

SAFETY ALERT

TO:
EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS
DIRECTORS PUBLIC SCHOOLS NSW
DIRECTORS EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
PRINCIPALS
WHS MANAGERS
WHS CONSULTANTS

SAFETY ALERT No 63

CHANGES TO THE 'TEMPORARILY CEASING OPERATIONS DUE TO AN EMERGENCY SITUATION' PROCEDURES

The Department's Procedures to ['Temporarily Cease Operations Due to an Emergency or Potential Emergency Situation'](#) have been simplified. The Procedures now outline the simplified steps for schools to follow should a situation arise that may require temporary cease of operations.

Some examples of emergencies or potential emergencies that may impact on NSW public schools are bush fires, fire, floods, or a major incident in the vicinity of the school such as a gas leak, power blackout, or other events which may have caused a significant impact on the operations of the school.

These major disruptions to the school mean that the Principal, as the leader and manager of the school site, makes the decision that the school is either:

- Operational - this means that there are staff and students on site, although likely to be a minimal number; or
- Non-operational - this means that there are no staff or students on site.

Following this update to the Procedures there is now a single dedicated reporting telephone number to alert the Department of a decision to temporarily cease operations. For all 'Temporary Cease of Operations' matters please contact the Department's [Incident Report and Support Hotline](#) on **1800 811 523** (Option 1), 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Once the school has reported the incident to the Department's Hotline, the team will then ensure that advice is disseminated to the relevant Director of Public Schools NSW and other relevant senior management.

Reporting the incident also enables the Health and Safety Directorate to fulfil its obligation to advise the State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC) of any schools not operating during natural disasters such as bush fires or floods.

Previously, Principals were required to call their Director of Public Schools NSW, the Director, School Operations and Performance, and the Health and Safety Directorate. This process is now simplified as Principals only need to call the Hotline.

Please refer to the Department's [Staff Intranet](#) for more information.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'M. O'Brien', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Marnie O'Brien
Executive Director, Health and Safety
17 November 2016