



Victorian Principals Association

Unit 2, 13-21 Vale Street, North Melbourne Victoria 3051, Australia

t: (03) 8379 4000 f: (03) 9326 9950 e: info@vpa.org.au w: www.vpa.org.au

VPA Position Paper

Emergency Management

Purpose

The Victorian Principals Association (VPA) is calling for the implementation of clearer, better supported and better communicated Emergency Management processes across Victorian Government Schools.

Background to the VPA Position

The VPA position has been determined in the following context:

- There is no clear DEECD response process for a wide range of emergencies.
- SSS Networks chairs seem to be responsible for emergency management for numerous schools within their networks, and are no longer aided by a regional support person.
- It is unrealistic for SSS Network chairs to have to deal with or delegate IRIS alerts, carrying mobile phones 24/7.
- SSS Networks chairs mostly have a full time position as an educational leader of a school and cannot reasonably be expected to handle Network crisis or emergency management without compromising their capacity as an effective school leader.
- Networks don't have consistent messaging, and there is a lack of clarity surrounding the entire Emergency Management process.
- Principals dealing with emergencies have not had access to adequate psychological support.
- Many schools have not had new Emergency Management processes and contacts communicated to them, leaving them in a potentially dangerous situation.
- There is financial confusion over the allocation of funds towards crisis management under the SSS Network restructure. It is unclear where the previous funding allocation of over \$180 000 or 1.6 staff per old region (9) for crisis management has now been assigned.

VPA Position

The VPA advocates for:

- Clarification over the official lines of communication in crisis management and a clear emergency response process managed by the DEECD.
- Increased Emergency Management staffing, in particular, allocation at a regional level to coordinate crisis management.
- Responsibility of the management of emergency staffing should not sit with network chairs.
- Allocation of ongoing psychologist and/or counselling support services for principals reporting emergencies to be made readily available.
- Clear and thorough messages and briefs to all networks, network chairs, principals and schools about correct emergency management procedures and the support services available to assist affected schools.
- Further explanation of the SSS Network restructure and its implications, specifically how finances' towards crisis management have been, and will be, allocated.