate medical treatment for:
  o the separation of skin from underlying tissue
  o the amputation of any part of the body
  o a serious head injury or eye injury
  o the loss of a bodily function
  o serious lacerations
  o an electric shock
  o a spinal injury
- collapse, overturning, failure, malfunction of or damage to plant that is required to be licensed or registered
- collapse or failure of an excavation or supporting shoring
- collapse or partial collapse of a building or structure
- an implosion, explosion or fire
- escape, spillage or leakage of any substance
- the fall or release from a height from any plant, substance or object.

Note: The same obligations to notify of incidents and dangerous occurrences apply under the Equipment (Public Safety) (Incident Notification) Regulations 2007 such as amusement structures used by volunteers at a school fete or fair.

eduSafe logging requirement

Schools must log the incident in eduSafe, the Department's hazard, incident and injury reporting system that covers all non-student incidents.

Notification procedure

WorkSafe must be notified immediately after the incident. Phone 132 360 to obtain a reference number. Within 48 hours after notification, the incident Notification Form is to be completed either online or in hardcopy. The Notification Form can be faxed to WorkSafe Victoria on (03) 9641 1091