

CHAPTER FIVE

ALERTING, NOTIFYING AND REPORTING

WARNING PLAN

The plan should describe the ways in which those who need to know about an emergency will be alerted and informed. Those who need to know include staff, students, emergency services and education authority officers.

REPORTING EMERGENCIES

Procedures for reporting emergencies affecting the workplace should be clearly described. These procedures need to account for emergencies which are reported by staff, students or by visitors.

The procedures should ensure that the workplace administration is notified, that the emergency services are notified and that the relevant education authority is notified without delay.

ALERTING THE WORKPLACE

Alternative means of alerting the workplace about an emergency include a bell, siren or other electronic warning device. Whichever warning device is used, it is preferable that it be used only for alerting purposes, rather than to initiate any action - such as evacuation.

INFORMING EVERYONE

Information should follow the sounding of a warning device which tells staff and students what they are expected to do. The information message can be conveyed by public address system or by runners carrying a written message from room to room. The information message could tell staff and students to remain where they are, to move to a designated safe area and the direction in which to travel.

NOTIFYING EMERGENCY SERVICES

Emergency service telephone numbers should be checked with the emergency services to ensure that the number used will produce the quickest response. The emergency services in many areas use centralised communications centres for processing emergency calls. Reporting an emergency to the local fire or police station may result in the call being re-directed leading to a delay in assistance arriving at the workplace.

CO-ORDINATION AND RECEPTION CENTRES

CO-ORDINATING ACTIVITY

Staff responsible for co-ordination during an emergency should be able to do so without being distracted by routine workplace activity. This can be achieved by locating co-ordination activity in an office which has access to suitable communications equipment such as telephones, photocopiers and facsimile machines.

RECEIVING RELATIVES

As well as establishing an area from which to co-ordinate emergency activity, consideration should be given to establishing a reception area for concerned relatives and others who may arrive at the workplace seeking information during an emergency. A staff room, classroom or assembly hall located away from the emergency co-ordination area could be used to contain visitors depending on the nature of the emergency. It is important that information about the emergency and its progress is regularly provided to people in the reception area.

COMMUNICATION

Workplace personnel will need accurate and frequent reports to assist them to deal with an emergency. Others who may require regular information include the emergency services, education authorities, relatives, and the media. The plan could identify who is responsible for providing reports to these groups and the frequency with which they will be provided.

SITUATION REPORTS

Information should be provided as it becomes available to workplace personnel and emergency services personnel dealing with the emergency. Half hourly reports might be provided to education authorities and relatives once the information has been approved for release.

RELATIVES

Communication with relatives normally plays an important role during an emergency and frequently overloads telephone switchboards. Where possible, it is preferable for one or more telephone lines to be kept as silent or restricted lines so that they will be accessible for use during an emergency.

MEDIA

Media inquiries for information are likely to occur during an emergency. In some cases, emergency services may co-ordinate the release of information. In others, education authorities may be responsible for communicating with the media.

Where workplace personnel are responsible for communicating with the media, the release of information should be managed. In most cases, the controlled release of information is likely to have less impact on the workplace than refusing to provide the media with information.

One member of staff should be responsible for media communications. Briefings could be arranged at nominated times during the course of the emergency.

RESOURCES

The plan should describe the arrangements for obtaining physical resources (equipment) and human resources (people) and financial resources (money), in the event that additional resources are required during an emergency.

APPROVING EXPENDITURE

Staff who are responsible for approving requests for resources and approving payment for them should be identified. An inventory of equipment which may be required during an emergency should be compiled and included in the plan.

SOURCES OF FUNDING

Sources of funding for major or minor prevention works should be identified in the plan. Costs may be incurred in removing hazards, upgrading buildings or providing safety equipment.

TRAINING

For the plan to be effective, it needs to be widely disseminated. Everyone who has some involvement in its implementation should be well versed in its contents. This can be achieved by providing regular exercises in which the procedures and arrangements to be used during an emergency are tested. This should consist of more than an evacuation to the school oval. The plan should describe a program of exercises.

REVIEW OF THE PLAN

ORGANISATIONAL

It is important that the plan be reviewed regularly to ensure that it will still work when required. It may be appropriate to conduct a minor review annually to account for staff changes or building works which may affect access to evacuation assembly areas. The plan should be thoroughly reviewed at least every two years.

OPERATIONAL

In addition to an organisational review of the plan, it is important that an operational review be conducted following any significant emergency when those who have been involved will be able to comment from experience concerning what parts worked and what parts should be changed.

Note

STANDARD EMERGENCY WARNING SIGNAL (SEWS)

The Standard Emergency Warning Signal has been developed and accepted nationally for alerting the community during emergencies except for cyclones when a different warning signal is used. It is intended to be widely used by the media to precede official emergency information. Consideration should be given to using this electronic signal which is available through State/Territory Emergency Services.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

FIRE EXAMPLE

In the event of an emergency:

- 1** *Assist anybody in immediate danger.*



- 2** **RAISE THE ALARM —**
Notify the office and ensure that emergency services have been contacted.

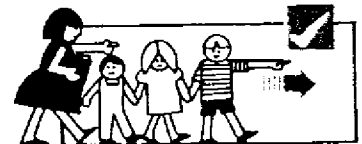


- 3** *Restrict the danger area.*

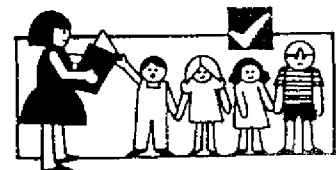


When instructed to do so:

- 4** *Evacuate to the nominated assembly area remaining clear of the danger area.*



- 5** *Remain at the assembly area.*
Account for and supervise all students.



- 6** *Fight the emergency only if safe to do so and if trained to use available equipment.*



CHAPTER SIX

EVACUATION PLANNING

INTRODUCTION

Evacuation is the process of moving people safely from a place which is considered dangerous to somewhere where there is no danger.

ASSEMBLY AREAS

While evacuation assembly areas and alternative routes to those areas can be identified in the plan, it cannot be assumed that they will always be available or safe. Circumstances at the time may prevent access or render them unsafe.

EVACUATION PRINCIPLES

SAFETY OF PERSONNEL

The safety of students and staff should be maintained throughout an emergency and should be the guiding principle determining evacuation decisions. Duty of care responsibilities concerning supervision of, and accounting for students should be maintained at the same level during an emergency as at other times. A roll call or head count of all staff and students should be conducted following any evacuation.

The needs of disabled staff or students should be considered when developing an evacuation plan and when identifying access routes to assembly areas.

ALTERNATIVE ASSEMBLY AREAS AND ACCESS ROUTES

The plan should identify several assembly locations which can be used as safe areas during an emergency, including a location which is at least one kilometre from the workplace. The use of corridors, stairways, exits and walkways during an emergency should be limited to those which ensure that movement to safe areas is away from danger at all times.

THE EVACUATION DECISION

When time permits, evacuation advice during an emergency should be sought from the emergency services (e.g. police, fire service, S/TES).

CIRCUMSTANCES

Decisions concerning evacuation and the selection of safe areas should be made according to circumstances at the time of the emergency. When a decision has to be made before emergency services arrive at the scene of the emergency, safe areas will need to be identified by workplace personnel.

IDENTIFYING SAFE AREAS

Safe assembly areas can be identified quickly using observation and common sense by:

- verifying what has been reported is actually happening;
- observing the emergency from a safe distance to find out how the hazard is behaving and the extent of danger;
- deciding who or what is at risk after assessing danger; and
- identifying safe areas and safe routes to those areas.

SELECTION OF EVACUATION ASSEMBLY AREAS AND ACCESS ROUTES

The identification of safe areas will not always require people to move outdoors. In some circumstances, moving to an open area may increase the risk of exposure to danger. Alternative strategies include having staff and students remain where they are, moving elsewhere in the same building, to another building, to an open area near the workplace or to an area well away from the workplace.

SELECTION OF ALTERNATIVES

Several locations should be selected as evacuation assembly areas around the school. This will ensure that alternatives are available if the emergency prevents one area being used or if access to an area is not possible.

SITE REMOTE FROM WORKPLACE

One assembly area should be identified which is at least one kilometre from the school such as a sports ground, public hall or neighboring school, in case of an emergency which prohibits access to workplace assembly areas (chemical emergency).

ACCESS ROUTES TO ASSEMBLY AREAS

Corridors, stairways, exits and pathways used as access routes to assembly areas should be varied according to the location of the emergency. Staff and students should become familiar with alternative ways of reaching assembly areas.

WELFARE AND FIRST-AID REQUIREMENTS

Staff and student welfare will need to be considered during an emergency, particularly if the evacuation occurs under extreme weather conditions or prevents return to the workplace for an extended period.

Exposure to hot or cold weather conditions may increase risks of hypothermia, dehydration. The plan should identify how shelter, food, drink and toilet facilities will be provided.

EMERGENCY EXERCISES

Regular exercises should be conducted to reinforce staff and student familiarity with emergency procedures. Local emergency services are often willing to participate in the organisation and evaluation of emergency exercises.

Exercises should test the capacity of staff and students to leave buildings and gather at assembly areas under a variety of emergency conditions using different exits, access routes and assembly areas.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ASSESSING DANGER AND REACTING DURING EMERGENCIES

INTRODUCTION

Assessing danger during emergencies differs from hazard assessment conducted during the planning process. Assessment of danger is the process used to find out what is happening during an emergency in order to determine what actions are required in the workplace to maintain the safety of staff and students.

MATCH DECISIONS TO CIRCUMSTANCES

The response to a workplace emergency should be determined by circumstances at the time. Each emergency will be different, but the process used to decide how the workplace should respond will be the same. Advice should normally be sought from emergency services, but where time does not allow this to happen, staff will have to make a decision.

VERIFY THE REPORT

Any emergency report should be checked to confirm that there is an emergency before contacting emergency services or alerting workplace personnel. No-one should be placed at extra risk while this verification is sought.

OBSERVE EMERGENCY

In order to decide how staff and students should react, it is necessary for a responsible person to observe the hazard from a safe distance to assess the danger. Staff do not need to be emergency experts.

ASSESS DANGER

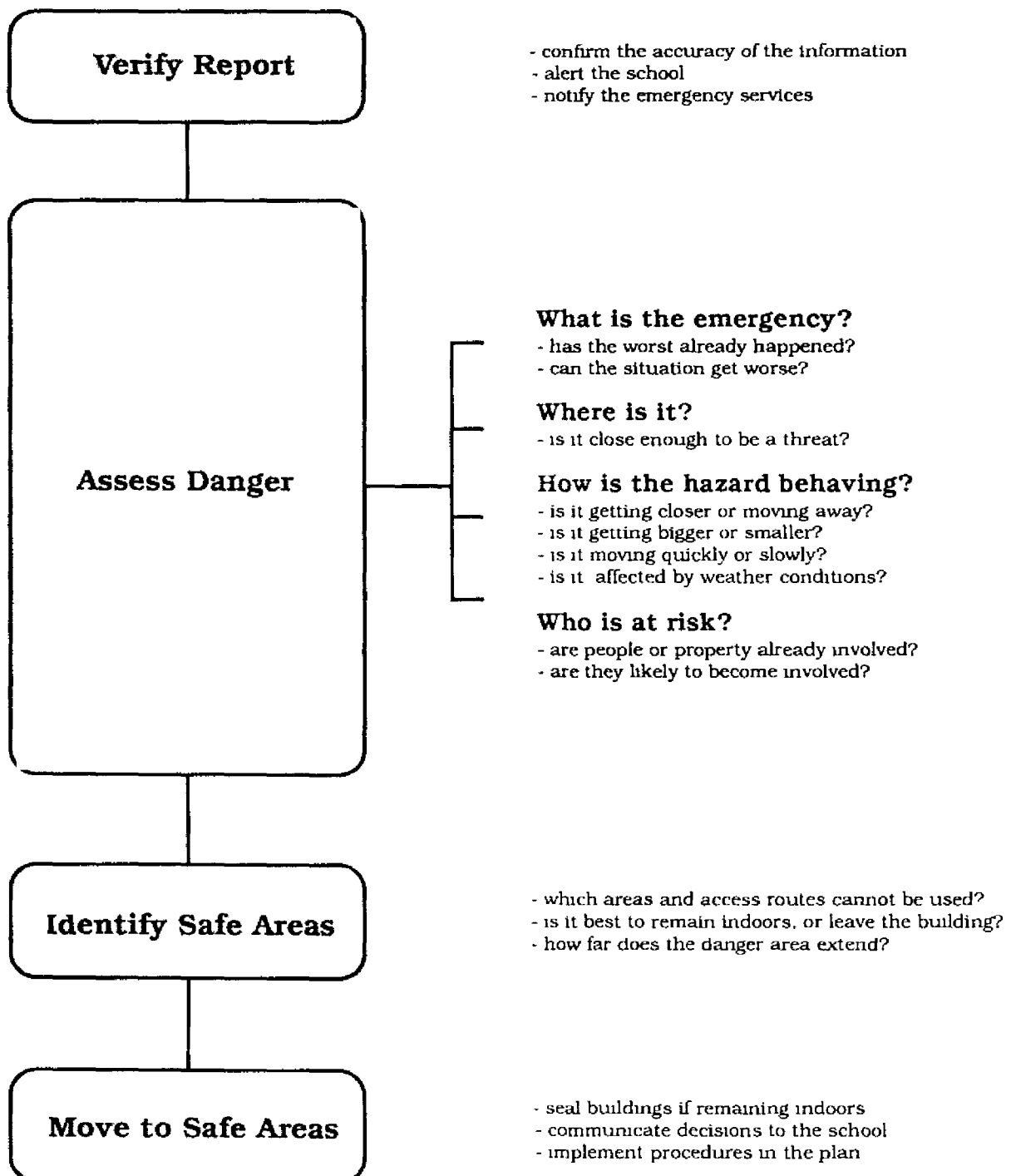
While observing the hazard, a responsible person needs to determine:

- the nature of the emergency;
- its proximity to people and property;
- whether wind conditions and/or slope of the grounds will send the hazard nearer; and
- action required to minimise danger based on this assessment.

DETERMINE A COURSE OF ACTION

The decision will involve whether or not to evacuate, and if so, selection of safe areas and access routes from those described in the plan

ASSESSING DANGER IN AN EMERGENCY



CHAPTER EIGHT

SPECIAL PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

Preparation for, and response to most emergencies or disasters are similar in terms of procedures, however there are differences in the:

- amount of preparation possible;
- degree of warning given;
- level of response required; and
- detailed actions to be taken in each emergency.

LABORATORY ACCIDENTS

It is important that separate instructions are issued to cover accidents in laboratories which may only involve a few students. Types of accidents include explosion, acid spillage, misuse of equipment, gas escapes, failure to use protective equipment.

TELEPHONE THREATS

INTRODUCTION

Special consideration may need to be given to threats against individuals or property which are made by telephone. Bomb threats and other threats to personal safety need to be taken seriously, even though Australia has been largely free from the sort of terrorist violence experienced by many overseas countries.

POSITIVE ACTION

Telephone threats result in the disruption of normal workplace activity while the emergency services investigate them. Positive action by individuals who receive such calls over the telephone can help to minimise their recurrence.

TELEPHONE THREAT CHECK LIST

Under some circumstances, an investigation by the police may result in the call being traced. Staff who are likely to receive such calls should be trained in what to do. The check list at Annex A enables staff to obtain information which can be investigated by police (Photocopy Annex A for use by staff who receive most phone calls). Circumstances under which calls may be traced should be confirmed with the police.

TELEPHONE REQUIREMENTS

Workplace telephones, switchboards and telephone exchange equipment at particular locations will determine whether it is possible for calls to be traced. Local requirements will need to be confirmed with the relevant telephone authority.

BOMB THREATS *

Annex A details appropriate response steps and check lists for both general and bomb threats. In the case of the latter, step 'B.3' - (evacuation) will require an established policy and plan which go beyond guidelines given in this book. It is therefore recommended that in order to determine policy, particularly in relation to removal or non-removal and checking of bags, etc. associated with evacuation, consultation should take place involving groups including parents and staff associations as well as police.

OTHER HAZARD IMPACTS

Annexes B to G cover other special preparedness and response measures, detailing useful facts and guidelines.

TELEPHONE THREATS (RESPONSE CHECK LIST)

Date: _____
 Time: _____
 Duration: _____
 No. called: _____
 Receiver of call: _____
 Signature _____

A. RESPONSE BY RECEIVER OF CALL

1. Record the exact wording and nature of the treat.
2. Ask the following questions and record the answers.

GENERAL THREAT

What are you threatening to do?

Why are you making this threat?

When do you intend to carry it out?

Do you intend to telephone again?

What is your name?

Where are you?

What is your address?

BOMB THREAT

When is the bomb going to explode?

Where did you put the bomb?

When did you put it there?

What does the bomb look like?

What kind of bomb is it?

What will make the bomb explode?

Did you place the bomb?

Why did you place the bomb?

What is your name?

Where are you?

What is your address?

IDENTIFYING/LOCATING THE CALLER

(Tick appropriate boxes)

Caller's Voice/Locating

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Male | <input type="checkbox"/> Slow | <input type="checkbox"/> Slurred | <input type="checkbox"/> Deep breathing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Female | <input type="checkbox"/> Rapid | <input type="checkbox"/> Nasal | <input type="checkbox"/> Cracking voice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Old | <input type="checkbox"/> Soft | <input type="checkbox"/> Stuttering | <input type="checkbox"/> Disguised |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Young | <input type="checkbox"/> Loud | <input type="checkbox"/> Lipping | <input type="checkbox"/> Accented |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Laughing | <input type="checkbox"/> Raspy | <input type="checkbox"/> Familiar |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional | <input type="checkbox"/> Abusive | <input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistent |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Well spoken | <input type="checkbox"/> Incoherent | <input type="checkbox"/> Irrational |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Foul | <input type="checkbox"/> Recorded | <input type="checkbox"/> Message read by caller |

Background Noises

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Street noises | <input type="checkbox"/> House noises | <input type="checkbox"/> Clear |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crockery | <input type="checkbox"/> Motor | <input type="checkbox"/> Muffled |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Voices | <input type="checkbox"/> Aircraft | <input type="checkbox"/> Static |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PA System | <input type="checkbox"/> Office machinery | <input type="checkbox"/> Fading |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Factory machinery | <input type="checkbox"/> Local |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Animal noises | <input type="checkbox"/> Long distance |

Other details

3. Follow pre-arranged telephone or switchboard procedures to assist in tracing the call. (e.g. leave phone of the hook, notify police using another telephone)

B. RESPONSE BY PRINCIPAL

1. Notify police (Request trace of call.)
2. Assess seriousness of threat
3. If evacuation is necessary, check exit route for suspicious objects, then follow your agreed evacuation plan - * (Refer to page 36)



FIRE RESPONSE

1. BUILDING FIRE/EXPLOSION (usually no warning time)

As building fires and related events rate among the more common major hazards, most workplaces have established and practised fire drills. Chapter 5, Annex A gives typical basic guidelines. For more detailed guidance on building fires and related responses, contact your local urban fire service.

2. BUSHFIRE (usually some warning time)

This information applies to workplaces located in bushfire-prone districts (eg fringe urban/bushland and some country areas).

BEFORE THE BUSHFIRE SEASON

- Have firebreaks maintained and garden rubbish, native shrubs and tree branches kept well clear of buildings.
- Have eaves enclosed and guttering kept clear of leaves and twigs.
- Have wire screens fitted to doors, windows, vents and enclose area under buildings.
- Keep long garden hoses on hand near taps, close to buildings.
- Monitor media for bushfire/weather warnings and alerts as the season begins.

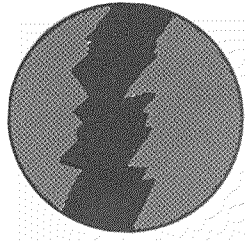
WHEN A BUSHFIRE APPROACHES

If building(s) are prepared as recommended, and early evacuation advice is **not** issued, everyone should remain in the building(s) after the following precautions are taken:

- Phone the bushfire service - do not assume someone else has done so.
- If possible, plug downpipes and fill all roof gutters with water using hoses.
- Check taps are working and fill all available containers with water.
- Hose down walls, garden etc on the side facing the 'fire-front' and leave sprinklers on.
- Move everybody inside, close all windows, doors, and block crevices, cracks and gaps.
- Stay inside, clear of windows, until main fire-front passes (usually 10 to 20 minutes).
- Staff should extinguish fires which may have started on or near the building(s).
- Listen to the radio for local information.

NOTES:

- a. Statistics show that where all the above precautions are taken, people remaining inside buildings have survived, and usually saved the buildings as well.
- b. Provided there is adequate warning of bushfire approaching and emergency authorities advise it is safe to travel, consider these options:
 - (1) If transport can be arranged, send home students whose parents are already there.
 - (2) Release staff whose homes are in possible danger, retaining a core group for supervision of remaining students etc.



EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE (no warning time)

DURING THE EARTHQUAKE

- If **indoors**, stay there and ensure nobody moves about or leaves the building.
- Get everybody to take cover under tables, benches, desks or internal door frames.
- Keep away from windows, shelves and overhead fittings.
- In **multi-storey buildings**, stay clear of windows and outer walls. Get everybody to take cover under desks near pillars or internal walls. Do not allow lifts to be used.
- If **outside**, keep everybody well clear of buildings, walls, power lines, trees, etc.

AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE

- Check for injuries and apply first-aid. Do not move the seriously injured (unless in immediate danger) until ambulance arrives.
- Avoid use of telephones (to relieve congestion) unless there is a serious injury, fire or other serious problem.
- Turn off electricity, gas and water.

EVACUATION

- Evacuate everybody (clear of buildings, walls, power lines and trees) by the safest route.
- Do not light matches until a check is made for gas or fuel leaks.
- Listen to local radio and heed warnings and advice.

DAMAGE SURVEY

- Check for water or sewerage leaks, broken electrical wiring etc.
- Do an external check for cracks and damage, including roof, chimneys and foundations.
- Be prepared for aftershocks and do not re-enter even slightly damaged buildings until they have been checked by an engineer



SEVERE STORM/CYCLONE RESPONSE (minimal to reasonable warning time)

BEFORE THE STORM OR CYCLONE SEASON

- Have tree branches trimmed well clear of buildings.
- Have roofs, guttering and downpipes checked and cleaned.
- Have a portable radio with fresh batteries.
- Clear grounds of loose objects that could cause damage during high winds.
- If located near sea level in a cyclone zone, in case of 'storm tide' warning - identify the nearest safe high area.

UPON FIRST WARNINGS (including EVACUATION)

- Listen to local radio for further warnings and reports.
- Secure all doors/windows and tape (cross fashion 'x') or cover windows.
- If a **thunderstorm** approaches, disconnect all electrical appliances.
- In the case of **cyclones**, if a **local evacuation warning** is issued, turn off electricity, gas etc, assemble all students, staff etc and follow instructions from emergency services.

WHEN THE STORM/CYCLONE STRIKES

- Ensure everybody stays inside away from windows and skylights.
- Do not use the telephone (lightning danger).
- Listen to the portable radio for weather updates.
- During **cyclones**, beware the calm 'eye'. Everybody must remain inside until advised by emergency services or weather bureau that danger has passed.

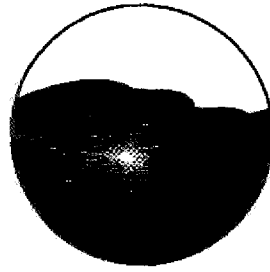
AFTER THE STORM/CYCLONE PASSES

- Listen to radio for warnings and reports of disruption to services.
- Check buildings for damage and **evacuate** if in dangerous condition.
- Before moving outside, check for: damage to neighbouring buildings; fallen power lines; debris; and flooded water courses.
- For emergency assistance contact your State/Territory Emergency Service.

NOTES

Principals should become familiar with local emergency plans and precautions in the event of a cyclone in particular. Points to consider include:

- liaison with local emergency services;
- local warning system;
- effects of cyclones in the particular area (eg storm tides); and
- plans, if any, to use the institution for emergency purposes, (eg public shelter, communication centre, etc).



FLOOD RESPONSE **(usually reasonable warning time)**

KNOW LOCAL FLOOD HISTORY

Ask your local council or State/Territory Emergency Service (S/TES):

- What the terms major, moderate and minor flooding mean to the workplace and at what official river heights, it and homes of students and staff become isolated or inundated.
- Whether you may need to evacuate during floods and what is the official plan?
- Where the nearest safe location is in your area and how to get there

UPON FIRST WARNINGS

- Listen to **local** radio and TV stations for further information.
- Arrange to stack furniture, equipment and books above likely flood level, with electrical items and books on top.
- Arrange to move garbage, chemicals, fuel etc to a high, secure place.
- Remove or secure heavy objects that could float and cause damage (inside and outside).

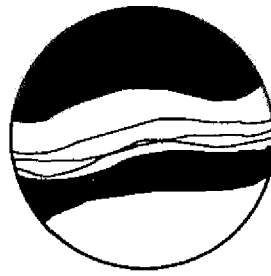
EVACUATION

- If sufficient warning and on advice from police or S/TES, send students home, provided a parent is there and it is safe to do so.
- Arrange temporary manning of phones to answer enquiries and advise parents.
- Organise 'billets' for students stranded away from home.
- Activate a pre-arranged plan for early release of staff with homes or property in flood-prone areas.
- Turn off electricity and gas etc prior to last staff leaving.

NOTES

Apart from action needed to cope with the actual flood, the workplace has a responsibility to:

- plan continuing educational services for students isolated by floods for extended periods;
and
- arrange accommodation for students cut off from their homes by the flood



TOXIC EMISSION/SPILL RESPONSE

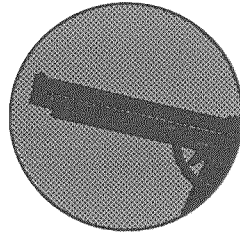
UPON FIRST WARNINGS

When alerted by phone or emergency warning sound:

- Move all students, staff etc into building immediately
- Close all external doors and windows. Draw curtains/blinds across windows and seal ventilators.
- Turn off air conditioners and extinguish all cigarettes and naked flames, including pilot lights.
- Occupy rooms furthest from the emission source area.

EVACUATION

- **Do not attempt to evacuate** unless officially advised by emergency services.
- Listen to radio or TV for the Standard Emergency Warning Signal - SEWS which, in several states/territories, will precede any authorised information or instructions.
- Remain indoors until either, you hear the 'all clear' or you receive advice from emergency



SIEGE/HOSTAGE RESPONSE

1. Confirm available facts by personal observation or by a second information source.
2. Contact police (Telephone No.....)
3. Evacuate - partially or totally (according to the situation).
4. Assemble personnel with a direct knowledge of:
 - preceding events;
 - interior layout/topography;
 - the hostage(s); or
 - the assailant(s).
5. Complete the Siege/Hostage Questionnaire (overleaf).
6. Co-operate with and assist police as necessary.

EMERGENCY/DISASTER AWARENESS AND PLANNING REFERENCE POINTS

Information concerning hazard/disaster awareness and assistance with emergency/disaster planning is available free of charge through the organisations listed below.

Telephone numbers and addresses have not been included to avoid information becoming incorrect due to inevitable changes. State and Territory Emergency Services have regional offices listed in local telephone directories.

New South Wales State Emergency Services,
(HQ) Wollongong, NSW.

Queensland State Emergency Service,
(HQ) Brisbane, QLD.

Victoria State Emergency Service,
(HQ) Melbourne, VIC.

Tasmania State Emergency Service,
(HQ) Hobart, TAS.

South Australian State Emergency Service,
(HQ) Adelaide, SA.

Western Australian State Emergency Service,
(HQ) Perth, WA.

Northern Territory Emergency Service,
(HQ) Darwin, NT.

Australian Capital Territory Emergency Service,
(HQ) Canberra, ACT.

Natural Disasters Organisation,
(HQ) Canberra, ACT.