

# Emergency Response Policy and Procedure

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## EMERGENCY RESPONSE POLICY

The Emergency Response Policy refers to all BirdLife workplaces and is to be used in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

- Emergency Response Procedure
- OHS Policy
- Fieldwork Policy
- Guidelines for Leading Groups on Outings.

These documents can be found on the BirdLife Australia website at:

<http://www.birdlife.org.au/who-we-are/our-organisation/occupational-health-and-safety>

### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

BirdLife Australia (BirdLife) is committed to meeting its responsibilities under State and Territory Occupational Health and Safety legislation and subsequent regulations; to provide for a safe and healthy work environment for all employees, volunteers, contractors and visitors. To this end, BirdLife will endeavour to provide appropriate and adequate Emergency Preparedness planning and training in the event of an emergency in any of its workplaces.

#### 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure BirdLife Australia prepares for and effectively responds to an emergency or disaster situation through the appropriate use of resources, including the following:

- Appropriate provision of resources and training
- Appropriate treatment of workplace injuries and illness
- Prompt reporting and investigation of work related injuries and illness
- Implementation of corrective actions following incidents
- Plan for the management of foreseeable workplace emergencies

#### 1.2 Scope

All employees, Volunteers, contractors, and visitors, when engaged in the organisation's activities or employment, are expected to be both aware of and adhere to this Emergency Response Policy.

#### 1.3 Overview

Disaster and emergency management planning is being prepared for events or incidents that stretch our ability to cope beyond normal day-to-day capacity.

BirdLife will endeavour to swiftly and effectively respond to disaster and emergency situations, with the foremost goals of preserving life, protecting the organisation's property, and restoring operations as quickly as possible.

The intended outcome of emergency preparedness is that emergency situations are prevented as far as practical and the negative impact of an emergency or disaster situations is minimised through effective management.

Remote BirdLife Australia workplaces, for example observatories and reserves, need to be to develop their own specific Emergency Response Procedures including a bushfire plan based upon the specific conditions of their workplace and locality.

## 1.4 Definitions

**Emergency** is an unplanned or imminent event that affects or threatens the health, safety or welfare of people, property and infrastructure, and which requires a significant and coordinated response. The defining characteristic of an emergency event or situation is that usual resources are overwhelmed or have the potential to be overwhelmed.

**Disaster** is a condition or situation of significant destruction, disruption and/or distress to a workplace.

**Emergency management** is the coordination of an emergency response and management of recovery. The aim of emergency management is to minimise physical and psychological impacts on all parties and to minimise damage to assets, operations, reputation and staff productivity.

**Hazard:** A source or a situation with potential for harm in terms of human injury or ill-health, damage to property, damage to the environment, or a combination of these.

**Risk:** (In relation to any potential injury or harm.) The likelihood and consequence of that injury or harm occurring.

**Risk Assessment:** A structured process designed to assess the nature of a hazard, the likelihood of exposure and the likely consequences.

**Workplace** is a place where work is carried out for a business or undertaking and includes any place where a worker goes, or is likely to be, while at work.

## 2. RESPONSIBILITIES

### 2.1 Responsibilities of the BirdLife Australia Board

- Ensure the development and implementation of the Emergency Response Procedure
- Ensure sufficient resources have been allocated to support this policy.

### 2.2 Responsibilities of BirdLife Australia Management

Take lead responsibility for the implementation of disaster and emergency management procedures, including the following:

- Ensure potential disaster and emergency situations are identified, and appropriate emergency management plans are in place
- Emergency floor plans are kept on display and up to date
- Training (including the induction of new staff) is organised and conducted for the implementation of Local Emergency Instructions
- Identification of potential hazardous situations
- Developing, documenting and communicating emergency response plans
- Reporting on actual situations
- Reviewing policy and procedures following a disaster or emergency situation

- Coordinate staff training in disaster and emergency management, such as fire response, building evacuation, etc.

### 2.3 Responsibilities of BirdLife Australia Employees, Volunteers, Contractors and Visitors

All employees, volunteers and contractors and visitors of BirdLife are:

- Expected to behave in a way to minimise the risk of emergencies occurring
- Responsible for following emergency response policy and procedures
- Required to cooperate with management and obey any reasonable instruction aimed at protecting their health and safety in the event of an emergency
- Required to report to BirdLife management, any information that may be of use in the event of or lead up to a workplace emergency.

## 3. RISK MANAGEMENT

BirdLife endeavours to identify, prevent and manage disaster and emergency situations within its sphere of responsibility and influence, until the arrival of appropriate emergency services. The approach to disaster and emergency management is illustrated in the Risk Rating Matrix in the Emergency Response Procedure.

A range of disaster and emergency situations may occur on the premises or in the field with the potential to impact on the safety of employees, volunteers and contractors, including but not limited to:

- fire
- gas or water leak
- vehicle accident
- chemical, radiation or biological spill
- bushfire
- storm
- earthquake
- bomb threat
- civil disorder or illegal occupancy
- hostage or terrorist situation
- physical (including sexual) assaults.

## 4. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

All staff and volunteers should be provided with training and contractors and visitors appropriately briefed to ensure they are familiar with implementation of site specific disaster and emergency management plans. Particularly those whom are regularly 'out in the field'.

All employees, volunteers, contractors and visitors should familiarise themselves with emergency evacuation procedures, including their responsibilities and the emergency evacuation assembly point.

## 5. REPORTING

All serious incidents must be reported to the appropriate line manager or volunteer in charge and the OHS Coordinator.

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURE

The Emergency Response Procedure refers to all BirdLife workplaces and is to be used in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

- Emergency Response Policy
- OHS Policy
- Fieldwork Policy
- Guidelines for Leading Groups on Outings.

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### 1. RISK ASSESSMENT

BirdLife Australia uses risk assessment processes to identify and control barriers to effective emergency management. Assessing the risk of a hazard is critical to achieving best practice occupational health and safety.

#### Step 1. Consequences

Consider the worst possible consequences for this incident occurring? Will it result in death in the worst-case scenario?

#### Step 2. Likelihood

What is the likelihood of the incident identified in step 1 happening? Consider this without new or interim controls in place.

RISK RATING MATRIX					
RISK RATING	LIKELIHOOD				
	Rare The event will only occur in exceptional circumstances	Unlikely The event is not likely to occur	Possible The event may occur	Likely The event is likely to occur	Almost Certain The event is almost certain to occur
CONSEQUENCE					
<b>Catastrophic</b> (Accidental death / serious injury)	<b>Significant Risk (2)</b>	<b>Significant Risk (2)</b>	<b>High Risk (1)</b>	<b>High Risk (1)</b>	<b>High Risk (1)</b>
<b>Major</b> (Serious injury)	<b>Low Risk (4)</b>	<b>Moderate Risk (3)</b>	<b>Significant Risk (2)</b>	<b>High Risk (1)</b>	<b>High Risk (1)</b>
<b>Moderate</b> (Lost time due to injury)	<b>Low Risk (4)</b>	<b>Low Risk (4)</b>	<b>Moderate Risk (3)</b>	<b>Significant Risk (2)</b>	<b>High Risk (1)</b>
<b>Minor</b> (Minor injury – no lost time)	<b>Low Risk (4)</b>	<b>Low Risk (4)</b>	<b>Low Risk (4)</b>	<b>Moderate Risk (3)</b>	<b>Significant Risk (2)</b>
<b>Minimal</b> (No injury)	<b>Low Risk (4)</b>	<b>Low Risk (4)</b>	<b>Low Risk (4)</b>	<b>Low Risk (4)</b>	<b>Moderate Risk (3)</b>

## 1.1 Medical Emergency

- Check for any threatening situation and remove or control it (**only if safe to do so**)
- Remain with the casualty and provide appropriate support
- Notify First Aid personnel
- Notify the ambulance service by dialling "000"
- Designate someone to meet and direct the ambulance to the location of the casualty

## 1.2 Flood/Severe Storms

- Secure all loose items external to the building, such as outdoor furniture etc
- Secure windows (close curtains and blinds) and external doors. If necessary, tape windows and glass entrances. Utilise boards and sand bags if required
- Isolate/shut off electricity, water and gas services
- Protect valuables and disconnect electrical equipment- cover and/or move this equipment away from windows
- During a severe storm, remain in the building and keep away from windows. Restrict the use of telephone lines to **emergency calls only** (this includes data calls via modems)
- After the storm passes, evaluate the need to evacuate if uncontrolled fires, gas leaks, or structural damage has occurred as a result of the storm
- Report to the Chief Warden regarding the status of the occupants' safety.
- Do not enter the flood waters
- Evacuate staff, volunteers and visitors as per evacuation procedures.
- Contact and liaise with emergency services if required
- Notify CEO/Manager and/or other staff or volunteer in charge.

## 1.3 Earthquake

If you are indoors:

- Remain indoors and seek shelter under strongly constructed tables, desks or door frames
- Keep away from windows, fixtures, furniture, and items that may become unstable
- Evacuate the premises if it is safe to do so.

If you are outdoors:

- Move quickly away from buildings, electrical structures and flammable products
- Proceed to designated assembly area if safe to do so.

After the earthquake:

- Evaluate the need to evacuate if uncontrolled fires, gas leaks or structural damage has occurred as a result of the earthquake

- Any evacuation is to be clear of trees, powerlines, buildings, etc
- Check attendance at assembly area against the attendance registers
- Respond to injured people
- Check for gas leaks, power failure and any other hazard
- Turn off electricity, gas and water if it is safe to do so
- Prevent entry to premises if unsafe
- Contact and liaise with emergency services if required
- Notify CEO/Manager and/or other senior staff or volunteer in charge.

#### 1.4 Fire

- Alert persons nearby and request assistance
- Assist any person in immediate danger (**only if safe to do so**)
- Close the door on the fire to contain the spread
- Contact fire emergency services, firewarden and/or a staff member or volunteer in charge if applicable
- Extinguish the fire (**only if safe to do so**)
- If threat to life exists evacuate immediately, closing all doors
- Check that all areas have been cleared and inform the Chief Warden

#### 1.5 Bushfire

Fieldworkers should be aware of, or find out from the relevant land manager (e.g. Fire Authority, Bushfire Council, Local Council, Park Ranger), the fire regulations that will apply throughout the duration of their fieldwork operation. Vehicles should not be parked in long grass because of the risk that hot metal will start a bushfire.

During extreme or catastrophic fire rating periods postpone fieldwork taking into account local conditions and activity type. Exercise extreme caution with all field activities if a high fire rating is predicted.

Special consideration should be given in periods of high and extreme fire danger as restrictions on access, processes, equipment and vehicles can apply. Carefully consider the risk of the fieldwork starting a fire. Ensure the field party:

- Has appropriate protective clothing, select natural fibres due to radiant heat;
- Can identify fire warning signs;
- Have a reasonable evacuation route and be aware of what to do if trapped.

In the event of a bushfire

- Contact all staff/volunteers or group members in the bushfire zone
- Evacuate staff/volunteers or group members as per the above evacuation procedure.
- Stay in a safe location while it continues to offer protection

- Contact and liaise with emergency services if required
- Notify CEO/Manager and/or other senior staff or volunteer in charge.

## 1.6 Hazardous Material

If the spill may give off toxic or noxious fumes:

- Contact fire emergency services, fire warden and/or a staff member or volunteer in charge if applicable. Provide as much information about the hazardous material as possible
- Ventilate to the open air if possible
- Turn off air conditioning and recirculation fans
- Notify all persons in the building to evacuate, under instruction from the Fire Warden (**ensure the Assembly Area is upwind**)
- Control the evacuation to the Assembly Area (if required)
- Do not attempt to re-enter the affected area
- Remain at the Assembly Area until advised by emergency services

If the spill is a **suspected flammable material**:

- Remove any ignition sources (**if safe to do so**)
- Evacuate all persons in immediate danger, under instruction from Fire Warden (**ensure Assembly Area is 200 metres clear of the hazard**)

## 1.7 Gas Leakage

- Ensure the Fire Warden is notified (if applicable)
- Isolate the gas supply at the source (**only if safe to do so**)
- Notify the emergency services by dialling "000"
- Notify the gas appropriate gas supply company
- Shut down the air conditioning to prevent the spread of any flammable or toxic gases
- Remove any ignition sources (**if safe to do so**). Turn off the electricity supply
- Report to the Fire Warden regarding any action taken (if applicable)
- Control the evacuation to the Assembly Area (if required)
- Remain at the Assembly Area until further advised by emergency services.



## 1.8 Bomb Threat

In the event of a bomb threat via phone call:

- Remain calm
- Record as much information as possible from the caller using questions and observations including:
  - What type of bomb is it?
  - How will it go off?
  - What does it look like?
  - When is it set to go off?
  - Where is it?
  - When was it put there?
  - Who put it there?
  - Why was it put there?
  - Will it explode or will something be released?
  - If a substance is released, what is it? How much is there? How will it be released?
  - Observations about the caller: gender, age, accent?
  - Any background noise?
- Contact police who can assist in determining if evacuation is required
- If instructed, evacuate employees, volunteers, contractors and visitors as for the above evacuation procedures
- Notify CEO/Manager and/or other senior staff or volunteer in charge.

In the event of a bomb threat via postal mail:

- Do not disturb, move or touch the package if possible
- Contact police who can assist in determining if evacuation is required
- If instructed, evacuate employees, volunteers, contractors and visitors as for the above evacuation procedures
- Notify CEO/Manager and/or other senior staff or volunteer in charge

## 1.9 Suspicious Mail

In the event of a suspicious item of postal mail arriving to the premises:

- Do not disturb, move or touch the package if possible
- Wash your hands if it is possible to do so within the work area
- Contact police who can assist in determining if evacuation is required
- Inform others present of what has occurred and advise them to stay in the work area
- Prevent others from entering the work area
- Do not attempt to clean up spilt material or brush it off your clothing
- If instructed, evacuate employees, volunteers, contractors and visitors as for the above evacuation procedures
- Notify CEO/Manager and/or other senior staff or volunteer in charge

## 1.10 Hold-up

In the event of a hold-up situation:

- Assume the offender is armed and that any firearms are loaded
- Comply with instructions given by the offender, doing no more or less than what you are told to do, and answering all questions when asked
- Do not attempt to disarm or apprehend the offender
- Take mental notes of details about the offender and any items that are touched by the offender
- If it is safe to do so, raise the alarm by phoning police.

Immediately after the incident:

- Lock access doors and preventing people from approaching to secure the area
- Notify the police immediately
- Notify CEO/Manager and/or other senior staff or volunteer in charge.
- Attend to the post-incident needs of employees, volunteers, contractors and visitors affected by the incident.

## 1.11 Evacuation

In the event of an alert to evacuate - either verbal, automatic alarm or manual alarm, all employees, volunteers, contractors and visitors:

- Follow site specific disaster and emergency management plans
- Swiftly collect personal belongings
- Proceed along designated routes to the designated assembly area(s)
- Ensure assistance is provided to people with disabilities and/or special needs

- Staff member or volunteer in charge to collect visitor sign-in and attendance registers and check attendance at assembly area against the attendance registers.
- Remain at the assembly area until advised by the fire warden and/or emergency personnel that it is safe to return to premises.

#### **Additional evacuation guidelines for threat of fire**

In the event of a fire threat and if it is safe to do so, close all doors and windows and turn off power supply before leaving the premises.

#### **Additional evacuation guidelines for bomb threat**

In the event of a bomb threat and the threat is not immediate, open all doors and windows before leaving the premises.

## **2. REPORTING**

For incidents other than those that are very minor, employees' contractors, volunteers and visitors must report all serious incidents as soon as possible:

- Employees must report incidents to their line manager and the OHS Coordinator
- Volunteers must report incidents to their Project Manager
- Contractor must report incidents to their BirdLife contact