

Safety Guideline

Fire & Emergency Evacuation Procedures

Overview

1. Introduction

- 1.1 These guidelines are intended to establish the procedures to be adopted in the event of any emergency which may require partial or total evacuation of buildings within the University. Evacuation from buildings may be necessary as the result of fire, explosion, chemical leak, structural fault, equipment failure or bomb threat. These guidelines have been prepared principally for fire emergencies, but they are suitable for use in other emergencies.
- 1.2 These procedures have been developed for use in all University buildings, other than those occupied by Medical and Dental departments for which effective procedures have already been instituted by the hospital with which the department is associated. However, adjustments may be required for sites other than St Lucia, particularly in relation to the emergency call-out phone numbers.
- 1.3 Specific instructions, based on these guidelines, should be prepared for each University building. The features of a particular building, its occupants or fire alarm system may require modification of these procedures. Enquiries in relation to these procedures should be made to the Occupational Health and Safety Unit (telephone 3365 2365).
- 1.4 In order to avoid delay, confusion and possible injury in the event of an emergency, it is essential that evacuation procedures and organisational arrangements are well understood and regularly practised by University employees. This is a requirement of the *Queensland Fire Service Act*.

Description

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of the Emergency Evacuation Procedures and associated organisation is to provide for:

- Fire and hazard prevention;
- Safe and orderly evacuation of people from the building in an emergency;
- Early control of the fire or emergency; and
- Speedy resumption of duties once the emergency is brought under control.

3. Emergency Organisation

3.1 The system of coordination for Emergency Evacuation Procedures is outlined below:

- The Emergency Co-ordinator (for the University site).
- A Building Warden and Deputy for each building.
- Floor or Area Wardens and Deputies for each building.

3.2 Emergency Coordinator

3.2.1 Appointment:

- The Emergency Coordinator for all campuses is the Manager of Security.
- The Deputy Emergency Coordinator at St Lucia campus is the duty Security Officer.
- In the absence of these persons, the duty Senior Security Officer will assume the role of Incident Coordinator, or, may designate a specific person to undertake the role of Emergency Coordinator at their absolute discretion. During business hours the nominated person may be the Fire Officer on duty.
- The Emergency Coordinator at Gatton and Ipswich Campuses [as delegated by the Manager Security](#), is the duty Security Supervisor or their nominee. In all instances it will be the duty Security or Senior Security Officer on duty [at these campuses](#).
- The Manager Security will ensure that emergency coordinators are appointed for sites other than those covered by the Security Section at St Lucia, Gatton or Ipswich campuses. This will usually be done through the appointment of Building Fire Wardens incorporated in the building or site Emergency Control Organisation (ECO) established by the Fire Safety Officers.

3.2.2 Responsibilities:

The Emergency Coordinator shall be responsible for overall coordination of actions in connection with Emergency Evacuation Procedures.

Duty and/or Acting Security Supervisor

In the case of a Fire or Other Emergency is to ensure the following details [are](#) carried out:

- Checking that an/the alarm has been relayed to the appropriate emergency service.
- Ensuring that designated duties are correctly and promptly carried out.
- Acting as a Liaison Officer with [the University Fire Safety Officers](#), Police, Fire Service, Ambulance, and, any and all other Official Emergency Services [as required](#).

- Ensuring that all emergency service personnel are directed to the building or site involved in the emergency.
- Ensuring staff and students are advised when it is safe to re-enter the building.
- To ensure all available Security and other personnel and resources are applied and coordinated to deal with the fire or other emergency.

Fire Safety Officers:

- For ensuring that personnel responsible for emergency evacuations are aware and trained in their responsibilities under the Fire Training Program incorporated as part of the Fire Safety Management Plan.
- To follow all Operating procedures and Work Instructions as listed in the Security Workbook.

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3.3 Building Wardens

3.3.2 Appointment:

A Building Warden and deputies (it is usually necessary to appoint more than one deputy building warden to ensure continuous availability) should be appointed for each building. If the building is occupied by only one department, the head of that department should make this appointment. Where more than one department occupies a building, the appointment should be made by the appropriate Executive Dean or Executive Deans in consultation.

3.3.3 The Building Warden and deputies should be physically fit, mature and responsible members of staff with personalities that will give confidence in an emergency. Their normal work location should preferably be on or close to the ground floor and their duties should not require frequent absences from the building. The Building Warden should ensure that either the Building Warden or deputy is available at all times during normal working hours.

3.3.4 Responsibility: The Building Warden, during emergency situations, will be in control of the occupants of the whole building until the arrival of the Fire Service Senior Officer. It is the Building Warden's responsibility to:

Before Fire or Emergency:

- Assist in training of emergency personnel under their command.
- Designate an assembly area (or areas) for the building. Occupants of the building should be directed to assemble in this area when required to evacuate the building in an emergency. This will facilitate checking that all occupants are safe and enable speedy return to the building when the "all clear" is given.
- Ensure that on each floor, or in each area, a current list of Floor

and Area Wardens (and telephone numbers) is displayed, together with an emergency floor plan. The emergency floor plan should show all rooms, exits, assembly area to be used in case of fire or emergency, fire alarms, extinguishers, fire hose reels and special emergency equipment.

- Ensure that all staff in the building are given instruction in relation to:
 - evacuation procedures;
 - means of escape from the building and location of assembly areas;
 - the location and operation of fire alarms; and
 - the location and operation of fire extinguishers or other emergency equipment required in the building.

In the case of Fire or Emergency (the assistance of a deputy may be required to undertake some of these tasks):

Respond immediately to an alarm, determine the nature of the emergency.
Initiate Emergency Evacuation Procedures for the building.

Direct the actions of Floor and Area Wardens within the building.
Check that all occupants have proceeded to the designated assembly area.
In consultation with the Fire Service and the Emergency Coordinator, advise occupants when it is safe to return to the building.

3.4 Floor and Area Wardens

3.4.1 Appointment: Floor Wardens and their deputies should be appointed for each floor of the building. In buildings where features of the building indicate the necessity, floors should be divided into areas for each of which an Area Warden should be appointed.

3.4.2 The general selection criteria for Floor and Area Wardens and their deputies are the same as for the Building Wardens and their deputies and the appointments should be made by the Head of Department or Executive Dean(s), as appropriate.

3.4.3 Responsibility: Before Fire or Emergency Floor and Area Wardens should:

- Familiarize themselves with the floor or area for which they have responsibility;
- Familiarize themselves with potential problem areas such as strong-rooms, rooms leading off blind passages, doors leading to dead ends, toilets or changing rooms;
- Identify people who will require special assistance during evacuation;
- Identify means of egress and alternative means of escape; and
- Identify location of push button alarm points and fire fighting or

emergency equipment.

- Ensure that staff are conversant with these Emergency Evacuation Procedures and the correct use of fire fighting and emergency equipment
- Carry out monthly inspections of their area and remove hazards or advise the Head of Department or Director of Occupational Health and Safety (as appropriate) of the hazards.
- Ensure that fire fighting and emergency equipment is in its correct position (as shown on the displayed floor plans) and ready for use.
- Ensure that passageways and exits are kept clear at all times.
- Ensure that notices required by these Procedures are kept current and prominently displayed.

3.4.4 Additional wardens should be appointed where required to assist the Floor or Area Warden. This should be on the basis of at least one to every 40 people employed on the floor, or in the area, and take account of the need to have at least one Warden from each department or section on the floor.

3.4.5 In the case of Fire or Emergency: Until the arrival of the Fire Service Senior Officer, the Floor or Area Warden (under the direction of the Building Warden) will control all evacuation and fire fighting (use of fire extinguishers) on their floor or in their area. The Floor or Area Warden should:

- Check the source, type and severity of the emergency.
- Order the evacuation of the floor if necessary.
- Advise the Building Warden of the emergency on the floor and the proposed action to be taken.
- Ensure that all occupants of the floor are aware that evacuation of the floor is necessary, and direct the occupants to the nearest accessible exit or escape stairs, through which they should proceed to the designated assembly area.
- Ensure that evacuation from the floor is orderly and by means of the stairs - **DO NOT USE THE LIFTS.**
- Ensure that necessary assistance is given to disabled and other persons in need of special care.
- Check fire doors to ensure that they are closed and post a watch so that they are kept closed except during the escape of occupants.
- Provided it is safe to do so, make a thorough search of the whole floor or area to ensure that no persons remain.
- Advise the Building Wardens when evacuation is completed.
- Assist the Building Warden in checking that all building occupants have arrived at the assembly area.

3.4.6 It should be emphasised that **the primary role of wardens is not to**

combat fire and emergencies, but to ensure, as far as practicable, the safety of occupants and their orderly evacuation from emergencies.

4. Assistance For Disabled Persons

- 4.1** Evacuation procedures for buildings should include procedures for caring for the disabled.
- 4.2** For the purposes of evacuation procedures, people should be considered as disabled if they are unable to evacuate the building without assistance, or if their time to exit the building would be much greater than the average building occupant.
- 4.3** Wardens should be aware of disabled persons within their area. In the case of permanent occupants of the building who are disabled, wardens should make a record of their name and their location to ensure that assistance can be rendered should evacuation be necessary. It will be necessary to periodically update this information.
- 4.4** Arrangements should be made for a person to be assigned to assist each disabled person in an emergency. This person should be someone working in close proximity to the disabled person and should assist the disabled person to a predetermined "safe" area. The Fire Service will determine the method of evacuating disabled persons from safe areas.
- 4.5** Where disabled students or visitors may be present, procedures should be implemented so that nominated staff can assist such persons.
- 4.6** During evacuation, disabled persons should be assisted to "safe" areas which should be adjacent to fire isolation stairs. Where possible, procedures should provide for alternative "safe" areas. If no "safe" area is available, it may be necessary to move disabled people into fire-isolated stairways. This should not be done until other people have been evacuated so as not to impede a smooth evacuation.
- 4.7** The Floor Wardens should inform the Building Warden of the number of disabled persons, the location and the nature and extent of their disability at the completion of the general evacuation of the floor. The Building Warden should advise the Fire Service, on its arrival, of the situation on each floor. The Fire Service will determine what further action should be taken for the safety of disabled persons and whether lifts can safely be used for their evacuation.
- 4.8** It is important that disabled persons participate in the regular fire drills conducted for the building.

5. Evacuation of Students and Visitors

- 5.1** When an evacuation alarm is sounded, **any person in charge of a class, seminar or other meeting** should instruct students and visitors to proceed quietly and quickly to the nearest exit - which should be nominated. When all students and visitors have left the room, the person in charge should leave and close the door to prevent spread of fire and smoke.
- 5.2** Lecturers should ensure that at the commencement of semester, or before commencing seminars or other meetings, the lecturer or convenor should advise those present of the exits to use in the event of a fire or other emergency.

6. Action By Individual Occupants

6.1 Before FIRE or EMERGENCY: All occupants should make themselves familiar with the Emergency Evacuation Procedures for their building, the location of fire exits and the operation of fire fighting and emergency equipment.

6.2 In the case of FIRE or EMERGENCY:

6.2.1 If you discover a fire or emergency:

- Sound the fire alarm system (if there is a push button alarm)
- Notify the appropriate emergency service contact number for assistance, e.g. for all University sites, telephone the Security Sections 24 hour, 365 day control room on 3365 3333 or extension 53333 and advise:
 - Details of location, type and scale of the fire or emergency, and
 - The name and location of the caller.
- Alert other people in the vicinity and notify the Floor Warden.
- If it is safe to do so, use the appropriate fire extinguisher to put out any fire (do not attempt to fight a fire if the fire is large or if you are not familiar with the use of the fire extinguisher).

6.2.2 If you hear the evacuate mode of the fire alarm or when instructed to evacuate by the Floor or Area Warden:

- Walk quietly but quickly to the nearest exit and proceed to the assembly point outside the building to await further instructions.
- Listen and follow instructions from the Building or Floor Wardens.
- In order to prevent injury and possible panic during evacuation:
 - Do not run, push, or overtake
 - Use stairs - do not use the lifts
 - Do not return to your desk, office or room
 - Do not return to your building until the "all clear" is given by the

Building Warden or Fire Service.

6.2.3 Outside of normal working hours (9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday):

- On hearing the fire alarm, occupants should evacuate the building even if the evacuate mode does not sound.

7. Emergency Evacuation Information

7.1 Building wardens in co-operation with floor and/or area wardens should arrange for a sign to be placed at a prominent position on each floor or in each area showing the following:

- The name of the Building and Floor number or area description.
- A brief statement of evacuation procedures, such as:
 - Alert Security Section and other Emergency Services by using the emergency callout telephone number for all University sites: e.g Telephone number 3365 3333 or Extension 53333 all hours.
 - Warn people in the vicinity
 - Evacuate the building, if necessary
 - If safe, confine the fire or other source of danger
- The location of the assembly area.
- A floor or area plan (Property and Facilities Division can assist in the provision of floor plans and preparation of emergency evacuation signage) showing the location of:
 - o fire exits and escape routes
 - o manual alarm points
 - o fire extinguishers, and other emergency equipment
- The names (and telephone numbers) of the:
 - o Building Warden (and deputy)
 - o Floor or Area Warden (and deputy)
 - o any additional wardens appointed.