

# EMERGENCY RESPONSE POLICY – BUSES

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set out how our school will manage emergency procedures in regards to our bus program in accordance with applicable Department of Education and Training policy and law.

## POLICY

Coordinating principals may use the tables below to develop their school bus program emergency response procedures for their school emergency management plans. Procedures below are directly from the DET **School Bus Program Emergency Management Operational Guidelines - May 2018** Schools should add any localised details required.

### Forecast Emergencies

#### Emergency Response Procedures from the Guidelines

##### Coordinating school principals will:

- monitor the VicEmergency website, app or telephone service for emergency forecast warnings
- enact the school's Emergency Management Plan
- complete the following by 3.30pm the day prior to the forecast emergency event:
  - utilise relevant information sources to consider any discretionary cancellations of bus routes travelling through high risk areas in consultation with school bus operators (adhere to the Bushfire Preparedness Relocation and Closure Procedures for Fire Danger Rating forecasts)
  - seek approval from the Regional Director for school bus service cancellations (for category 1 and 2 schools on the BARR, bus cancellation approval is incorporated in school closure or relocation approval for an elevated FDR forecast)
- notify the following stakeholders of the status of the school bus service:
  - school bus operators
  - client school principals
  - early childhood services (if applicable)
  - parents/guardians of affected students from the coordinating school
  - other approved travellers (which could include teachers, general public, tertiary students and pre-school students)
  - DET regional emergency management staff
- Continue to liaise with DET regional emergency management staff to advise of the situation and actions taken.

## Rapid Onset Emergencies – Actions for Coordinating Principals

A rapid onset emergency event may affect the safety of a school and/or bus service and will require the coordinating and or client principal to take immediate action. Explained below are the actions that should be taken during and after a rapid onset emergency that affects school bus services. This process is also outlined in Appendix F – Rapid Onset Emergency Flowchart.

In a rapid onset emergency the coordinating principal will initially take the leadership role and be supported by the DET Regional Manager, Operations and Emergency Management.

The Coordinating Principal will cancel Bus services where a rapid onset emergency affects or has the potential to affect school bus services. No bus routes will be modified unless directed by emergency services and in consultation with the Regional Manager, Operations and Emergency Management, where required.

### Coordinating school principals will:

- enact the school’s Emergency Management Plan
- call 000 to request emergency assistance, if required
- use the VicEmergency website, app or telephone service and emergency broadcast information on television or radio to get ongoing emergency information and warnings
- convene an Incident Management Team as required
- notify and seek advice from the DET regional emergency management staff and or The SEIL as required
- direct all media enquiries directly to the DET Media Unit

### Rapid onset Procedures when students are at school

<b>Emergency Response Procedures from Guidelines</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make a decision whether to cancel an affected or potentially affected bus route in full</li> <li>• hold all students on affected services at the school until the all clear is given from emergency services, either directly or via DET region emergency management staff.</li> <li>• liaise with bus operators and drivers regarding school bus services and instruct drivers not to leave the school until the all clear is given</li> </ul>

### Rapid onset Procedures when students are en route

#### Emergency Response Procedures from Guidelines

- advise emergency services of the status and location of bus services and seek assistance if required
- confirm or provide the bus driver with the final bus stop destination with preference to return to school if safe and practical to do so
- ensure confirmation of bus's arrival at destination is received from the bus driver

### Bus services affected overnight or before school

Seek advice from Regional Manager, Operations and Emergency Management, emergency services and local knowledge.

#### Emergency Response Procedures from the Guidelines.

Determine whether the bus service is to be cancelled or not. If so, notify the following stakeholders of the status of the school bus service:

- school bus operators
- client school principals (government and non-government)
- early childhood services (if applicable)
- parents/guardians of affected students from the coordinating school
- other approved travellers (which could include teachers, general public, tertiary students and pre-school students)
- DET Incident Support Operations Centre (ISOC)
- DET regional emergency management staff

## REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was ratified March 2021 and is due for review in March 2023

May 2019	
May 2021	No Change
May 2023	