

Emergency
Evacuation
Procedures for
People with
Disabilities
and Medical
Conditions



ACCESS & EGRESS

Foreword

In 1997 a project was undertaken by the four Western Australian public universities to improve emergency procedures for people with a disability or medical condition in educational institutions. This project was coordinated by Murdoch University for the Post Secondary Education Disability Network (PSEDN) with funds provided by Cooperative Funds Projects through DETYA and Critical Incident Management Systems (CIMS) compiled the data. A survey was conducted with approximately 1000 students and staff at the four universities who had identified themselves as having a disability. The survey explored the individual's understanding of what might happen in emergency situations; their previous experience and participation in evacuation training exercises; the appropriateness of current emergency procedures at their campuses; and their suggestions for improvements relating to emergency evacuation procedures. The general perception from staff and students with a disability or medical condition who responded to the survey was that people would assist them at the time of an emergency, but that pre-planning opportunities and the dissemination of information were not currently of an appropriate level.

This guide was developed to respond to the need for emergency procedures that cater for people with disabilities and medical conditions on tertiary education sites. This initiative provides a new resource for university planning committees in assisting in the development of emergency procedure manuals that are inclusive of all people on campus sites and the training of staff and students in emergency procedures.

Acknowledgements

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The information in this guide is available in alternative formats; contact the Disability Support Officer at Murdoch University for further information.

Disclaimer: While every care has been taken in the preparation of this publication, the author and PSEDN do not accept responsibility or liability for the results of specific action taken on the basis of this information nor for any errors or omissions, legal issues in the area of Australian Standards, Building Codes and Occupational Health and Safety Laws that are in the process of change. It is the responsibility of individuals utilising the information within to ensure they refer to the most current Australian Standards and legislative requirements in relation to access provisions. This is particularly important for those planning new or refurbished building facilities.

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Introduction

This guide is intended to serve as a reference source for university planning committees to assist in the development of emergency procedure manuals so that all people on campus sites are included. It is essential for each institution to develop emergency procedures that are specific to their environment and needs. The format of this guide is based on Western Australian legislation and it is incumbent on each institution to ensure that they adhere to their own states legislation.

It is a legal obligation under Occupational Safety and Health legislation that workplaces and populated venues must have a structured, comprehensive emergency preparedness program in place (Occupational Safety and Health Act, WA, 1984). The emergency preparedness program should address the identified risks and be flexible to enable it to meet the changing needs of the site; this program contributes towards meeting the legal and moral 'duty of care' that must be provided to all staff, students and visitors. A requirement under 'The Guidelines for Fire Risk Management for Commonwealth Agencies' (1999) is that an organisation's fire risk management policy should state how the needs of people with disabilities would be met in the event of a fire emergency.

Emergency procedures planning should be tailored and include procedures that provide a framework for fast action in identifying and deploying resources to problems as they arise during an emergency on campus. This guide will not prevent problems from arising in an emergency.

Approximately 18% of the population have permanent disabilities; including people who have a sensory, physical, psychiatric impairment, learning disability or medical condition. Additionally, there are people who have temporary impairments or conditions that may affect their ability to independently deal with an emergency situation and it is not possible to predict when any one of us may require support during an emergency evacuation. A further group of people may be significantly affected by a situation due to their medical condition e.g. sensitivity to chemicals, or

allergic reactions. It is anticipated that the numbers of individuals with disabilities accessing higher education will continue to increase. Accordingly, these communities have to be able to respond appropriately to ensure the safety of all people while on campus.

Pre-planning and acquired knowledge of emergency response techniques and procedures is an essential element of coping in an emergency (Counts & Prowant, 1994; Gips, 1996). For people with a disability or medical condition this is of prime importance. People with a disability or medical condition need to know what their requirements are in an emergency situation and be able to communicate that. In achieving this objective, consultation is required with people with disabilities or medical conditions during the planning process to allow their support needs to be established and to ensure confidence in the evacuation procedures providing protection.

The employees in organisations involved in the planning process need to know they have considered, prepared and practiced what might be required in an emergency to assist individuals with disabilities.

Structure

This guide includes comments on procedures and suggestions and is divided into emergency planning considerations, specific assistance techniques and emergency situations, training materials, resources and references.

1. Emergency Planning Considerations

This provides an overview of the legal considerations in emergency procedure planning, the detection and notification of an emergency, and movement of individuals during an evacuation.

It refers to the Australian Standard AS3745-95 Emergency Control Organisation and Procedures for Buildings and other relevant documents to provide guidelines for emergency planning.

2. Specific Assistance Techniques and Emergency Situations

This section contains general guidelines on how to effectively support the needs of people with specific types of disabilities in emergency situations.

The information is drawn from a number of sources and is applicable to the Western Australian context. It is incumbent that each institution checks with the state and local service authorities for variations and current evacuation procedures. For example,

immediate evacuation of individuals using wheelchairs or awaiting fire services arrival and the evacuation of the individual with or without their wheelchair.

3. Training Materials

This section contains five separate training modules that are designed to address different audience requirements. A base module provides the background information on specific types of disability and is a prerequisite to the other modules. The other four modules include: designing emergency evacuation planning for emergency procedures committees; general emergency procedures training for staff and students; assistance techniques for individuals with a disability or medical condition for Wardens or staff; and self-advocacy training for people with a disability or medical condition during evacuation procedures on campus.

4. Resources and References

This section contains useful resource and reference material to assist in the planning of emergency evacuation procedures in general and specifically working with people with a disability or medication condition.

1.0 Emergency Planning Considerations

1.1 'Emergency' Defined

For the purposes of this guide, an 'Emergency' is defined as any incident that could:

- Jeopardise the safety of persons on or near the site,
- Result in significant damage to property or equipment contained on campus,
- Significantly disrupt normal campus operations, or
- A high risk situation that, if not controlled, could lead to disaster.

1.2 Legal Considerations

A number of Federal and State laws need to be considered in the development of an emergency planning manual; it is necessary for each institution to ensure that they adhere to their own state processes.

Legislation or standards that need to be considered include:

- The Commonwealth Employment Act (1991) provides reference to employers and organisations making provision for employees with disabilities in emergency procedures planning and evacuation.

- The Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act (1992) indicates a reliance on evacuation assistance to people with disabilities by carers, fire Wardens and emergency personnel. A review is currently underway for specific building code requirements covering warning and evacuation of people with disabilities. However, an organisations fire risk management policy is supposed to state how each organisation will address the needs of people with a disability in the event of a fire.
- There are a number of regulations and Australian Standards that can relate to evacuation and emergency procedures and campuses will need to check their own statutory requirements.
- The Australian Standard AS3745-1995 provides information regarding: emergency planning principles and procedures; considerations in relation to escape routes, lifts, assembly areas and accounting for people; the emergency planning committee and their duties; the structure of the emergency control organisation, their duties and the selection of personnel for the roles. The Standards are guidelines only and are available from the Standards Association of Australia.
- The Australian Building Codes Board also makes provision for people with disabilities by requiring building exits to be accessible, providing areas of refuge and direction on where these should be located. It should be noted that the states and territories require new and refurbished buildings to comply with legal requirements for people with disabilities. The Building Codes of Australia are available from the Standards Association of Australia.
- The Occupational Safety and Health Acts and associated regulations of each State and Territory, for example the Occupational Safety and Health Act (WA) 1984. This requires a 'duty of care' by the employer ensuring the health and safety of employees and their visitors. By design, the Act does not describe how to discharge this 'duty of care', with no specific reference to people with disabilities.

1.3 Detection

The detection of fires is usually achieved by automatic systems installed in buildings, which do not require human intervention. If human notification intervention is required by the use of a pull cord or break glass alarm system to notify the fire services on discovery of a fire or emergency situation, the following points need to be considered:

- The height of the alarm thereby ensuring all users of the building can reach the alarm.
- The strength and dexterity required in operating manual devices (Juillet & Bukowski, 1995).

The detection of other emergency situations such as gas leaks, chemical or environmental hazards and civil disorder should be included in the emergency evacuation procedures manual for each university campus. An investigation of these procedures should be undertaken to establish if alterations are necessary to accommodate people with a disability. Examples include height of alarms requiring manual activation or emergency phones.

1.4 Notification

Notification is the process of informing occupants of a building that an emergency exists and some action is required; in most cases that action is to evacuate.

Notification is usually accomplished by audible devices that are effective for all occupants with the exception of people with a hearing impairment. In buildings with Early Warning and Intercommunication System (EWIS), visual warning devices can be installed in conjunction with audible devices to increase effectiveness (Juillet & Bukowski, 1995).

Evacuation may involve relocation to safe areas within a building or phased evacuation by floor or area to prevent overloading of stairways. Information on how to proceed is most effectively communicated through audible means. For people with a hearing impairment the use of flashing textural displays on television or computer monitors located throughout the building is an option. An alternative is the use of portable devices, such as vibrating pagers connected to the EWIS (Juillet & Bukowski, 1995).

1.5 Movement

People with a disability, medical condition or temporary condition can be limited by their ability to evacuate quickly and independently during an emergency and may require support. Many people can perform well in evacuation drills and do not consider themselves in need of assistance. However, in an actual emergency situation the reality of the extreme exertion required to escape down flights of stairs in unfamiliar or smoke filled areas means they may require support. These individuals need to be considered in the emergency planning process and encouraged to register with the Disability Support Officer on their campus. The following suggestions need to be considered during planning:

- Identify potential candidates in need of support during an evacuation but have an awareness that there will always be someone who requires support in the event of an emergency evacuation but may not have recognised their own need for assistance prior to the evacuation.
- Once individuals have been identified consult with these individuals about their specific needs, how assistance can be best provided, methods of accommodation and the selection of appropriate assistive devices.
- All staff and students should have access to training in evacuation procedures and should be aware of how to identify the Wardens that can be asked for assistance, how to proceed in an emergency, the evacuation routes and the assembly areas.
- After hours personnel who assume the positions of the emergency control organisation and are responsible for ensuring the evacuation of buildings in an emergency, require training in assistance techniques.

1.6 Planning Considerations for Evacuation Procedures

These suggestions could be incorporated into existing emergency planning procedures, existing buildings or in the design of new and refurbished buildings.

- Consult with Student and Staff Disability Advisory or Reference groups on campus regarding emergency evacuation plans and procedures, and for appropriateness of the procedures to the individual campus.
- Buildings that contain scientific laboratories may require additional attention to design and construction to ensure ease of access in an emergency evacuation, modification to alarm systems and controls to enable all users to be accommodated (Johnson, 2000).
- Provide emergency evacuation information and training using alternative formats such as written text with illustrations, subtext videos, audio, and Braille.
- Orientation of individuals with a disability or medical condition to the buildings they use on campus, the layout of the building, the exits and evacuation routes, assembly areas, refuge areas and emergency phones.
- Signage that uses large print or alternative formats such as Braille and/or symbols, colour and contrast of signage in buildings, use of speaking signs to alert those with a vision

impairment of distance to exits, and height of signage needs to be in accordance with Australian Standard 1428.1.

- Training should be available to all staff in evacuation procedures and for Wardens on how to work with people with a disability or medical condition during an evacuation or emergency situation.
- Participation in evacuation drills and access to information on evacuation procedures should be available to all staff and students and that this information is repeated in a number of different settings such as orientation, newsletters and updates.
- Provide information on who will be able to offer assistance during an emergency, how to identify the Wardens, the first aid person and their roles. Identify the location of qualified first aid personnel within the building using signage.
- The emergency plan should be:
 - Simple and easy to understand,
 - Highly flexible and functional,
 - Comprehensive,
 - Written,
 - Widely disseminated – available and in accessible formats,
 - Tested and practiced by all members of the campus,
 - Reviewed and updated annually.

1.7 Applying the Australian Standards (AS3745-1995)

Suggestions for applying the standards to campuses include the following:

- Often a campus Emergency Planning Committee will adjust the structure of the emergency control organisation to include the campus's management and reporting structures. Campuses usually consist of a conglomeration of different buildings so the concept of a Chief Warden per building may not be appropriate.
- The risks to be covered will very likely exceed the bare minimum included in AS3745 (fire, bomb threat, earthquake, civil disorder), as educational environments will need to consider all facilities, including those with radioactive hazards, chemical hazards, and other environmental issues such as flooding, bushfire etc.

- All locations should be planned to exceed these standard requirements, making this the bare minimum of compliance, particularly in meeting the support needs of people with a disability or medical condition in emergency evacuation situations.
- A practical application of the warden's main responsibility is to ensure that all persons are out of the building in an evacuation and a visual check of the building should be made to ensure the area is 'all clear'. If there are any individuals who require support to evacuate, the warden must:
 - Have someone responsible stay with them,
 - Ensure they have been relocated to a safe area, and
 - Have their exact location reported.
- As part of the emergency planning process buildings that are identified as having a higher number of staff or students requiring support should have a higher ratio of Wardens than the recommended 1 per 20 persons. Additional Wardens in these buildings could be used to assist those requiring support to evacuate the building and could act as stair Wardens instructing evacuees.
- In buildings where the stairways are used as areas of temporary refuge (stairways must meet the fire and smoke rated criteria) stair Wardens should remain with those people unable to evacuate until emergency personnel arrive and can arrange for their evacuation. Stair Wardens require a means of communication to enable reporting to the floor warden their location and the number of people requiring assistance to evacuate. Professional fire-fighters, according to research, stated that the time spent locating someone could be the difference between losing or saving lives, so it is an imperative to report the exact location of those requiring assistance.
- Training to prepare all members of the campus for emergency situations, in addition to the required warden training, could be incorporated into staff and student orientation programs.
- Evacuation procedures should be practiced regularly and reviewed.
- Ensure that the evacuation procedure plans are available and accessible to all members of the campus.

2.0

Assistance Techniques and Emergency Situations

Assistance techniques should be tested prior to being required in an emergency situation, this would ideally occur during practice drills allowing alterations to be made to improve the process. Individuals who believe that they may require assistance during an evacuation should be encouraged to register with the Equity Office or appropriate person. However, registration should not be relied on to identify all individuals that may require assistance during an emergency, as individuals who have temporary impairments, visitors to the campus and persons who were unable to recognise their own need for support will not have registered. Empowering individuals to act in emergency situations can be achieved with the provision of education and training in emergency evacuation procedures. Evacuation planning procedures also need to consider the requirements of individuals after hours – who will be available to assist together with the training requirements of these personnel?

In an emergency evacuation it is important for Wardens to offer assistance and then allow the individual to explain what support they require, if any. People with disabilities or medical conditions are individual in their abilities and requirements, and their disability or medical condition may not be visible. It is therefore important to allow the individual to explain their needs. As part of the Wardens' duties a visual check should be carried out of all offices and rooms in the building to ensure all users have evacuated the building.

2.1 Intellectual Impairment or Learning Disability

Individuals with an intellectual disability may have difficulty in recognising an emergency and may experience difficulty in responding to complex instructions. However, within a campus setting individuals with a learning disability may be present and require support with receiving and processing information. When offering assistance to people with an intellectual disability the following should be considered:

- State there is a problem and they need to leave the building.
- Ask the individual what assistance they require, offer to escort the individual through the evacuation route to the assembly area.
- Visual perception of written instructions or signs may be confused.
- Breakdown directions and information into small simple steps.
- Deliver directions slowly, clearly and with visual reinforcement such as simple signals and/or by drawing graphic symbols.
- Be patient and check for understanding by asking them to tell you what they will do now.
- Do not belittle or patronising when speaking or acting towards these individuals. The individual's ability to understand speech is often more developed than their vocabulary (Juillet & Bukowski, 1995).

2.2 Medical Conditions

Individuals with medical conditions may be less obvious than people with other types of impairments and there is a large range of medical conditions that may impact on an individual's ability to evacuate independently in an emergency. Emergency situations may exacerbate medical conditions for an individual whilst not affecting others in the same area. The following points should be considered:

- Offer assistance and allow the individual to explain what support they require.
- Check with individuals that they have their medications before leaving the building, for example asthma or heart medications.

- Offer to walk alongside the individual and be of support both emotionally and physically.
- Frequent rest periods may be required due to reduced stamina.
- Stay with the individual to reassure them after reaching the assembly area, check they have somewhere to rest and ensure no further assistance is required.
- Notify the first aid personnel or emergency services if medical assistance is required (Juillet & Bukowski, 1995).

2.3 Psychiatric Impairment

Individuals with a psychiatric impairment are not always immediately as obvious as other types of disability as requiring support to evacuate during an emergency situation. Offer assistance and allow the individual to explain what support they require, be aware that individuals with a psychiatric impairment may experience difficulty concentrating, managing stress and initiating personal contact. In addition the following points should be considered:

- Deliver instructions in a concise and clear way using simple steps.
- Offer to guide the individual through the evacuation route and stay with the individual in the assembly area.
- Offer reassurance and emotional support. For individuals who are experiencing extreme anxiety ask them to breathe slowly and deeply.
- When giving instructions try to stay calm, do not yell or panic. Be patient.
- Repeat instructions and check for understanding (Juillet & Bukowski, 1995).

2.4 Physical Impairment

When offering assistance to individuals with a physical impairment allow them to explain what support they require, as they are the experts in knowing their own requirements. However, the following points should be considered:

- Allow faster independent evacuees to progress first through the evacuation route, followed by less quickly paced independent evacuees and then evacuees requiring support.

- Individuals using crutches or canes may be able to negotiate stairs independently, allow individuals to grasp the handrail and use their other hand for the crutch. It is best not to interfere with this person's movement, offer to carry the extra crutch and if stairs are crowded act as a buffer between the individual and passing evacuees.
- Wheelchair users (check with local fire authorities on recommended evacuation procedures).
- Move to designated areas of refuge, if the stairway is used as the refuge area allow other evacuees to exit stairway prior to entering.
 - Notify the floor warden regarding the location and type of assistance required. The floor warden will then deliver this information to the Fire and Rescue Services. Wardens or a designated person will stay with individuals unable to evacuate.
 - Await emergency services personnel arrival for assistance in evacuating.
 - **Use of lifts:** Lifts are only generally prohibited in a fire or other situations that may affect the integrity of the building. In other emergency situations for example, a bomb threat the lifts may be able to be utilized. Use of the lifts in an emergency evacuation is usually undertaken with the supervision of Fire and Rescue Service personnel, or other qualified personnel unless they are purpose built to withstand emergency conditions.
 - If phased or horizontal evacuation is more appropriate, evacuate across to another part of the building or a separate building to an area of safety. The lifts may be used to exit if the other building or area is unaffected by the emergency.
- If the policy is to evacuate all building occupants, ask the individual with the disability or medical condition to give instructions in how they would like to be assisted. A number of evacuation devices and techniques are available but will require training and regular practice by the emergency control team. In Western Australia the Fire and Rescue Service recommend that unless the individual is in immediate danger that Wardens await the arrival of the emergency services personnel who will coordinate the evacuation of the individual in their own wheelchair.
- If an individual using a wheelchair must be evacuated the following technique may be used but it is noted that the potential for injury is great to both the evacuee and those assisting in the evacuation. To assist in moving a wheelchair

down the stairs, stand behind the chair grasping the pushing handles. Tilt the chair backwards until balance is achieved. Descend front forward, stand one step above the chair keeping your centre of gravity low and let the back wheels gradually lower to the next step. Keep the chair tilted back. If possible, have another person assist by holding the frame of the wheelchair and pushing in from the front, but do not lift the chair, as this places more weight on the individual standing behind the chair (Juillet & Bukowski, 1995).

2.5 Sensory Impairment

2.5.1 Hearing

To support a person with a hearing impairment during an emergency the following techniques may assist:

- Flick lights on and off to gain the persons attention when entering the area.
- Establish eye contact so the person can see your face.
- Face the light so your face can be seen, do not turn away while trying to communicate.
- Use facial expressions or hand gestures as visual cues.
- Check to see if you have been understood, repeat if necessary, rephrase message or use a different word order if repetition unsuccessful. Use short sentences as these are more easily understood.
- Offer pen and paper. Write down the nature of the emergency and the nearest evacuation route for example, FIRE, go out the rear door, turn to the right and down stairs NOW!
- Write slowly and let the individual read the message as you write. Written communication may be important if you are unable to understand the individual's speech.
- Do not allow other people to interrupt while conveying the emergency information to the individual.
- Be patient, the individual may have difficulty comprehending the urgency of the message.
- Offer to escort the individual through the evacuation route to the assembly area.
- Provide the individual with a flashlight for signalling their location in the event of separation from other evacuees and to facilitate lip reading in the dark (Juillet & Bukowski, 1995).

2.5.2 Vision

When offering to assist persons with a vision impairment the following points should be considered:

- Announce your presence; speak out when entering the area.
- Speak naturally and directly to the individual, do not shout.
- Offer assistance, allow the individual to explain what assistance they require.
- Describe the action to be taken in advance, e.g. what route to take to evacuate the building.
- If the individual requests a guide:
 - Let the individual grasp your arm.
 - Allow them to explain how and what you should do to guide them.
 - The individual may choose to walk slightly behind you to gauge your body reactions to obstacles, be sure to mention stairs, doorways, narrow passages, ramps or other obstacles.
 - When guiding to a seat, place the person's hand on the back of the chair.
- Suggestions when assisting owners of Guide Dogs
 - Explain the nature of the emergency and offer assistance, allow the individual to explain what they require. Individuals who are comfortable using their Guide Dog to navigate to safety should be allowed to do so.
 - Plan for the Guide Dog to be evacuated with the owner.
 - Do not touch or offer the Guide Dog food without the permission of the owner.
 - When the Guide Dog is wearing its harness, it is on duty. If you are requested to take the Guide Dog while assisting the individual, it is recommended that you hold the leash and not the dog's harness.
 - If there are unfamiliar obstacles, debris for example, or the Guide Dog requires a break, the warden or volunteer should offer their arm and allow the individual to instruct them on the assistance they require.
 - Emergency control team members require training in how to respond to a confused, panicked or wounded service animal. A Guide Dog is trained to protect its owner and will respond accordingly to perceived threats (Juillet & Bukowski, 1995).

3.0

Training

This section contains five separate training modules that are designed to address different audience requirements. The first module provides the background information on specific types of disability and is a prerequisite to the other modules. The other four modules include: designing emergency evacuation planning for emergency procedures committees; general emergency procedures training for staff and students; assistance techniques for individuals with a disability or medical condition for Wardens or staff; and self-advocacy training for people with a disability or medical condition during evacuation procedures on campus.

The training modules can be presented separately and the specific types of disability module can be presented at the beginning of any of the other four modules due to the brevity. It is possible for the individual modules to be incorporated into professional development programs for staff or orientation programs for staff and students. Prior to undertaking the module in assistance techniques participants who are Wardens should have completed 'Warden Training'. This will enable Wardens to put into perspective their responsibilities and provide practice in working with people with a disability or medical condition in emergency evacuation situations.

Specific Types of Disability

Objectives for the Module

- To raise participants' awareness of the different types of disability.
- To raise participants' awareness of the individual differences between people with a disability or medical condition.
- To raise participants' awareness of how an emergency situation may limit the ability of people with a disability or medical condition to respond and evacuate independently.
- To discuss the need to offer assistance to people with a disability.

Presentation of the Module

This module is to be presented first as a prerequisite to the other modules and provides the background information for specific disability types. The module is intended to raise awareness of the possible support requirements of people with disabilities during an evacuation and is relevant to emergency planning.

Using overheads and handouts the facilitator introduces the specific types of disabilities and the different requirements of these individuals. This module is designed to be very brief, however, each organisation could establish links and invite student representatives, the Disability Support Officer or guest speakers from outside agencies to present more detailed information related to disabilities and medical conditions.

The facilitator asks participants to discuss their awareness of the specific types of disability. Discuss what experiences the participants may already have had in working with people with a disability or medical condition in any emergency situation or critical incident.

Points to discuss include:

- Specific types of disability
 - Intellectual Impairment or Learning Disability;
 - Medical Conditions
 - Physical Impairment
 - Psychiatric Impairment
 - Sensory Impairment
- How different types of disability may impact on the ability of individuals in their campus setting to evacuate during an emergency situation.
- The need to offer assistance.

Approximate time required for module: 30 minutes

*Experiential Learning Activity of Types of Disability
(Optional)*

Provide participants with access to sensory limiting devices such as goggles and earmuffs, and mobilisation devices such as wheelchairs, crutches or walking sticks. Facilitate the use of devices to allow participants to experience what it is like for a person with a disability when moving around the campus buildings. Obstacles may be placed in the room during this exercise that could be realistically expected within the environment, for instance, boxes of stationery or furniture in corridors, doors that are too narrow for wheelchair access, and crowded areas that are noisy which make hearing instructions difficult.

Specific Types of Disability

Reference Materials

Intellectual Impairment or Learning Disability

Individuals with an intellectual disability may have difficulty in recognising an emergency and may experience difficulty in responding to complex instructions. However, in a campus setting the individuals you will be working with are more likely to have a learning disability and experience difficulty in the way they receive and process information. Individuals with a learning disability may experience difficulty reading; others may have difficulty with oral communication or interpreting floor plans or combinations of these.

Medical Conditions

Medical conditions, as a disability type, can include a great variety of conditions that are not always immediately obvious. Medical conditions can include respiratory problems and allergies, epilepsy and related disorders, chronic fatigue syndrome, diabetes, heart and circulation problems, arthritis and many other conditions. Emergency situations may exacerbate medical conditions for an individual whilst not affecting others in the same area. The difficulty is that a given situation, for example air-conditioning contamination that may be uncomfortable for most people but constitute an emergency for a person with a medical disability.

Psychiatric Impairment

People with a psychiatric impairment may be less obvious than other impairments. The impairment can range from temporary, relatively minor conditions to chronic and severely incapacitating conditions, and can include schizophrenia, bipolar disorders, depression and anxiety. People with a psychiatric impairment may experience difficulty concentrating, managing stress and initiating personal contact.

Physical Impairment

Individuals with physical impairments represent a range of conditions, both temporary and permanent. The impairment may be congenital, the result of an injury, or the result of a chronic

health condition or disease. It may be orthopaedic, neuromuscular, cardiovascular, pulmonary, or a combination of these. Some individuals with physical impairments may need to use equipment such as wheelchairs, braces, or crutches to move about the campus; others whose impairments are less visible may have decreased coordination or stamina and progress at a reduced pace or need to rest frequently.

Sensory Impairment

Hearing

The severity of hearing loss can be expressed in decibel levels. An individual with profound hearing loss, or deafness, cannot hear sounds softer than 90 decibels (heavy traffic or the sound of an alarm clock two feet away are 80 decibels) and is not helped by a hearing aid. Someone who cannot hear decibel levels of 70 to 90 and above is considered to have a severe hearing loss, but a hearing aid can be of some help. A person who is hard of hearing is someone whose sense of hearing ranges from mild (25-40 decibels) to moderate (40-70); a hearing aid is helpful (crunchy breakfast cereal is a 30 decibel sound, ordinary conversation is 50-60 decibels). Some individuals with hearing loss can sign or lip-read, but lip reading is a technique with limitations as only approximately 30% of spoken English can be lip-read. People with a hearing impairment may not hear the alarms, evacuation instructions or other people leaving an area in the event of an evacuation.

The sound of the emergency alarm may cause people wearing hearing aids pain due to the amplification. These individuals may need to reduce the volume of their hearing aid due to the amplification and this may then effect their ability to hear instructions.

Vision

Some individuals with vision impairment can see no light at all or may have some light sensation. Vision impairment can range from an ability to see shapes well enough to walk around without a cane during the day, to not being able to see anything or a requirement for larger print to read. It is common to experience increased difficulty with vision in dark areas, or at night, than in light areas or daylight. Conditions that limit an individual's field of vision, such as glaucoma and macular degeneration, are most common. Each individual with a vision impairment can usually describe what his or her vision is like.

Designing Emergency Evacuation Planning to Accommodate All Campus Users

Objectives for the Module

- To raise participants' awareness of the issues relating to emergency evacuation procedures planning and people with a disability or medical condition.
- To raise participants' awareness of their current campus evacuation procedures limitations in accommodating the needs of all campus users.
- To provide information to enable participants to develop an emergency evacuation plan for their campus that will accommodate all campus users and provide training to staff and students to achieve this aim.
- To provide information and suggestions to enable participants to develop their own staff and student training and information packages for emergency evacuation procedures within their campus.

Presentation of the Module

This module is designed to extend participants' understanding of specific types of disability; to raise awareness of campus users with a disability or medical condition that may not be catered for in the existing emergency evacuation plans and how all campus users can be accommodated when planning for an emergency event. A prerequisite to this module is the completion of the specific types of disability module, or a reasonable understanding of the types of disability and the possible support needs of these individuals regarding emergency planning and evacuation.

Using overheads and handouts the facilitator can introduce the background information, the objective of emergency procedure planning and general emergency planning information, planning considerations of detection, notification and movement and how people with specific types of disability may have different requirements. Note: If participants already have extensive knowledge and understanding of emergency procedure planning, the facilitator may choose to omit this information from the training session.

Points to discuss include:

- Background facts
- General emergency procedure planning information and the objective of emergency procedure planning
- Planning considerations
- Detection
 - Height of manual alarms
 - Height of emergency telephones
- Notification
 - Use of audible devices and advising people with hearing impairments of emergency
- Movement
 - How those who need support to evacuate will be identified and planned for
 - How will assistance be provided
 - The techniques that will be used to assist

Approximate time required for module: _____ minutes

The time required to complete this module will depend upon the facilitator and the amount chosen to present, which will be dependant upon participants' previous knowledge of emergency procedures planning. It is anticipated if all participants have existing knowledge on emergency procedure planning some of the more general reference material may not be required.

Experiential Learning Activity for Examining Campus Accessibility in Emergency Evacuation Planning

The facilitator asks participants to come up with suggestions of potential areas of difficulty that may be experienced by different users of the campus during an emergency evacuation, taking into consideration the types of buildings and areas that make up their campus. Depending on the size of the training group this exercise could be done in small teams with each team writing their suggestions down on large sheets of paper to present to the whole group. Encourage all possible ideas to be presented, do not discount any suggestions. Once the areas have been identified the facilitator asks participants to discuss the areas of difficulty they identified as a large group.

The facilitator then asks participants to work in teams again to come up with solutions to overcome the areas of difficulty that were identified in the last exercise. Using large sheets of paper the facilitator asks teams to write down all their possible solutions, again do not disregard any suggestions. Discuss as a large group when the activity is complete.

Discussion Groups

Supply participants with a handout that provides a starting point for discussion on issues involving:

- Emergency Planning Procedures, including: legal considerations; dissemination of information to campus users; consultation and use of resources in the planning process; evacuation techniques; and considerations for refurbished and new buildings.
- Training issues, including: who will be trained and how; evaluation of the effectiveness of training; and administrative considerations.

Participants may like to use the discussion groups to formulate a checklist or plan for how they will modify their existing emergency evacuation plans.

Emergency Evacuation Planning Reference Materials

Background Facts

Approximately 18% of the population have permanent disabilities; including people who have a sensory, physical, psychiatric impairment, learning disability or medical condition. Additionally, there are people who have temporary impairments or conditions that may affect their ability to independently deal with an emergency situation and it is not possible to predict when any one of us may require support during an emergency evacuation. A further group of people may be significantly affected by a situation due to their medical condition for example, sensitivity to chemicals, or allergic reactions.

It is anticipated that the numbers of individuals with disabilities accessing higher education will continue to increase. Accordingly, these communities must be able to respond appropriately to ensure the safety of all people while on campus.

Previous research conducted by PSEDN in Western Australian Universities with students and staff with a disability or medical condition found:

- The perception was that people would assist them at the time of an emergency.
- People did not know how to assist individuals with a disability or medical condition in emergency evacuations.
- Pre-planning opportunities and consultation with campus users with a disability or medical condition in emergency procedures planning was not occurring at an appropriate level.
- Emergency evacuation information for campuses was not currently available in alternative formats and the dissemination of information was not currently of an appropriate level.

General Information in Emergency Procedures Planning

An emergency procedures plan is a written plan of action for every part of the organisation detailing the actions to be taken when an emergency occurs. An emergency can be defined as a situation that is a threat to the safety of people, property or the environment. It is a high risk situation that if not controlled could lead to disaster.

A general objective of all emergency procedure planning is:
To ensure personnel and public safety in your buildings and on campus by formulating a comprehensive set of procedures and a training program for all staff and students to ensure that, in the event of an emergency, safe evacuation of all staff, students, building occupants and visitors will be carried out.

To achieve this general objective the emergency plan should be:

- Simple and easy to understand.
- Highly flexible and functional.
- Comprehensive.
- Written.
- Widely disseminated – available and in accessible formats.
- Tested and practiced by all members of the campus.
- Reviewed and updated annually.

(Borak & Silverstein, 1999; Edmond, 1999; Gaade, 2000; Hallett, 1999; Mansdorf, 2000; Western Australian Fire Brigades Board, n.d.)

An emergency procedures plan provides a structured response methodology with well trained and well equipped personnel; **it saves lives and saves money** (Gaade, 2000). A good plan is a living document that is revisited on a regular basis including a new risk assessment to take into account changes. An emergency procedures plan should be tailored and include procedures that provide a framework for fast action. The first step in designing an emergency procedures plan is risk assessment (Mansdorf, 2000). Risk assessment involves contacting many stakeholders, identifying hazards, the probability of occurrence and the scale of consequences. Following this planners need to identify and prioritise those types of emergencies that need to be planned for and in what order. When organisations create generic 'all hazards' plans, each department needs to create a set of related procedures that will allow the plan to be put into effect

(Gaade, 2000). On university campuses this could include the collection of information about each building, the operational features that are specific to that building, for example laboratories, personnel and protective systems. Every person within the organisation with emergency management duties needs to know the basics of what other departments are doing.

Types of Emergencies

Emergency Response

- Technology
- Personnel Related and Man Made Threats
- Environmental Damage
- Weather and Related Natural Disasters
- Workplace Fires
- Chemical Spills
- Hazardous Materials
- Vehicle Accidents

Benefits of Implementing an Emergency Procedures Plan

- Minimises the level of risk to property and environment as a result of an emergency situation.
- Identifies the resources – people, equipment, information and knowledge necessary to ensure that when used effectively minimises the risk of disaster.
- Empowers employees and students to handle emergency situations and increases awareness of the ramifications if procedures are not upheld.
- Reduces the risk of injury and/or loss of life to employees, students and visitors to the campus.
- Reduces the risk of payment from compensation and fines.
- Minimises public relations issues.
- Reduces insurance costs.
- Workplace hazard learning occurs with increased knowledge on processes, equipment and the environment.
- Complies with legal requirements of duty of care under Occupational Health and Safety legislation.

(Bechtel, Hansberry & Gray-Brown, 2000; Borak & Silverstein, 1999; Edmond, 1999; Hallett, 1999).

Steps for Developing an Emergency Procedures Plan

Step 1: Planning

Identify High Consequence Risk



Check Legislation and Other Requirements



List Information Requirements



Consultative Meeting – Discuss Requirements



Prepare First Draft – Program, Procedures, Plans



Circulate for Comment – Record, Adjust, Document



Step 2: Putting into Action

Training/Simulations



Step 3: Follow Up

Debriefing Sessions – Record



Adjust Training – Including Induction



Step 4: Sign Off

Review Monitor and Review

Planning Considerations

Detection

The detection of emergencies, such as fires and gas leaks, is usually achieved by automatic systems installed in buildings, which do not require human intervention. If human notification intervention is required the following point needs to be considered:

- Height of alarms if human intervention is required to raise the alarm and consideration of the strength and dexterity required in activating the alarm (Juillet & Bukowski, 1995).

The detection of other emergencies such as civil disorder, bomb threat or earthquake may require the use of the telephone.

The following point could be considered:

- The height of emergency telephones or the availability of alternative means of alerting people to the threat.

Notification

Notification is the process of informing occupants of a building that an emergency exists and some action is required; in most cases that action is to evacuate.

- Notification is usually accomplished by audible devices that are effective for all, with the exception of people with a hearing impairment. In buildings equipped with Early Warning and Intercommunication System (EWIS) visual warning devices can be installed in conjunction with audible devices to increase effectiveness (Juillet & Bukowski, 1995).
- Evacuation may involve relocation to safe areas within a building or phased evacuation by floor or area to prevent overloading of stairways. Information, on how to proceed, is more effectively communicated through audible means and is usually the most effective. For people with a hearing impairment the use of flashing textural displays on television or computer monitors located throughout the building is an option. An alternative is the use of portable devices, such as vibrating pagers connected to the EWIS (Juillet & Bukowski, 1995).
- The visual check that Wardens (during daylight hours) and security (after hours) conduct of the building is of prime importance. It will ensure that **all** staff and students have been notified and evacuated.

Movement

People with a disability, medical condition or temporary condition can be limited by their ability to evacuate quickly and independently during an emergency and may require support. The following suggestions need to be considered in the planning process:

- Identify potential candidates in need of support during an evacuation, however, have an awareness that there will always be someone who requires support in the event of an emergency evacuation but may not have recognised their own need for assistance prior to this emergency evacuation.
- Once individuals have been identified, consultation with these individuals about their specific needs, how assistance can be best provided, methods of accommodation and the selection of appropriate assistive devices will need to occur.
- All staff and students should have access to training in evacuation procedures and should be aware of: how to identify the Wardens; who can be asked for assistance; how to proceed in an emergency; the evacuation routes, and assembly areas.
- After hours personnel who assume the positions of the emergency control organisation and are responsible for ensuring the evacuation of buildings in an emergency require training in the assistance techniques.

Discussion Points for Planning Considerations for Evacuation Procedures

These points could be used as a starting point to a discussion on the issues involved in emergency planning procedures.

Planning Issues for Discussion

- Q. How could campus users who need support and their individual requirements in an emergency situation be identified?**
- R. Utilise the Disability Support Officer to provide a profile of student body needs and keep the information updated on an annual or semester basis by linking it to the student census data. Consultation with Student and Staff Disability Advisory or Reference groups on campus regarding the emergency evacuation plans and procedures, and for the appropriateness of the plans in relation to the campus.
- Q. Is the emergency evacuation plan compliant with federal and state legislation and has it taken into consideration Australian Standards?**
- R. Check relevant legislation including: Commonwealth Employment Act, Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act, Australian Standards in particular AS3745-1995, Australian Buildings Codes Board and the Occupational Safety and Health legislation for the relevant State or Territory. The location where this information can be sourced is contained in the reference section of this guide.
- Q. Where can we find current techniques and information that apply to our campus requirements when developing the emergency evacuation plan?**
- R. Consult with emergency fire services training division in your State or Territory for appropriateness of the evacuation techniques and response times to establish evacuation needs for individuals with mobility impairments from multi-storey buildings. Consult local services regarding emergency disaster planning in your state and community, and organisations such as the State Emergency Service.

Q. How could the planning committee investigate the possible availability and use of equipment to assist in an evacuation, such as signage and evacuation chairs, and how could the minimum and maximum standard requirements be established?

R. Consultation with the Disability Support Officer and people with disabilities using the campus. Other advisory disability groups in your state may have useful information regarding assistance techniques such as the Blind Association, Paraplegic-Quadriplegic Association, Independent Living Centre, and the Australian Hearing Association. See the resource and reference section of this guide for contact details of disability advisory groups.

Q. How many of the members of the university staff hold current first aid certificates and are able to assist in an emergency?

R. The minimum recommended amount is 10% of staff. However, a proposal for a minimum of 20% of staff to be trained in first aid was made to allow for absences due to sickness, vacation or other job duties that remove trained persons from their usual work environment (Minter, 1992). Universities could encourage at least 20% of their staff per building to have current first aid certificates. Qualified first aid persons need to be able to be easily identified in the event of an emergency. The location of qualified first aid persons could be achieved by signage on office doors. The wearing of green vests or helmets during an emergency situation would assist in the identification of first aiders.

Q. When designing a new building or refurbishing buildings on campus what features could be incorporated that would accommodate the needs of people with a disability or medical condition during an emergency evacuation situation?

R. The concept of a place of refuge (Fire Safety Evacuation Stations) has been introduced to provide a protective evacuation station for people unable to evacuate. It is a safe area where people could wait until rescue personnel can help them leave the building and has signage indicating the area. The places of refuge are required to be made of smoke or fire resistant material, depending upon whether the building has sprinklers or not. It could have a communication system, instructions, emergency lighting and be located adjacent to or with additional space that forms part of the fire stairway which Fire and Rescue Service personnel would use (Juillet

& Bukowski, 1995; Peace, 1999). Signage needs to be in accordance with the Australian Standard 1428.1. It is suggested that signs appear in large print or alternative formats such as Braille and/or symbols, the use of colour and contrast in building signage, using of speaking signs to alert those with a vision impairment of the distance to exits, and height of signage. Adjustments have been suggested by the Australian Building Code Board to assist people with vision impairment, such as ground surface indicator matting to warn people at the top of the stairs etc. There are also suggestions relating to tactile domed buttons on handrails and contrasting strips or treads. Buildings that contain scientific laboratories may require attention to design and construction to ensure ease of access in an emergency evacuation, modification to alarm systems and controls to enable all users to be accommodated. A useful reference for this purpose is 'Accessible Scientific Laboratory Design' (Johnson, 2000).

Training Issues for Discussion

- Q. Who will the emergency evacuation committee recommend to receive training in evacuation procedures and how?**
- R. Training should be available to all staff and students in evacuation procedures, and for Wardens in providing support to people with a disability or medical condition during evacuation. This could be achieved during orientation programs by providing information on who will be able to offer assistance during an emergency, how to identify the Wardens, the first aid person and their roles. Participation of staff and students in regular evacuation drills and repeating evacuation and emergency procedures information in a number of different settings such as orientation, newsletters, updates and emails ensures wide dissemination of the emergency plans. All staff, not just Wardens, need to demonstrate understanding and awareness of emergency procedures so that staff on the scene can provide directions in accordance with procedures. If Security Officers are to assume the roles of Wardens after hours they require training to consider those people with a disability or medical condition.
- Q. How can you assess and how often will you practice the effectiveness of emergency evacuation training in your staff and students?**

- R. Practice evacuation drills of different campus buildings biannually under different conditions such as day and evening. Email quizzes and reminders throughout the year or post training sessions.
- Q. If you recommend training all staff in emergency evacuations how is this going to be communicated to the university staff and does your organisations senate or regulatory body need to endorse the recommendation?**
- R. Prior to recommendations consultation could be sought with staff groups and bodies within the university. Newsletter or announcement from the senate or regulatory body of the university regarding the changes to the roles and responsibilities of staff in emergency evacuation procedures and the training required. Personal communication with all staff who will be required to undertake training and providing details when training sessions will be available and why training is required.

Dissemination of Evacuation Plans

- Q. How could emergency planning information be disseminated to all campus users?**
- R. Provide emergency evacuation information and training using alternative formats such as written text with illustrations, subtext videos, audio, and Braille. Ensure evacuation information has readability. Provide evacuation plans in each room showing the location of the escape routes and assembly areas. Give written step-by-step details of how to proceed from the room to the assembly area and what to do in the emergency situation, the different alarm signals and what they require occupants to do. Provide each staff member with an emergency procedures booklet that outlines the steps to take in different emergency situations. This booklet should be colour coded the same as those used by the Wardens and could be kept close to the phone. As part of the orientation process for a student or staff member with a disability or medical condition, a guided tour could be offered of the campus to show the easiest access to buildings and any emergency related information. This orientation could focus on the layout of the buildings they will use on campus, for example the exits, evacuation routes, assembly areas, areas of refuge and emergency phones.

Emergency Procedures for Staff and Students

Objectives for the Module

- To provide participants with details of emergency procedure plans, including the colour codes for each emergency, if this approach is chosen.
- To provide participants with information on evacuation alert signals and the requirements for each of the stages, fire equipment (types and locations), evacuation routes and assembly areas, the location of further information relating to emergency procedures including wall maps and instructions, and computer maps of accessible pathways if the university has this device available.
- To present participants with information that provides familiarity with emergency procedures as they relate to their place of work or study in the various buildings on campus. This includes details of the actions to be carried out in the event of discovering an emergency situation and information to enable participants to be able to identify the Chief Warden, Floor Wardens and First Aid Warden and the assistance these individuals can offer in an emergency situation.
- To provide participants with information relating to emergency procedures to ensure that they are familiar with their roles and responsibilities in an emergency situation, which may include offering assistance to people with a disability or medical condition.

Presentation of the Module

This module can be integrated into an existing orientation program for staff and students to provide some basic awareness of emergency procedures for all campus users. The Emergency Procedures Module was designed in association with the Specific Types of Disability Module to raise awareness of the potential support needs of people with disabilities in emergency planning and evacuation.

Using overheads and handouts the facilitator introduces the emergency procedure plans as they relate to the university campus. Each university will need to integrate its own existing emergency procedure plans and standard operations into this module, for example each campus will need to insert its own emergency number into the bracketed space [].

Points to discuss include:

- Emergency Procedure Plans for the campus
 - Evacuation
 - Fire
 - Bomb Threat
 - Chemical Spill
 - Civil Disorder
 - Flooding
 - Gas Leak
 - Lift Emergency
 - Medical Emergency
 - Power Failure
 - Seismic Disturbance
 - Storm
 - Violent Person
 - After Hours
- The evacuation alert signals, the different stages (if a two stage evacuation signal) and the actions required.
- The evacuation route and alternative routes, assembly areas and the location of the written evacuation plan in each building (or floor) used by participants.
- What actions to take on the discovery of an emergency situation.
- How to identify the Chief, Floor and First Aid Wardens in any building on campus during an emergency situation.
- The role and responsibilities of lecturers, tutors, general staff and students in an emergency situation.

Approximate time needed for module: 60 minutes

Experiential Learning Activity for Emergency Procedures

The facilitator asks participants to form small teams with other participants who use the same buildings. Hand out pens and paper to participants and ask them to draw a plan of the building that they most frequently use. Emphasise that this exercise is not a test of artistic ability and scale of the drawing is not important. Ask participants to note the exits, the evacuation routes, and the designated assembly areas. It may be necessary to provide participants with visual information of the building floor plans if they are unfamiliar with the buildings or if the university has it available, a computer program with accessible pathways for different buildings. Once teams have completed the exercise encourage a discussion with the whole group on the different evacuation plans for the buildings around the campus and

generate discussion around emergency evacuation, the alarms, the different emergency situations, what to do when faced with an emergency, who to ask for assistance and how to identify them, the roles and responsibilities of each individual person.

Participants could be encouraged to develop their own written individual emergency procedure plans on the following areas: the actions they will take when evacuating the building; the evacuation routes and exits available to them; who they can ask for assistance and what assistance they would require; where they would assemble; and what their responsibilities and roles are in an emergency situation. This could be achieved by designing a small workbook or flip chart that participants could fill in their answers to the areas noted above.

Emergency Procedures for Staff and Students

Reference Materials

Emergency Procedure Plans for the Campus

Each campus will have its own set of emergency procedure plans in compliance with federal and state legislation and their own university senate regulations. This reference material is intended only to serve as a general guide and it is incumbent upon each university to adapt or create their own training module to meet their own requirements. The fire and evacuation information contained in this module is in accordance with the recommended practices of the Western Australian Fire Services.

Note: Insert campus emergency number in the bracketed section [].

Evacuation

The warning of an emergency situation requiring evacuation will be broadcast in the following ways:

1. A two stage audible alarm –
 - a. Stage one ALERT/STANDBY: an interrupted tone indicating that staff/students should standby awaiting the evacuation signal. In some instances it may be bypassed into stage two.
 - b. Stage two EVACUATION: an uninterrupted tone indicating that staff/students should commence evacuation.
2. A floor warden or other member of staff may give a verbal warning.

On hearing building alarm 'ALERT' tone or being advised to prepare for a possible evacuation:

- Remain calm.
- Ensure that persons in your immediate vicinity are aware that they may have to evacuate.
- Collect personal belongings providing they are IMMEDIATELY and SAFELY accessible.

On hearing building alarm 'EVACUATION' tone, being advised to evacuate or it becomes necessary to evacuate:

- Unless directly involved in controlling the emergency or assisting Wardens, immediately leave the building via the most safe direct exit route taking your personal belongings with you – provided it is safe to do so.
- Proceed to the nearest safe assembly area for the building.
- Assist any persons experiencing difficulty with the evacuation; notify the nearest warden of the exact location of people requiring further assistance to evacuate.
- Remain at the assembly area until otherwise instructed.
Note: During the hours of darkness, initially assemble in a well-lit area in the vicinity of the main entrance to the building (providing it is safe to do so).

Fire

Fire Response

In the event of a fire, the person discovering the fire should:

- Alert persons in the vicinity of the fire.
- If the alarms have not activated, ring the Campus Emergency Number [], report the emergency and request Fire Services be called.
- Extinguish the fire ONLY if safe to do so using portable fire fighting equipment.

If the fire is too dangerous to fight then:

- Evacuate the area of danger (use ALL available safe exits).
- Activate break glass alarm (where applicable).
- Turn off ignition sources and gas if applicable and possible.
- Turn on all lights.
- Close all doors and windows after the area has been evacuated (if possible).
- **DO NOT use the lifts.**
- Leave the area by the nearest safe exit and proceed to the designated assembly area.
- Listen to instructions from Wardens.
- Notify Wardens of the location (room number/building) of any people who are injured, unconscious or are unable to evacuate without support.

Bomb Threat

Telephone Bomb Threat

If you receive a bomb threat telephone call:

- Endeavour to obtain as much information as possible about the threat.
- Location of the bomb, for example which building.
- Type of package.
- If possible engage the caller in conversation allowing a trace to be made on the call - do not hang up.
- Raise the alarm by attracting the attention of a passer-by who should:
 - Contact the Campus Emergency Number [] on another telephone.
 - Advise the telephone extension number so that the line can be held open for trace purposes.
- Write down exact wording of the threat.
- Note time of call.
- Complete as much as possible on the bomb threat checklist, which is located near the telephone.
- If asked to evacuate, follow evacuation procedures.

Searches – Where to Start

- Confirm who, where and when to report back to after the search.
- Any areas mentioned in the threat and/or description of what to look for.
- Building exterior.
- All exits.
- Egress routes to assembly area/s.

What to Look For

- Anything that is 'out of place' – that doesn't normally belong where it is.
- Anything that can't be vouched for.
- Anything that looks suspicious or matches the description contained in the threat.

After Search

- Report results back to the Building Warden/Emergency Response Officer. The Campus Emergency Coordinator determines if evacuation is appropriate subject to threat information and circumstances.

If Something Suspicious is Discovered:

- **DO NOT TOUCH** the object, clear the area and prevent other persons from going near the object.
- Note the appearance, sound and exact location of the object – draw a simple diagram of the location for the emergency services.
- Tell the Building Warden/Emergency Response Officer – **DO NOT** use two-way radios or mobile telephones.

If the alarm signal sounds followed by the evacuation signal:

- Be ready to evacuate.
- Open all doors and windows before leaving (if possible).
- Take all personal belongings.
- Proceed to a designated assembly area.
- Listen to instructions from the Wardens.
- Notify Wardens of the location (room number/building) of any people who require assistance to evacuate.

Chemical Spill

Initial response:

- DO NOT enter suspect area.
- Evacuate immediate vicinity – move persons to well ventilated area.
- Notify the Campus Emergency Number [].
- Turn off any ignition sources.

Civil Disorder

Initial response:

- Restrict access and notify persons in the immediate vicinity.
- Withdraw persons to secure areas.
- Notify the Campus Emergency Number [].
- Secure critical records/valuables.
- Remove potential missiles/weapons.

Flooding

Initial response:

- Evacuate flooded area.
- Notify the Campus Emergency Number [].
- Isolate electricity source to the flooded area, if possible.

Gas Leak

Initial response:

- Evacuate immediate vicinity – move persons to well ventilated area.
- Turn off ignition sources and isolate supply, if possible.
- Notify the Campus Emergency Number [].

Lift Emergency

Initial response:

- Reassure occupants.
- DO NOT attempt to release persons.
- Notify the Campus Emergency Number [].
- Await arrival of the lift contractor.

Medical Emergency

Initial response:

- Notify the Campus Emergency Number [].
- Provide first aid if qualified.
- Notify ambulance if required (check university campus policy as the emergency response team may coordinate ambulance contact).

Power Failure

Initial response:

- Notify the Campus Emergency Number [].
- Reassure occupants.
- Check for possible fire.
- If the power disruption is to last longer than 1 hour check the campus regulations for policy relating to classes in progress – students should be instructed to remain seated until a decision to close teaching areas has been made by the appropriate Manager and in consultation with the Occupational Safety and Health Co-ordinator.

Seismic Disturbance

Initial response:

- Protect yourself from falling debris – take cover under a desk, table, door arch or against an inside wall. Keep well away from glass and external walls.
- No ignition sources.
- Extinguish fires.
- Render assistance to those around you that require it.
- Notify the Campus Emergency Number [].
- Evacuate the building – be careful of hazards such as broken glass.

Storm

Initial response:

- Take cover inside buildings.
- Close doors and windows.
- Secure any objects outside that could become airborne in strong wind gusts and cause damage.
- DO NOT use electrical equipment during an intense electrical storm – including computers and telephones.

Violent or Threatening Person

Initial response:

- Notify the Campus Emergency Number [].
- DO NOT argue with the person.
- Move away from the person and alert others to move away also, avoid sudden moves.
- Make it easy for the person to leave and DO NOT surround the person.
- DO NOT attempt to physically subdue the person.
- If the person is armed, withdraw to a secure room with a telephone and lock the door.
- Make a mental note of the person's description.

After Hours

After hours the initial response to an emergency situation:

- Ensure persons are moved away from immediate danger.
- Raise the alarm by contacting the appropriate emergency service by dialling 0 first to establish an outside line then '000' (check the university standing orders for correct procedure and order).

- Notify the Campus Emergency Number [].
- A security officer will assume the role of Emergency Response Coordinator, and will proceed to the scene and assist in controlling or containing the emergency and initiating an evacuation if appropriate.
- In the event of an evacuation occupants should leave via the nearest safe exit and initially assemble in a well-lit area at a safe distance away from the main entrance of the building. Remain there (providing it is safe to do so) and await instructions from the security officer or emergency service personnel.
- Staff will ensure that all students stay together until it is determined to continue lectures or classes.

Evacuation Signals

All the major buildings on campus are equipped with Emergency Warning Systems that are capable of sounding Alert and/or Evacuation Warning tones, these tones and their associated actions are as follows:

- **ALERT SIGNAL (BEEP-BEEP SOUND)** – Secure Work Area – Be Ready to Leave – Move to Internal Assembly Area
- **EVACUATION SIGNAL (WHOO-WHOO SOUND)** – Leave by the Nearest Safe Exit and go to External Assembly Area (letter/number) Unless Otherwise Directed

Other buildings on the campus, such as the Student Accommodation Village, are equipped with audible alarm bells or battery operated smoke alarms that do not automatically inform the Fire and Rescue Service.

Evacuation Routes and Assembly Areas

In the event of an evacuation, all building occupants should assemble at the nearest safe assembly area nominated for that building. The evacuation routes for each building should be displayed, as a minimum, on each floor showing the evacuation routes and the assembly areas. At the upper limit, the evacuation instructions in a step-by-step approach with the map of the evacuation routes and assembly areas could be displayed in each room. Another suggestion is that all office and building occupants could be provided with an individual emergency card detailing each emergency procedure and the actions to take with the page tab colour coded using the same standards as the Wardens, for

example red for fire, orange for evacuation, purple for bomb threat, and black for armed aggression.

For staff and students each individual has a responsibility to familiarise themselves with their location and be aware of:

- The most direct means of exiting the building.
- The location of the exits.
- The nominated assembly area for the buildings they frequent.
- The location of any portable fire fighting equipment within the building and its application.

Discovering an Emergency Situation

If you discover an emergency:

1. Attract the attention of other people in the immediate vicinity. **DO NOT** shout or cause panic.
2. Raise the alarm by contacting a member of the Emergency Control Team by dialling the emergency number of the campus [] (check the campus standard operations to ensure that your campus has the same number after hours and the same procedure).
3. Carefully describe:
 - The location of the emergency i.e. building, room.
 - The type of emergency, i.e. fire, chemical spill, suspicious object.
 - Your name and extension number.
4. Await instructions from your Chief Warden and if the **ALERT SIGNAL** sounds (BEEP-BEEP Sound), followed by the **EVACUATION SIGNAL** (WHOO-WHOO Sound), follow the evacuation procedures as outlined on the evacuation plans for the appropriate emergency.

Identifying the Emergency Control Organisation Members

Structure

Structure of the Emergency Control Organisation

(8.30 am to 4.00pm Monday – Friday, excluding Public Holidays):

Campus Emergency Coordinator



Emergency Response Coordinator



Building Wardens ← — — [Communications Officer]



Floor/Area Wardens

Note: Deputies are designated for all positions

Other Times: Outside the above times a Security Officer will assume the role of Emergency Response Coordinator and be responsible for coordinating the initial response to an emergency.

Warden Identification

The wearing of different coloured helmets or vests, which are usually marked with the wearer's title and area number, identifies Wardens.

- **Chief and Deputy Wardens** **White**
- **Floor Wardens** **Yellow**
- **Floor Warden Deputies** **Red**
- **Communications Officer** **White**
- **First Aid Officers** **Green**

Roles and Responsibilities

Every staff member and student has a responsibility to familiarise themselves with their location and be aware of:

- Emergency Exits/Fire Doors/Fire Stairs
 - Know the location of ALL emergency exits in the building they frequently use.
 - Exits, stairs and doors must be CLEAR and UNOBSTRUCTED.
 - Fire doors must NOT be PROPPED or WEDGED OPEN.
- The most direct means of exit from the building they use.
- The nominated assembly area for that building.
- The location of any portable fire fighting equipment within the building and its application (universities may have guidelines stating who is competent in using fire equipment and provide training).
- Exit lighting – should be ON at all times.
- Awareness of emergency procedure and plans for various emergency situations and how the procedures apply to the building they use on campus.

The roles and responsibilities of staff and students on hearing the building alarm '**ALERT**' tone or being advised to prepare for a possible evacuation are:

- Remain calm.
- Ensure that persons in your immediate vicinity are aware that they may have to evacuate.
- Collect personal belongings providing they are **IMMEDIATELY** and **SAFELY** accessible.

On hearing building alarm '**EVACUATION**' tone, being advised to evacuate or if it becomes necessary to evacuate:

- Unless directly involved in controlling the emergency or assisting the Wardens, immediately leave the building.
- Take your personal belongings with you – provided it is safe to do so.
- Proceed to the nearest safe assembly area.
- Assist any persons experiencing difficulty with the evacuation – notify the nearest warden if additional assistance is required.
- Remain at the assembly area until otherwise instructed.

In the event of an evacuation, staff with classes in progress are responsible for overseeing the orderly movement of their students to a safe assembly area and for reporting any missing persons to the Building Warden or Emergency Response Coordinator.

Staff are responsible for notifying the nearest warden of students who require assistance to evacuate and their location. It is the role of all staff and students to be responsible for their own well-being; and in encouraging a collegiate environment both staff and students are responsible for reporting any emergency situation on the campus.

Assistance Techniques for Individuals with Specific Types of Disability

Objectives for the Module

- To assist participants to develop their understanding of how emergency situations may limit the ability of people with a disability or medical condition to respond and evacuate independently.
- To ensure participants are able to recognise the need to offer assistance to people with disabilities or medical conditions.
- For participants to be provided with information on how to assist people with a disability or medical condition and the appropriate techniques that can be utilised in emergency situations.
- For participants to be provided with the opportunity to practice assistance techniques that may be required in emergency situations.

Presentation of the Module

The 'Specific Types of Disability Module' is a prerequisite to this Assistance Techniques Module as it develops the participants' understanding of the types of disability.

The facilitator asks participants to discuss, or recall (if discussed earlier in the 'Specific Types of Disability Module') their experiences of working with people with disabilities or medical conditions in any emergency situation or critical incident.

Using overheads and handouts the facilitator introduces the assistance techniques to support the different requirements of individuals with a disability or medical condition in an emergency evacuation.

Points to discuss include:

- Assistance techniques suitable for specific types of disability
 - Intellectual Impairment or Learning Disability
 - Medical Conditions
 - Physical Impairment
 - Psychiatric Impairment
 - Sensory Impairment

- The need to offer assistance to individuals in an emergency situation and listen to the individuals' requirements, as they are the best source of information on how to support their requirements.

*Approximate time needed for module: minimum
60 minutes – 4 hours*

(minimum required for the presentation of techniques and a further 3 hours is required to allow time for all participants to practice techniques).

*Experiential Learning Activity for Assistance Techniques for
Specific Types of Disability (Optional)*

A number of role-plays could be conducted using a stable auxiliary of the facilitator and prepared scripts. Emergency situations requiring evacuation could be designed to reflect the different buildings on campus, for example the top floor of a multi-storey building such as the library. Depending on the size of the training group, smaller teams could role-play different scenarios to the whole group to identify the support needs of different disability types and the specific assistance techniques that may be useful in evacuations. The scenarios can be given to participants as handouts. Instructions for the stable auxiliary, who will play the role of the person with a disability, on how they should present themselves to the participants, are given as a guide in this module; however, the facilitator may wish to modify the scripts to include more detail. Alternatively, a person with a disability who has experience in training situations may be employed as the stable auxiliary.

Scenario 1

The emergency alarm system has activated in the library (or another multi-storey campus building) and an audible warning message has asked all persons to evacuate. You are one of the Wardens for the top floor of the library building. The students and staff in the area are leaving via the designated emergency exits and while carrying out your visual check of the area you notice Dave sitting reading a book in a study cubicle with his back to you. You speak as you approach Dave and ask him to leave the building but he does not lift his head and appears not to have heard your instruction to exit. You surmise that Dave may have a hearing impairment.

What actions will you take next to alert Dave to the emergency and to offer him assistance to evacuate the building to the assembly area?

Initially, some techniques you may like to consider when offering assistance could include:

- Alert Dave to the emergency – using the lights
- Establish eye contact
- Facial expressions and hand gestures to accompany your verbal instructions
- Using short sentences

Scenario 2

The evacuation alarm has sounded to evacuate the humanities building and there appears to be a fire on the third floor as smoke is starting to fill one of the tutorial rooms at the very end of the corridor. You are an area warden (or a tutor) on the third floor and are assisting the evacuation of staff and students by directing them to the evacuation stairwells and instructing them where the assembly area is located. The corridor is becoming very crowded and noisy but you notice Jane trying to negotiate her way through the milling people and she appears to be finding it difficult to locate her way towards the stairs. As you get closer you notice her white cane.

What actions could you now take to offer assistance to Jane?

Initially, some techniques you may like to consider when offering assistance could include:

- Announce your presence
- Offer assistance and listen to the reply
- Describe the actions required in advance – for example, the route to take to evacuate the building

Scenario 3

The physical science building alarm has sounded as a gas leak has occurred. You are the area warden for the floor. You are aware that one of your fellow colleagues Chris is in his/her office at the end of the corridor and has a medical condition. You are aware Chris has difficulty walking the distance of the corridor, which is required to exit the building and Chris is stood at the doorway of his/her office.

What actions as the area warden can you take to offer assistance to Chris in evacuating the building?

Initially, some techniques you may like to consider when offering assistance could include:

- Offer assistance and listen to the reply
- Check if Chris has his/her medications
- Offer to walk with Chris

Scenario 4

John is your administrative assistant and an avid football player. Last week he turned up to work on crutches after fracturing his ankle during his weekend sporting pursuits. John is able to move around the office easily but is much slower than he usually is without crutches. The evacuation alarm has just sounded in your building and your offices are located on the 3rd level; as no one else is available, the floor warden has asked you to assist John down the stairs to the evacuation assembly area.

What can you do to assist John in leaving the building?

Initially, some techniques you may like to consider when offering assistance could include:

- Offer assistance and listen to the reply
- Allow faster moving evacuees to progress first through the evacuation route
- Act as a buffer between John and passing evacuees

Scenario 5

The campus has experienced a seismic tremor and the damage to the buildings appears to be minor but the emergency control organisation has decided it would be more appropriate to evacuate the buildings in case of further tremors. The evacuation signal sounds and you are an area warden for the social sciences building (or another campus building). Staff and students have taken cover under desks during the tremor and are now evacuating the building. A tutor approaches you explaining that one of her students, Jake, is refusing to leave the area, is very anxious and does not seem to understand the instructions of how and where to evacuate to. You go to the room and find Jake sat underneath his desk appearing very apprehensive and frightened.

What techniques can you use in offering Jake support and assistance to evacuate the building?

Initially, some techniques you may like to consider when offering assistance could include:

- Deliver instructions in a concise and clear way using simple steps
- Offer reassurance and emotional support
- Offer to escort Jake from the building

Scenario 6

The evacuation signal has sounded in the chancellery building (or another campus building) after a bomb threat and the discovery of a suspicious package. You are the area warden for a section and while doing a visual check of your area discover Jo standing by an evacuation map saying that he/she is having trouble trying find the exit and assembly area as he/she is unfamiliar with the building and keeps getting lost. You are aware that when the alarm first sounded you gave Jo verbal instructions along with the other people in the vicinity.

What techniques could you use to assist and support Jo to evacuate the building and successfully arrive at the assembly area?

Initially, some techniques you may like to consider when offering assistance could include:

- Breakdown instructions and information into small steps
- Deliver instructions slowly and clearly
- Use visual reinforcement with your instructions

Scenario 7

You are the floor warden on the middle level a multi-storey building (such as the humanities or social sciences building). The building is 'H' shaped with small lecture theatres, tutorial rooms and offices along the corridors. The evacuation signal has sounded as smoke has been detected on the top floor. Your area is being evacuated when a lecturer approaches you to say she has a visiting lecturer, Alex, who uses a wheelchair and is unable to evacuate because the lifts in the building cannot be used. You locate Alex waiting by the evacuation stairwell door.

What actions should you take next to offer assistance to Alex in evacuating the building?

Initially, some techniques you may like to consider when offering assistance could include:

- Offer assistance and listen to the reply
- Check if horizontal evacuation is an option
- Move to a designated area of refuge

Scenario 8

Annie works for the campus Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance Department (or another department on campus). Annie also has an intellectual impairment. Annie has been working on the internal courtyard garden in the library (or another building on campus with an internal courtyard). The evacuation signal sounds as a fire has been detected in one of the offices in the building. You are the area warden closest to the courtyard area and notice that Annie has not left her work and appears unsure of what she should do about the evacuation signal.

What actions can you take to offer assistance to Annie in evacuating the building?

Initially, some techniques you may like to consider when offering assistance could include:

- Deliver directions slowly and clearly
- Breakdown directions and information into small simple steps
- Check for understanding of your instructions

Scripts for Role-Play Actors

Scenario 1: Dave

Dave has a severe hearing loss and is unable to hear any sounds including human speech or the emergency evacuation alarm. Dave lip-reads and communicates using sign language or writing messages to non-signing people. Dave does speak but is sometimes not easily or clearly understood particularly when placed in stressful or difficult situations. Dave has been reading books in a study cubicle on the top floor of the multi-storey library when the emergency evacuation alarm sounds and he is unaware of the evacuation.

Scenario 2: Jane

Jane has a vision impairment and can see dark/light distinctions and uses a cane to move around campus, which she normally does independently and without difficulty. Jane is familiar with the building and is aware of the location of emergency exits and the assembly area. The evacuation alarm has sounded and smoke is present on the third floor. Jane is on the third floor of the building and is trying to make her way through the very crowded and noisy corridors to the evacuation stairs but is finding it difficult as she is continually being bumped and is becoming disorientated. Jane requests a guide to assist her in negotiating the corridor and evacuation route.

Scenario 3: Chris

Chris could be a male or female actor who could have any medical condition; examples could be asthma or another respiratory condition, heart or circulatory conditions, arthritis or even the advance stages of pregnancy (if the actor is female). Chris experiences difficulty in walking any long distance such as the length of the corridor due to breathlessness and reduced stamina. Chris is in his/her office at the end of the long corridor in the physical science building when the evacuation alarm has sounded due to a gas leak. Chris is standing at the doorway of the office.

Scenario 4: John

John is the administrative assistant in a third floor office and he is an active fit person who has fractured an ankle in his football pursuits a week ago. John is using crutches to move around the office, which is a new experience for him. John needs some assistance to negotiate the stairs to evacuate the building after the evacuation alarm sounds.

Scenario 5: Jake

The campus has experienced a seismic tremor and Jake who was in a tutorial class at the time took cover along with his fellow students under their desks. The evacuation signal has sounded for the building but Jake who has a psychiatric disability is too frightened to leave the safety of his desk despite the tutor trying to explain the need to evacuate the building. Jake is very anxious and frightened and does not want to leave the room.

Scenario 6: Jo

Jo is in the chancellery building after an appointment when the evacuation alarm sounds. Jo is instructed along with a number of other people in the area to exit the building down the stairs and move to an assembly area. Jo gets lost in the process and cannot find his/her way out of the building. Jo has a learning disability and finds it difficult to process new information and follow instructions both verbal and written. This is exacerbated in difficult or stressful situations. Jo has found an evacuation map for the floor and is trying to read it to find his/her way out of the building.

Scenario 7: Alex

Alex is a visiting lecturer to the campus and has been giving a lecture on the second level of a three storey 'H' shaped building. Alex uses a wheelchair, as he/she is unable to walk due to a spinal injury. The lecturer who normally takes the class has ensured that Alex is near the evacuation stairwell and has notified the floor warden of Alex's location but has gone to ensure that all the students have evacuated to the assembly area.

Scenario 8: Annie

Annie has an intellectual impairment and is employed by the campus Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance Department. Annie has been working in an internal courtyard garden in the library (or another campus building with an internal courtyard) by herself when the evacuation signal sounds. Annie hears the alarm but keeps working as she has to finish this section before her supervisor comes back to check and she doesn't know what she is supposed to do, where to go or how to get out of this building. Annie is worried that she will be reprimanded if she leaves her work unfinished and that her supervisor won't know where she is.

Assistance Techniques

Reference Materials

Intellectual Impairment or Learning Disability

Individuals with an intellectual impairment may have difficulty in recognising an emergency and may experience difficulty in responding to complex instructions. Individuals with a learning disability may experience difficulty receiving and processing the emergency evacuation information or instructions. When offering assistance to people with a learning disability the following should be considered:

- State there is a problem and they need to leave the building.
- Ask the individual what assistance they require; offer to escort the individual through the evacuation route to the assembly area.
- Visual perception of written instructions or signs may be confused.
- Breakdown directions and information into small simple steps.
- Deliver directions slowly, clearly and with visual reinforcement such as simple signals and/or by drawing graphic symbols.
- Be patient and check for understanding by asking them to tell you what they will do now.
- Do not belittle or patronise when speaking or acting towards these individuals. The individual's ability to understand speech is often more developed than their vocabulary (Juillet & Bukowski, 1995).

Medical Conditions

Individuals with medical conditions may be less obvious than people with other types of impairments and there is a large range of medical conditions that may impact on an individual's ability to evacuate independently in an emergency. Emergency situations may exacerbate medical conditions for an individual whilst not affecting others in the same area. The following points should be considered:

- Offer assistance and allow the individual to explain what support they require.
- Check with individuals that they have their medications before leaving the building, for example asthma or heart medications.
- Offer to walk alongside the individual and be of support both emotionally and physically.
- Frequent rest periods may be required due to reduced stamina.
- Stay with the individual to reassure them after reaching the assembly area; ensure the individual has somewhere to rest and that no further assistance is required (Juillet & Bukowski, 1995).
- Notify the first aid personnel or emergency services if medical assistance is required.

Psychiatric Impairment

Individuals with a psychiatric impairment are not always immediately as obvious as other types of disability as requiring support to evacuate during an emergency situation. Offer assistance and allow the individual to explain what support they require, be aware that individuals with a psychiatric impairment may experience difficulty concentrating, managing stress and initiating personal contact. In addition the following points should be considered:

- Deliver instructions in a concise and clear way using simple steps.
- Offer to guide the individual through the evacuation route and stay with the individual in the assembly area.
- Offer reassurance and emotional support.
- When giving instructions try to stay calm, do not yell or panic. Be patient.
- Repeat instructions and check for understanding (Juillet & Bukowski, 1995).

Physical Impairment

When offering assistance to individuals with a physical impairment allow them to explain what support they require, as they are the experts in knowing their own requirements. However, the following points should be considered:

- Allow faster independent evacuees to progress first through the evacuation route, followed by less quickly paced independent evacuees and then evacuees requiring support.
- Individuals using crutches or canes may be able to negotiate stairs independently, allow the individual to grasp the handrail with one hand and use their other hand for the crutch. It is best not to interfere with the person's movement, offer to carry the extra crutch and if stairs are crowded act as a buffer between the individual and passing evacuees.
- Wheelchair users (check with the local fire authorities on recommended evacuation procedures).
 - Move to designated areas of refuge, if the stairway is used as the refuge area allow other evacuees to exit stairway prior to entering.
 - a. Notify the floor warden regarding the location of evacuees' and type of assistance required, who will then convey this information to the Fire and Rescue Services. Wardens or person delegated by the warden are to stay with individuals who are unable to evacuate.
 - b. Await emergency services personnel's arrival to evacuate.
 - c. Use of lifts: Lifts are only generally prohibited in a fire or other situations that may affect the integrity of the building. In other emergency situations e.g. bomb threat the lifts may be able to be utilized. Use of the lifts in an emergency evacuation is usually undertaken with the supervision of Fire Service Personnel, or other qualified personnel unless the lifts are purpose built to withstand emergency conditions.
 - If phased or horizontal evacuation is more appropriate, evacuate across to another part of the building or a separate building to an area of safety. The lifts may be used to exit if the other building or area is unaffected by the emergency.
 - If the policy is to evacuate all building occupants, ask the individual with the disability to give instructions on how they would like to be assisted. A number of evacuation devices and techniques are available but will require training and regular practice by the emergency control team. In Western Australia the Fire and Rescue Service recommend that unless the individual is in immediate danger from smoke or fire that Wardens await the arrival of the emergency services personnel

who will coordinate the evacuation of the individual in their own wheelchair.

- If an individual using a wheelchair must be evacuated the following technique may be used but it is noted that the potential for injury is great to both the evacuee and those assisting in the evacuation. To assist in moving a wheelchair down the stairs, stand behind the chair grasping the pushing handles. Tilt the chair backwards until balance is achieved. Descend front forward, stand one step above the chair keeping your centre of gravity low and let the back wheels gradually lower to the next step. **Keep the chair tilted back.** If possible, have another person assist by holding the frame of the wheelchair and pushing in from the front, but **do not lift the chair**, as this places more weight on the individual behind the chair (Juillet & Bukowski, 1995).

Sensory Impairment

Hearing

To support a person with a hearing impairment during an emergency the following techniques may assist:

- Flick lights on and off to gain the persons attention when entering the area.
- Establish eye contact so the person can see your face.
- Face the light so your face can be seen, do not turn away while trying to communicate.
- Use facial expressions or hand gestures as visual cues.
- Check to see if you have been understood, repeat if necessary, rephrase message or use a different word order if repetition unsuccessful. Use short sentences as these are more easily understood.
- Offer pen and paper. Write down the nature of the emergency and the nearest evacuation route for example, FIRE, go out the rear door, turn to the right and down stairs NOW!
- Write slowly and let the individual read the message as you write. Written communication may be important if you are unable to understand the individuals' speech.
- Do not allow others to interrupt while conveying the emergency information to the individual.
- Be patient, the individual may have difficulty comprehending the urgency of the message.

- Offer to escort the individual through the evacuation route to the assembly area.
- Provide the individual with a flashlight for signalling their location in the event of separation from other evacuees and to facilitate lip reading in the dark (Juillet & Bukowski, 1995).
Vision When offering to assist persons with a vision impairment the following points should be considered:
 - Announce your presence; speak out when entering the area.
 - Speak naturally and directly to the individual, do not shout.
 - Offer assistance, allow the individual to explain what assistance they require.
 - Describe the action to be taken in advance, e.g. what route to take to evacuate the building.
 - If the individual requests a guide:
 - Let the individual grasp your arm.
 - Allow them to explain how and what you should do to guide them.
 - The individual may choose to walk slightly behind you to gauge your body reactions to obstacles, be sure to mention stairs, doorways, narrow passages, ramps or other obstacles.
 - When guiding to a seat, place the person's hand on the back of the chair.
 - Suggestions when assisting owners of Guide Dogs:
 - Explain the nature of the emergency and offer assistance, allow the individual to explain what they require. Individuals who are comfortable using their Guide Dog to navigate to safety should be allowed to do so.
 - Plan for the Guide Dog to be evacuated with the owner.
 - Do not touch or offer the Guide Dog food without the permission of the owner.
 - When the Guide Dog is wearing its harness, it is on duty. If you are requested to take the Guide Dog while assisting the individual, it is recommended that you hold the leash and not the dog's harness.
 - If there are unfamiliar obstacles, debris for example, or the Guide Dog requires a break, the warden or volunteer should offer their arm and allow the individual to instruct them on the assistance they require.
 - Emergency control team members require training in how to respond to a confused, panicked or wounded service animal. A Guide Dog is trained to protect its owner and will respond accordingly to perceived threats (Juillet & Bukowski, 1995).

Self-Advocacy in Emergency Situations

Objectives for the Module

- To raise participants' awareness of how an emergency situation may limit their ability to respond and evacuate independently.
- To raise participants' awareness of the type of support they may require in an emergency situation.
- For participants to develop their own plan of action to manage an emergency event including identifying who will be able to assist them and being able to communicate what support they require.
- To provide an opportunity for participants to practice their emergency evacuation plan in a safe environment.

Presentation of the Module

Ideally, the facilitator will have prior experience in training people in self development skills and have an understanding of the support needs of individuals with a disability or medical condition. This module is designed to be supplementary to the 'Emergency Procedures for Staff and Students' training module to allow people with a disability or medical condition to be prepared and be able to take control during an emergency event. The facilitator may choose to present information from the 'Emergency Procedures' module to participants who have not previously undertaken that module including details of emergency procedure plans, evacuation routes and alert signals.

The facilitator asks participants to discuss what experiences they may have already had in any emergency situation or critical incident, the types of support they required and the techniques that were helpful or not.

Using overheads and handouts the facilitator introduces the concept of planning for emergency events by examining the types of support that the individual may require and how they will achieve this. The facilitator may utilise information from the 'Assistance Techniques' training module to allow participants to consider techniques that may be helpful to them.

Points to discuss include:

- Different types of emergency situations.
- The actions required by participants to respond to an evacuation and what will happen during an evacuation, for

example when lifts can not be used how and when will individuals using wheelchairs be evacuated.

- Evacuation routes in buildings used by participants.
- Who can be asked for assistance – how to identify the Wardens.
- What support does the individual require?
- How to develop your own action plan

Approximate time required for module: minimum 60 minutes – 2 hours

(minimum required for the discussion of support requirements in emergency evacuation situations and a further one hour is required to allow time for all participants to practice and develop their own plan of action for emergency situations).

Experiential Learning Activity to Develop Self-Advocacy in Emergency Situations

The facilitator asks participants to examine the emergency exits, evacuation routes and assembly areas of the buildings they use on campus. Participants should note any potential problems they may encounter in evacuating the building when the areas are crowded and busy such as would be encountered when the evacuation alarm sounds. The facilitator may need to provide participants with visual information of the building floor plans or map of accessible pathways. Depending on the size of the training group participants may work in small teams with others who use the same buildings or have similar types of disability or medical condition. The facilitator asks participants to discuss the areas of potential difficulty they have identified as a large group.

The facilitator now asks participants to work in small groups to identify some of the support needs they may require to successfully evacuate the buildings and overcome any of the previously identified problems from the last exercise. Ask participants to discuss in their small groups how they would ask for assistance, who would they ask and how would they explain what they required. A handout with questions for the groups could be used to facilitate points for discussion. When the activity is complete discuss the findings as a large group including points such as asking for assistance, explaining requirements, the role of floor Wardens and how they are identified.

The identified support needs for each individual could be recorded in their own small workbook or flip chart along with the building and evacuation maps so each participant would have their own emergency evacuation procedures plan.

Role Plays

Participants should form small teams (if the training group is large enough) and using the buildings and situations identified earlier, practice how they would communicate their requirements in a variety of emergency situations (for example, fire, seismic disturbance, gas leak, bomb threat or power failure) to:

- a. The floor warden or
- b. To someone offering assistance.

The emergency evacuation role-play should also consider the after hours procedures of the campus. The facilitator or stable auxiliaries of the facilitator such as the staff of the university campus who are the actual floor Wardens in buildings could play the role of warden.

Role play different contingencies such as:

- a. What would happen if the person assisting you doesn't follow your instructions or doesn't understand what you require?
- b. What if you are having difficulty communicating the assistance you require in a stressful situation – how can you plan to overcome this?
- c. What will you do if the person assisting takes control and their behaviour is unhelpful? For example, turning off the batteries to your electric wheelchair, or if you need a guide, tries to take your arm and drag you through the evacuation route.

Self-Advocacy in Emergency Situations Reference Materials

In an emergency situation some types of support I may need to evacuate may include:

- I would like someone to guide me through the evacuation route to the assembly area.
- I would like the directions on how to evacuate the building broken down into small simple steps.
- I would like the directions delivered more slowly, repeated or rephrased and using signals or by drawing graphic symbols.
- Check with me that I know what steps to take next and I know where I am going but don't speak to me in a patronising way.
- Check that I have my medications or anything I need before leaving the building, for example asthma or heart medications.
- Walk alongside me to support me.
- I need frequent stops for a rest.
- I would like someone to stay with me, as I may need some further assistance in the assembly area.
- I need the first aid personnel or emergency services notified, as I require medical assistance.
- I would like to be reassured.
- I would like someone to assist me down the stairs by carrying my crutch and buffering me against all the other passing evacuees.
- I need to move to an area of refuge as I cannot evacuate down the stairs but I need the warden notified so the Fire and Rescue Service know my location and can evacuate me.
- To evacuate I need assistance to be transferred or lifted from my wheelchair – detail the instructions of how people assisting will achieve this. See alternative to evacuate people in wheelchairs down stairs in Assistance Techniques section – 2.4.
- I need you to gain my attention and maintain eye contact when you are trying to speak to me, as I am not able to hear you.

- I may need to write down what I want or you may need to write down the instructions if I don't understand them.
- I need you to announce your presence in the room, as I cannot see you.
- I need a guide to assist me from the building. I will instruct you on what I need you to do in order to assist me.

Discussion Points for Self-Advocacy in Emergency Situations

These questions are intended to be a starting point for your discussion to consider what your requirement may be in an emergency situation. You will think of further questions related to emergency situations please incorporate them into your discussion.

Q. What assistance may I require to evacuate the buildings I use on campus – do I need any?

R. Think about different emergency situations: Does the evacuation route require movement down stairways? How many flights of stairs would I need to climb down? What if the area was very crowded and busy and other evacuees bumped or knocked you? Would I be able to make it to the assembly area? What if there was smoke in the air?

Q. Who can I ask for assistance and how do I identify them?

R. Floor or deputy floor Wardens are available to assist people during an evacuation and they are identified along with other Wardens by the colour of the helmet or vest they wear.

- Chief and Deputy Wardens White
- Floor Wardens Yellow
- Floor Warden Deputies Red
- Communications Officer White
- First Aid Officers Green

Q. What do I want those offering assistance to do for me?

R. Guide me out of the building, Clear directions, Written directions or instructions, Support to assist my movement down the stairs or to walk with me, Reassurance.

Q. When can I use the lifts in an emergency situation?

R. Use of lifts: Lifts are only generally prohibited in a fire or other situations that may affect the integrity of the building. In other emergency situations, for example a bomb threat the lifts may be able to be utilized. Use of the lifts in an emergency evacuation is usually undertaken with the supervision of Fire Service Staff, or other qualified personnel unless the lifts are purpose built to withstand emergency conditions.

Q. What if I cannot evacuate down the stairway?

R. If phased or horizontal evacuation is more appropriate, evacuate across to another part of the building or a separate building, to an area of safety. The lifts may be used to exit if the other building or area is unaffected by the emergency. Alternatively, notify the floor warden of your location and move to an area of refuge such as a designated stairwell. In Western Australia the Fire and Rescue Service recommend that unless an individual is in immediate danger from smoke or fire that Wardens await the arrival of the emergency services personnel who will coordinate the evacuation of the individual in their own wheelchair.

Q. What are the procedures in place on this campus for emergency evacuation assistance after hours?

R. Each campus will have its own procedures, however, someone is assigned (usually security personnel) who will assume the role of floor Wardens but you may need to consider asking fellow students, tutors or lecturers for assistance, as there will be fewer Wardens available.

4.0

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Other Resources:

Association for the Blind of WA (Inc).

Provides information and advice concerning the provision of access for people with a vision impairment. The association offers assistance in producing written information in alternative formats including large print, computer disc, audiotape and Braille.

Association for the Blind of WA (Inc):

Phone (08) 9311 8202, Fax (08) 9361 8696
 16 Sunbury Road, Victoria Park, WA, 6100.

Australian Legislation online www.austlii.edu.au

Provides access to legislation online, case law and access to court judgement reports.

Australian Standards www.standards.com.au

Provides the standards for building codes for Australia, emergency control organisations and procedures for buildings, design for access and mobility in new building work, and design for access in specific building including laboratories.

Better Hearing Kits

Better Hearing Kits provide information about communication with people with a hearing impairment.

Better Hearing Kits: Phone (08) 9328 7938, Fax (08) 9328 7550
 29 West Parade, Perth, WA, 6000.

Deaf Society of Western Australia Inc.
Provides information and advice concerning the provision of access for people with a hearing impairment.

Deaf Society of Western Australian Inc.
Phone (08) 9443 2677, Fax (08) 9444 3592
16 Brentham Street, Leederville, WA, 6007.

Emergency Management Australia **www.ema.gov.au**
Provides information on Australian Emergency Manuals, national guidelines and emergency risk management, and a virtual library is also available.

Fire and Emergency Services Authority of Western Australia (FESA). Provides training for fire Wardens and reference information for emergency evacuation planning through the commercial training unit. The FESA website has links to other state and territory sites and other relevant sites.

FESA: Phone (08) 9323 9300 or www.fesa.wa.gov.au
Commercial Training Unit: Phone (08) 9454 0723 or
Email: ctu@fesa.wa.gov.au

Independent Living Centre.
Provides information, cost and availability of equipment, including emergency assistance devices, building and design access and resources for people with a disability. The web site contains links to many community organisations within Western Australia.

Independent Living Centre:
Phone (08) 9382 2011, Fax (08) 382 2896
3 Lemnos Street, Shenton Park, WA, 6008.
<http://www.ilc.com.au>

WorkSafe Western Australia **www.safetyline.wa.gov.au**
Provides information regarding occupational health and safety regulations in Western Australia and includes unofficial versions of the Act, and links to other states and sites relating to occupational health and safety.

Disclaimer: A previous consultant undertook the original drafts of this guide and sources were not referenced. Whilst every endeavour has been made to reference sources some may still remain unacknowledged.

