Title	Incident and Emergency Policy
Description of policy	This policy establishes the framework for Catholic Education Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn (CECG) to manage and report incidents and emergencies. The policy sets out: • the meaning of incident and emergency • roles and responsibilities at school and System level • high-level outline of processes to manage incidents • when and how incidents must be reported, and • links to documents with more detailed processes and guidance It applies to all CECG work-related activities and in all CECG workplaces. Some definitions and obligations may apply to incidents that occur outside workplaces and work-related activities, if they have the potential to disrupt safe and orderly operations. This policy is informed by Australian Standard 3745-2010.
Required because	Schools and other CECG workplaces encounter a wide range of incidents that can disrupt safe and orderly operations. Some of those incidents involve a high level of threat and require responses coordinated at school or System level. CECG has a duty of care to take reasonable action to ensure workers and students are protected from harm. This includes appropriately planning for and managing incidents. Clear guidance ensures CECG students, workers, and workplaces are better protected and CECG and workers can meet their duty of care.
Description of changes	Replaces the concept of 'critical incident' with 'emergency'. More clearly defines 'incident', including the relationship with the terms 'Serious Incident' under ELC/SAC laws and 'Notifiable Incident' under WHS laws. Sets out five clear components of incident and emergency management. Consolidates and replaces the: • Critical Incident Response Policy • ELC Critical Incident Response Policy • School Buildings-Incident Management Policy • Lockdown and Lockout Policy Introduces the new Emergency Management Plan, which replaces the: • ACT Schools Critical Incident Handbook • NSW Critical Incident Handbook • Early Learning and School Age Care Centre Critical Incident Handbook
Applies to	☒ Organisation-wide

Status	☐ Staff only ☐ Students only ☒ Staff and students
	☐ New ☒ Major revision of existing document ☐ Minor revision of existing document

Publication location	Intranet and Public Website
Related documents	Emergency Management Plan Template
	Emergency Management Procedures Template
Intranet category	Complaint and Incident Management
Review date	December 2024
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Approval authority for this version:	Director
Approval date:	15 November 2022
Accountable authority	School and Family Services Leader
Responsible officer	CECG Emergency Controller

1. Summary

1.1   CECG workplaces may encounter a wide range of incidents that can disrupt safe and orderly operations. Some of those incidents involve such a high level of threat that they require coordinated responses at school or System level.

1.2   This policy establishes a framework for Catholic Education Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn (CECG) and its schools to manage and report these incidents.

Active emergency situations must immediately be reported to Emergency Services (if required). Emergencies must be reported to CECG immediately or as soon as safety allows.

- Telephone Emergency Services on 000 (if required)
- During business hours (8.30 am to 5.00 pm) contact School and Family Services.
- Outside business hours, contact the CECG Incident Management Lead (Tim Elliott) on 0409042130.

1.3   The policy sets out:

- the meaning of incident and emergency
- roles and responsibilities at school and System level
- high-level outline of processes to manage incidents
- when and how incidents must be reported, and
- links to documents with more detailed processes and guidance.

1.4   This policy applies to all CECG work-related activities and in all CECG workplaces, including schools, Early Learning Centres, School Age Care, and offices.

1.5   Some definitions and obligations may apply to incidents that occur outside schools and other workplaces and work-related activities, if they have the potential to disrupt safe and orderly operations.

1.6   Additional obligations are specified in related policies and supporting documents including the Emergency Management Plan and the ELC/SAC Incident and Incident Policy.

2. CECG Incident and Emergency Policy

2.1   All workplaces must establish an Incident Management Team and develop a workplace Emergency Management Plan and Emergency Management Procedures.

2.2   CECG workplaces must manage incidents in line with this policy, and their Emergency Management Plan and Procedures.

2.3   The five stages of appropriate management are:

- Plan
- Prepare, including training and practice
- Respond
- Report, and
- Recover, including review and support for people affected

3.   What are Incidents and Emergencies

3.1   Incidents are situations that affect or disrupt the safe and orderly operation of CECG schools and workplaces.

3.2   Emergencies are incidents that involve a high-level threat to student and worker safety and require a formally coordinated response at school level (Level 2) or System level (Level 3). The Incident Management Team is formally stood up to manage emergencies.

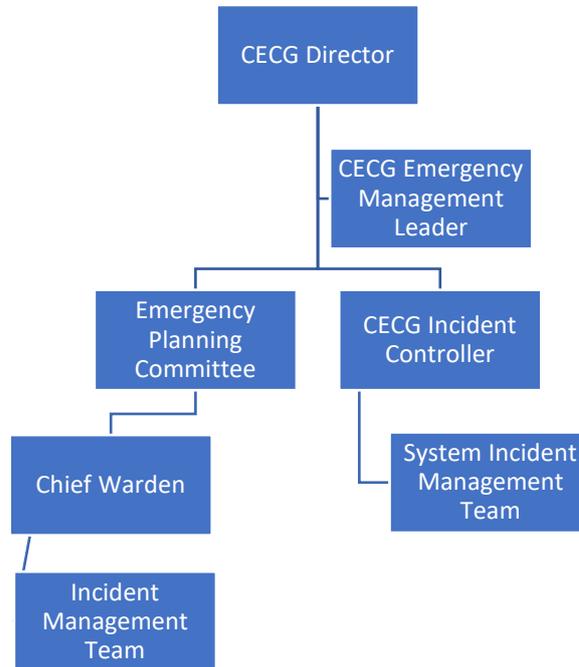3.3   Incidents and Emergencies are defined in the table below:

Level	Definition
1 Incident	Situations that affect or disrupt the safe and orderly operation of the school
2 School Emergency	High level threat to student and workers safety requiring a formally coordinated response at a School level
3 System Emergency	High level threat to student and workers safety requiring a formally coordinated response at a System level

3.4   Emergencies are likely to fall into one of seven categories:

- **Violent attacks** including workplace intrusion or complex behaviour that threatens serious harm.
- **Widespread injury** to workers or students such as bus crash.
- **Natural disaster** including bushfire, flood, earthquake, severe storm, or pandemic.
- **Major building Incident** or property damage such as a building fire, gas leak, or car crash into a school (with or without injury).
- **Bomb threat** or suspicious substance threat.
- **Disappearance** or suspicious removal of a student from school grounds/events.
- **Death on campus** or during school/work activities.

3.5   Emergencies will often but not always involve attendance by emergency services. For example:

- A bushfire in the area or an extended pandemic may trigger school and System Incident Management Team responses, but emergency services may not attend the school itself.

3.6   Not all attendance by emergency services will constitute a school or System emergency. For example:

- A worker or student falls and may have a concussion and broken ankle. An ambulance is called, but the incident is unlikely to trigger formal Incident Management Team response.

3.7   Incidents and Emergencies may require responses like evacuation, lockdown/lockout but the 'incident' is the situation that causes the response, not the evacuation, lockdown or lockout.

4.   Roles and Responsibilities

4.1   All workers have a role mitigating incident risks.

4.2   The Chief Warden leads Incident and Emergency management in each school and workplace. The controller heads and is supported by the Incident Management Team.

4.3 The CECG Director leads Incident and Emergency management at the System level. The Director delegates certain functions to the CECG Emergency Management Leader. They are supported by the CECG Emergency Controller and the CECG Incident Management Team.

System Roles and Responsibilities

Position	Roles and Responsibilities
Director	• Activates the EMT and provide ongoing strategic direction. • Oversee all formal notifications. • Act as the CECG spokesperson unless this is delegated to other persons. • Manage interactions with high level stakeholders.
Emergency Management Leader	• Lead the CECG emergency response system. This includes responsibility for the management and decision making of the response. • Be the final decision maker with regard to emergency and incident response activities. Provide guidance and direction to the IMT and will rely on the Emergency Controller and other key IMT members to implement response plans. • Conduct briefings with the CECG Director, SALT and other key stakeholders and is to ensure the team has clear direction.
System Incident Management Team	Manages the planning, preparation, response, reporting, and recovery for incidents requiring a System-level response (usually Level 3 incidents).
System Incident Controller	• Developing and maintaining the CECG System Emergency Management Plan and system. • Ensuring all CECG workplaces establish an Incident Management Team and complete a workplace Emergency Management Plan. • Supporting incident responses at system and school level. • Preparing and coordinating the annual CECG Incident Management Exercise.

School and ELC/SAC Roles and Responsibilities

4.4   All CECG schools, ELCs and SACs must appoint a Chief Warden and Incident Management Team.

4.5   The Emergency Management Plan for campuses with school and ELC (preschools) must ensure the different risks are considered and procedures are suitable for both or separate, as emergency management needs for an ELC may be different to a school.

4.6   The Chief Warden and Incident Management Team specified in an ELC plan may be the same or different to the plan of an associated school, depending on the capacity of the ELC to appoint and resource a separate controller and team.

Position	Roles and Responsibilities
Emergency Planning Committee (EPC)	Develops the Emergency Management Plan and has primary responsibility for the Planning and Recovery phases of emergency management.
Chief Warden	Leads the Incident Management Team and manages the Response to emergencies. Has primary responsibility for the Preparation, Response, and Reporting phases of emergency management including: • Stands up/stands down the Workplace Incident Management Team. • Maintaining a current register of IMT members, in the Emergency Management Plan. • Replacing ECO members when a position becomes vacant. • Conducting regular preparation exercises. • Ensuring the emergency response procedures are kept up-to-date, in the Emergency Management Plan. • Attending meetings of the EPC, as appropriate. • Attend training and emergency exercises, as required by the EPC. • Ensure personal ECO identification is available.
Incident Management Team	Conducts the Preparation, Response, and Reporting phases of emergency management, at the direction of the Chief Warden. Includes Chief Warden, Deputy Chief Warden, Wardens, and Communications Officer as appropriate.
Deputy Chief Warden	The second position in the Incident Management Team. Assists the Chief Warden with duties and assumes responsibilities of the Chief Warden in the event they are unavailable.
Floor Warden/Warden	Assist with significant aspects of emergency response, including coordinating the movement of people and coordinating equipment for emergency response. May provide administrative and logistic support for planning and preparation, and manage communications at the direction of Chief Warden (unless specific communications officer is appointed).
Communications Officer	The control position for communications during or after emergencies, under the direction of Chief Warden or EPC.

	Recommended to have oversight of all communications, to ensure messaging is efficient and not contradictory.

5. Plan

All CECG workplaces must plan appropriately for incident risks, including:

- establish an Incident Management Team, and
- complete an Emergency Management Plan and review it every two years;

5.2   The Emergency Management Plan will detail other planning activities.

6. Prepare

Infrastructure and Equipment

6.1   The Chief Warden must ensure the workplace they are responsible for has appropriate infrastructure and equipment. For example, first aid supplies, fire extinguishers, security or incident warning Systems required by law or appropriate to assessed incident risks. The Emergency Management Plan will identify these measures in greater detail.

Training

6.2   Incident Management Team members must ensure they understand their role and complete annual training on Incident Management Response and Recovery.

6.3   All CECG employees should complete incident and emergency management training annually.

Preparation Exercises

6.4   The Catholic Education Office will arrange and coordinate an annual major Incident management exercise.

6.5   All CECG workplaces must conduct regular (e.g. at least once per school term) preparation exercises to ensure workers and students are familiar with incident and Incident management procedures.

6.6   Preparation exercises may include:

- Lockdown, lockout, and evacuation drills.
- Ensuring all workers and students can identify the difference between lockdown, lockout, and evacuation alarms.
- Communicating Incident management procedures to workers, students, and families.
- Incident Management Team scenario drills.

7. Respond

7.1   The Chief Warden must ensure incidents are managed in line with the Emergency Management Plan and relevant policies.

- Worker misconduct
- Violent behaviour by workers, students or parents
- An injury on-campus or during school/work activities,
- A situation that could have resulted in serious injury ('WHS near miss'),
- Psychological injury.

8. Report

8.1 The Chief Warden must report emergencies to the CECG Emergency Leader/Incident Controller by telephone immediately, or as soon as safety allows. The written incident report should follow within 24 hours.

8.2 Other incidents should be reported within 24 hours if they fall into the following seven categories:

- Threats to safety of wellbeing of workers or students.
- Complaints assessed as 'Medium' or 'High' risk under the Complaints Policy
- Death of employees or student (off campus and unrelated to school/work activities or events)
- Privacy and Cyber Security breaches (including potential or suspected breaches)
- Property damage, including vandalism
- Incidents reportable to government agencies, including:
  - Reportable Conduct (see CECG's ACT or NSW Policy)
  - Mandatory Reporting (see CECG's ACT or NSW Policy)
  - Privacy breach
  - Notifiable WHS incident
  - A 'Serious Incident' under Early Learning Centre National Law
  - A reportable infectious disease (see CECG's School or ELC/SAC policy)
  - Restrictive Practice used on a student, and
  - Death of animals in schools.
- Government action on school grounds, or against workers off-campus (for example arrest, police search or regulator inspection, government officer interviewing staff/students on-campus).

9. Recover including review and support

9.1 Incidents can take a significant physical, emotional and spiritual toll on workers, students, and families. Managing an incident will also highlight lessons for planning, preparation, and response to reduce the likelihood and harm of future incidents.

9.2 The relevant Chief Warden(s) must ensure students and workers are offered appropriate support within the workplace's ability to provide. This may include pastoral care and school counselling, employee assistant program, or support by the parish priest and school community. The CECG Wellbeing team is available to assist with post-incident support and counselling.

9.3 The Chief Warden must ensure emergency cause and response is investigated and the response is reviewed, with significant failings or successful lessons recorded and incorporated into future plans and incident response. Investigations should comply with any relevant policies or guides including the WHS Incident Investigation Guide and Routine Complaints Investigation Procedure.

10. Definitions

10.1 **Emergency**: incidents that involve a high-level threat to student and worker safety and require a formally coordinated response at school level (Level 2) or System level (Level 3). Likely to fall into one of seven categories:

- Violent Attacks
- Widespread Injury
- Natural disaster
- Major building emergency
- Bomb threat or suspicious substance threat
- Student Disappearance
- Death on campus or during school/work activities

10.2 **Emergency Planning Committee**: The group responsible for developing the school Emergency Management Plan and with primary responsibility for the Planning and Recovery phase of emergency management. At school level, likely to involve some or all of the school leadership team. Distinct from the Incident Management Team (but the same individual/s may have roles in both).

10.3 **Incident**: situations that affect or disrupt the safe and orderly operation of a school or other workplace (Level 1).

10.4 **Incident Management Team**: The group that manages the Response during an emergency, and has primary responsibility for Preparation, Response, and Reporting phases. Led by the Chief Warden. During an emergency, the Incident Management Team's authority takes precedence over normal management structure.

10.5 **Chief Warden**: The lead position in school Incident Management Team. Must be a person able to perform the role, and ideally a person with infrequent work away from school and without immediate student supervision requirements.

10.6 **Incident Management Team**: School-based team in charge of planning, preparation, response, reporting and recovery for emergencies. Incident Management Team combines the functions of an Emergency Planning Committee and Emergency Control Organisation under Australian Standard 2745-2010.

10.7 **Deputy Chief Warden**: The second position in the Incident Management Team. Assists the Chief Warden with duties and assumes responsibilities of the Chief Warden in the event they are unavailable.

10.8 **Warden(s):** Assist with significant aspects of emergency response, including coordinating the movement of people and coordinating equipment for emergency response. May provide administrative and logistic support for planning and preparation, and manage communications at the direction of Chief Warden (unless specific communications officer is appointed).

10.9 **Notifiable Incident**: A specific term under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 meaning death of a person, serious injury or illness of a person, or a dangerous incident under the Act. Notifiable incidents must be reported immediately to the Work Health and Safety regulator. Some Notifiable Incidents constitute Emergencies under this policy.

10.10 **Serious Incident:** a specific term under the Education and Care Services National Law and Education and Care Services National Regulation. Serious Incidents must be reported to the

ELC/SAC regulator. They include death of a child, serious injury, illness or trauma, attendance by emergency services, apparent disappearance of a child, or a child locked in/out of a service. Serious Incidents are likely to constitute Emergencies under this policy.

10.11 Violent behaviour means any of the following behaviour/s by a person in relation to a member of the school community:

- physical violence or abuse
- sexual violence or abuse
- emotional abuse
- threatening behaviour
- coercion or any other behaviour that causes the school community member to fear for their safety and/or wellbeing or that of another person.

11. Related Documents and Legislation

11.1 Related CECG Documents:

- Emergency Management Plan Template
- Emergency Management Procedures Template
- Complaints Policy
- Work Health and Safety Policy
- WHS Incident Investigation Guide
- Routine Complaints Investigation Procedure

11.2 Related legislation or Standards

- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Education and Care Services National Law
- Education and Care Services National Regulation
- Safe Work Australia Incident Notification Sheet

12. Contact

12.1 For support or further questions relating to this policy, contact the CECG School and Family Services Team.