

Emergency Management Plan

Purpose

ECMS services have a responsibility to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of children, educators, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers, students and visitors. To minimise the possibility of harm from a serious incident or external threat each ECMS service will develop an Emergency Management Plan that is based on the risks, needs and resources relevant to that service and/or site.

DET requires every early childhood facility in Victoria to have an Emergency Management Plan (EMP).

Furthermore, ECMS services that are located in a [Bushfire-at-risk area](#) have additional responsibilities as outlined in this document and are required to submit their plan to their regional office annually.

As part of best practice, ECMS submits all EMPs to the relevant DET regional office annually.

The purpose of the EMP is to:

- Minimise the impact of emergencies and critical events on children and educators, staff, volunteers and visitors.
- Facilitate the return of the workplace to normal operations as soon as possible.
- Provide staff with the tools that, if faced with an emergency situation, will enable them to manage.

Roles & responsibilities

General Managers	Accountable for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring implementation
Area Managers	Responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that each service and site has an EMP that is reviewed at the commencement of each year , after any incident and when new information that could affect the plan becomes available • Undertaking roles and responsibilities as outlined in the service’s EMP

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure each services current EMP is located on inside play • Ensuring services in BARR areas submit their EMP annually • Ensure service located in a BARR are notified of Code Red rated days and have made provisions to close the service on that day • Ensure all services submit their EMP annually • Monitoring the implementation and documentation of evacuation drills • Ensure that services have the equipment and resources to implement their emergency management plan • Ensure all staff are aware of and are familiar with the EMP for the service in which they work • Ensure staff undertake professional development as required
Centre Directors & Nominated Supervisors	<p>Responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaking roles and responsibilities as outlined in the service's EMP • Reviewing the service EMP at the commencement of each new year • Leading quarterly evacuation drills • Ensuring documentation is recorded in relation to evacuation drills • Support employees and families to develop and implement the plan. • A hard copy of the plan is available to staff • Inform and educate educators, staff, families and children about the EMP • Ensure if their service is located in a BAR area, the service does not operate on a Code Red day and that families are made aware of this requirement • On Code red days, families are notified of the closure of the service by 3pm the previous day
Educators	<p>Responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaking roles and responsibilities as outlined in the service's EMP • Contribute to the development of the service EMP • Undertaking evacuation drills as outlined in their service EMP • Reporting changes required to the EMP to the Centre Director /Nominated Supervisor

Procedure

Each service will:

- Develop, in collaboration with their Area Manager, educators, staff and families, an EMP using the Emergency Management Plan Template for Early Childhood Services
- Submit their EMP by April each year to their Area Manager
- Conduct, in collaboration with educators, staff and families, a risk assessment that considers:
 - Fire - internal and external
 - Severe weather, storm water damage and flooding
 - Chemical or hazardous materials spill
 - Intruders, criminal and violent incidents
 - Nearby explosions
 - Bomb threats
 - Child or educator death
 - Any other site specific hazard/s
 - Ensure that an updated copy of the EMP is forwarded to their Area Manager by April each year and an updated copy is kept on the premises at all times.

Educators and other staff will contribute to the:

- Risk assessment and planning processes
- Conducting regular practice runs of the plan, document and evaluate outcomes. As a minimum, services must conduct one evacuation drill each term.
- Review and update
- Implement any changes required

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.

Critical Incident Closure Policy

For Services listed on the Bushfire-At-Risk Register only

Code Red Days

All Victorian early childhood services and schools listed on the Bushfire-At-Risk Register (BARR) are required to pre-emptively close if they are located in a Bureau of Meteorology district **where** a Code Red Fire Danger Rating day has been determined.

The EMP for BAR service must contain a risk assessment of the service, regulatory obligations, a communication plan and the strategies to be used to disseminate information about closure.

The Fire and Emergency Authorities will advise the Department of impending high risk days. Pre-emptive closures are pre-determined based on the high risk register and the trigger of



'Code-Red'. The Department will provide children's services up to three days warning; however implementation of the services EMP may be based on less warning¹.

Extreme Fire Danger Rating Days

In consultation with Emergency Management Victoria the Department's Emergency Management Division has developed a new policy for government schools - Pre-emptive school relocation or closure on forecast Extreme Fire Danger Rating days.

The policy outlines that in exceptional circumstances, some government schools may pre-emptively close or relocate on a forecast Extreme Fire Danger Rating day. This will affect early childhood services located on government school sites or within close proximity to a government school in a high designated bushfire risk area. In light of this new school policy education and care services that are co-located with a government school will review their emergency management policies and procedures.

The decision by a school to pre-emptively close or relocate must be specifically related to a forecast Extreme Fire Danger Rating day.

The decision must be made in advance (no later than 3.00 pm the day prior) and communicated and well understood by other site users such as the local early childhood services.

Where there is a forecast Extreme Fire Danger Rating day services will consider the risk to children attending their service, advice from local authorities and the actions taken by schools and ensure every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury.

The two services located in Bushfire areas and are on the BARR have EMPs in place to manage both code red and extreme fire rating days. Please refer to these documents for further information.

The Department's Emergency Management Requirements for early childhood services are available at:

www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/

Policy Created Date	July 2014, Policy Reviewed September 2015, Reviewed July 2016
Policy Review Date	September 2018
Sources and Further Reading	<p>Education and Care Services National Law 2010 Education and Care National Regulations 2011: Regulations 85 87, 97, 98, 99, 160, 161,168, 177, 178 Information Privacy Act 2000 Health Records Act 2001 DET Emergency Management Guidelines October 2010 www.education.vic.gov.au VMIA Community Service Organisation Insurance http://www.vmia.vic.gov.au/ Guide to the National Quality Standard http://www.acecqa.gov.au/links-and-resources/national-quality-framework-resources/</p>
Related to NQS Q.A	Children's Health and Safety 2.3.3

¹ https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/childrensservices/VKP_supplement_critical_incident.pdf

