



draft

Education Emergency Plan

Cook Islands



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Vision

All learners and staff will have a secure and meaningful learning environment that enhances personal growth, knowledge and success

Mission

Illustrate commitment through the facilitation of feasible emergency procedures for all schools and education staff.

Objectives

- To raise awareness for all to acknowledge that a safe environment supports and enhance education development, personal growth, staff and student well being and success
- To improve on plans and monitor management of emergencies and disasters in schools and within the Ministry of Education
- Demonstrate that continuity of education after an emergency is crucial and that well-being for students and staff has the utmost priority
- Ensure that all schools have a feasible emergency plan in place
- To strengthen the relationship through networking with primary stakeholders for plans to secure the country.

This plan provides standard operating procedures for the Ministry and also schools through a combination of templates that acts as guidelines with handling and responding to emergencies.

It also outlines a framework for the Ministry of Education in establishing and acts as a map for co-ordination activities within all schools and strengthening networking with supporting agency before, during and after an emergency or disaster.

These supporting agencies may be core responding agencies for instance, the Ministry of Health, Cook Islands Red Cross or Emergency Cook Islands depending on the nature of emergency.

This plan aligns itself with the following:

- Cook Islands Administration guidelines, that is emitted out of the Education Act 1986 and 1987 that endeavors all schools; “to provide a safe physical and emotional environment for staff and students and comply in full with any legislation currently in force or that may be developed to ensure the safety of students and employees.”¹

¹ Cook Islands Ministry of Education, (July 2002) *Cook Islands Education Guidelines*.

- The Disaster Risk Management 2007 Act, under subsection 17 that requires:

“The Disaster Risk Management plan shall, when directed by the Director, be prepared in writing and kept current by all agencies and essential services”²

“The National Sustainable Development Plan for 2007 – 2010 strategic goal 6 is to have a safe, secure and resilient community that will support the following strategic outcomes:

- a. Well educated, healthy and productive people and resilient communities
- b. A secure society built on law and order and good governance
- c. Sustainable Economic growth in Harmony with Our social Values, culture and environment
- d. Enhanced cultural and environmental values”³

Acknowledgement:

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- Emergency Cook Islands
- New Zealand Ministry of Education
- Cook Island Schools
- SOPAC
- Cook Islands Red Cross

Introduction:

An emergency is defined by the Disaster Risk Management Act 2007 as, when an actual or imminent event that endangers or threatens life, property or environment and which requires a significant coordinated response.

While a disaster is an actual event or high probable risk involving a serious disruption to the function of a community, causing wide-spread human, materials, economy or environment loss and which exceeds the ability of the affected community using its own resources

To minimize the damages or effects of any emergency, standard operation procedure (SOP) within an emergency plan must be effective, understood by all and include training through frequent drills.

² November, 2007; *Disaster Risk Management Act*. Emergency Cook Islands.

³ January 2007; *Te Kaveinga Nui, Pathway for Sustainable Development in the Cook Islands*. Office of the Prime Minister, Cook Islands Government.

Emergencies, however, may be Human induced (man-made) or natural. Some examples are:

Human Induced (man-made)	Natural
Death or serious injury	Cyclones
Intruder	Flooding
Medical emergency	Earthquake
Serious assault	Tsunami
Armed offenders	Extreme weather conditions
	Landslide
	Drought

This plan is laid out into two sections, one for the Ministry of Education and the other for schools. The two sections are further divided in subsections, titled before, during and after. This identifies the critical key steps in combating and preparing for an emergency or a disaster.

1. Preparedness and Mitigation phase (before an emergency)
2. Response phase (during an emergency)
3. Rehabilitation and Reconstruction phase (after an emergency)

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION BEFORE

(Preparedness and mitigation phase)

Roles and responsibilities of the Ministry of Education:

The Ministry of Education (MoE) has a role in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of its staff and that of the schools:

For MOE staff

- The safety and well being of staff by having a standard operating procedure in place for any emergency
- Display of Emergency Evacuation procedures on walls and information sharing within the agency
- Assist National planning for overall emergency planning and the allocation of school facilities as evacuation centers.
- Ensure that there are guidelines and policies to cater for the well being of staff, which may be included in staff manual
- This would include clause of maternity and paternity leaves, office and grounds hygienic safety, rights of appeal, code of ethics.

For Schools

- Monitor School emergency plans and assist with resource allocation and maintenance required. (Assist in the review or development of an
- Proposals for including specific curriculum subjects included in the curriculum in partnership with the Emergency Cook Islands.
- Support awareness campaigns from other agencies and assist in the distribution of information kits for what to do in an emergency.
- Assist and support the initiatives for training in first aid certificates through financial assistance securing technical advice through partnership with core responding agencies such as Red Cross Society and EMCI
- Closely monitor all school standard operating procedures (SOP) and plans for precautionary, response measures through the audit process.
- Establish an information management system and identify clear communication channels are accessible.
- Assist schools in assessing status of vulnerability to natural disasters

Standard Operating procedure for:

Natural Disasters:

At the time of issue of the official warning, as may be issued by the Emergency Cook Islands, or the Meteorological Services, the Director of Finance and Support Services (DFS) shall report to the Secretary of Education who shall then issue appropriate instructions for schools and to the Ministry of Education staff.

Channels of communication

The DFS or delegated personnel shall under the advice of the EMCI and close monitoring of the weather bulletin advice Staff and principal's instructions to ensure safety of staff, students are maintained.

The DFS or delegated personnel will act as liaison officer when a natural disaster is imminent, and ensure that all communication channels are accessible particularly with outer islands schools.

Man-made emergency

- In the event a human induced event such as serious assault, death or serious injury, intruder, medical emergency, the DFS will liaise with school, advice the Secretary of Education after an assessment using the Incident investigation report and take appropriate action depending on the circumstances of the event

DURING

(Response phase)

Responses during any emergency whether natural or human induced will include:

- Ensure the appropriate plans are in place for schools and staff at the Ministry of Education
- Assist any schools that may require further assistance with resource allocation, physical preparation during an emergency, transportation of student and/or resources

AFTER

(Rehabilitation and reconstruction phase)

- The MOE shall immediately after the passing of an emergency assess damages with itinerary visits to school affected and clear instructions for reconstruction and rehabilitation
- Ensure that appropriate counsels are available for students and staff who may be affected emotionally, physically and mentally.
- The Ministry of Education through shall deploy officers to the various affected districts to make an assessment of the extent of the damages done. Refer to appendix 1 for Assessment form
- The Director of Finance and support Services or delegated personnel is responsible for documenting all events with the Investigation incident report, and this accompanies the incident report filed to the Ministry by the Principal or delegated personnel

SCHOOLS

Roles and Responsibility

School committee

- The Education Master plan in its 15 year strategic direction aims to encourage an increased participation on the role of parents in the progress and well being of their students.
- Have a say in the developments of emergency plans sat within schools and be part of the review committee for updating the emergency plan

Principals

- Consult with staff and develop their own emergency plan, the Ministry of Education, EMCI and Red Cross Society may be able to assist and provide technical assistance where needed
- Participate and co-ordinate in-service training for staff
- Provide leadership during an emergency or disaster
- Ensure that special needs students are catered for
- Conduct frequent evacuation drills to ensure that people student, staff, parents and members of the school committee are aware of their roles during an emergency.
- Arrange for the purchase, storage and maintenance of emergency supplies and equipment
- Inspect facilities for structural safety and report areas requiring improvement

Staff

- Assist with the development of an Emergency Plan
- Participate in emergency response training and first aid training
- Provide leadership for students during an emergency or disaster

Before

The principal in consultation with staff facilitate and develop an Emergency Response Plan that prepares the school to respond to any emergency that may occur and minimize the impacts and harm to the school community.

Schools must identify potential hazards likely to occur in schools – schools will need different emergency procedures depending on their location and situations. However, it should include the following information: All Info Kits are under Appendix 1

- Emergency Management – refer to InfoKit 1
- List of emergency contacts – see InfoKit 1a
- Developing a site map – see InfoKit 1b

- Site Maps – see InfoKit 1c in appendix 1
- First Aid – see InfoKit 1d
- Emergency information for Visitors – see InfoKit 1e
- Evacuation or Emergency responses – see InfoKit 1f
- Medical Emergency Responses – see InfoKit 1g
- Fire Emergency Responses – see InfoKit 1h
- Flooding Emergency Response – see InfoKit 1i
- Violence / Personal Threat Emergency – see InfoKit 1j
- Armed Intruder incident emergency – see InfoKit 1k
- Physical Assault Emergency Response – see InfoKit 1l

(Note: InfoKit refers the information resource kit that aims at assisting schools in developing customized emergency response plans)

First Aid Kits

- All schools are required to have First Aid kit and sufficient depending on school rolls.
- There should be a trained or experienced person in charge of all first aid supplies and allocation of first aid rooms, when the need arises.
- Sufficient stocks of first aid supplies for the different works areas such as ICT area, science labs and caretaker workers
- Availability of portable first aid kits for taking on trips outside the school compound

Evacuation Center

- Some schools are allocated as evacuation centers, to this regard, the Principal must ensure that during an emergency the safety and well being of students are given priority.
- The continuing operation of the school will be determined by the nature of the emergency and the availability of resources such as buildings, staff. The decision to continue school lies in the decision by the Principal in consultation with the Ministry of Education and EMCI.

The responsibility for coordinating agencies that have a role in providing services during a national emergency falls under the NEOC in conjunction with school principals, the Ministry of Education and other government agencies.

Emergency Drills

- The school Fire Evacuation plan and drills must be approved and tested by the Rescue Fire Services.
- Regular drills ensure that school community knows what to do during an emergency situation and the plan and procedures in place do work.
- School must ensure that fire wardens are appointed according to the school size and in line with the Rescue and Fire Services recommendations

- This plans and procedures must be provided to new employees/contractors, students and visitors, updates at regular intervals
- Emergency numbers and procedures are to be displayed on wall in main office and staff room.
- Staff must ensure that flammable substance and chemicals that are used for science experiments are stored in proper places and out of reach of children unless using during a class
- Principal must ensure that students, staff, school committee or PTA are aware of the standard operating procedures.
- School committee is responsible to assist in organizing the roof to be roped down immediately after a warning has been sent by the meteorological services.
- Staff and students trained to respond effectively to respond appropriately to emergency situations.

Information and Training

Staff, students, visitors and consultants must be informed about school emergency plans and procedure through

- Displays of evacuation procedures and site maps showing safe exit pathways
- Emergency information handbooks, training or class exercises
- Visitor information on emergency procedures
- First Aid training and information regularly updated

DURING

Schools will use customized procedures as outlined in InfoKit that are appropriate to each type of emergency.

AFTER

- A meeting should be coordinated by the Principals to make a review of the incident and report summary of events and decisions made.
- Recommend changes to the current plans and procedure and corrective actions
- Facilitate getting professionals to help with students/staff that are in a state of shock, trauma and not able to concentrate in normal activities
- School may need to undergo a debriefing to bring normality to school state after a crisis

Monitoring and Evaluation

All schools would have supporting emergency policies and plans audited by the Directorate of Audit and quality assurances.