

## HE-BPR03 CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

### Abbreviations:

<b>AHE</b>	Apex Australia Higher Education
<b>BCP</b>	Business Continuity Plan
<b>BoD</b>	Board of Directors
<b>CEO</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>CIP</b>	Critical Incident Procedure
<b>SMS</b>	Student Management System
<b>SSO</b>	Student Support Officer

### 1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this procedure is to prescribe Apex Australia Higher Education’s (AHE) approach in responding to and managing critical incidents that impact AHE students and staff in particular, traumatic events, or the threat of such, causing extreme stress, fear, or injury.

### 2. Scope

2.1 Applies to all governance and operational activities of AHE.

### 3. Principles

3.1 AHE needs to prepare and respond to the unlikely event of a critical incident as part of its Business Continuity planning and response. The objectives of this **Critical Incident Procedure (CIP)** are to make sufficient preparations for responding to a critical incident or emergency to minimise the effect upon the students, personnel, and operations of AHE.

3.2 Students, course delivery, administration, information, or human resources of AHE all may be affected, and AHE requires the co-operative efforts of AHE management together with functional areas to support a response to any critical incident.

3.3 This CIP provides guidance and effective processes for AHE’s response to, and management of, critical incidents when they occur to ensure that AHE meets its duty of care obligations by providing the appropriate health and safety support to those affected and taking appropriate actions to prevent re-occurrence of the incident.

3.4 This CIP is not designed to provide an answer to each type of critical incident that could happen, but rather is provided to identify the methods on how to manage a critical incident if one was to occur.

- 3.5 This CIP also relates to the overall emergency plans of AHE and aims to minimise the damage incurred during an emergency, by providing guidelines for a rapid and effective response to an emergency.
- 3.6 AHE further recognises that coordinated, systemic institutional procedures enable rapid, appropriate, and comprehensive responses to a critical incident.
- 3.7 Ensure that all staff are aware of critical incident management through the **Staff induction materials**.

#### **4. Critical Incidents: Actions and Responsibilities**

- 4.1 A **Critical incident** includes a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes or is likely to cause extreme stress, fear, or injury.
- 4.2 This includes physical or psychological harm, extreme emotional distress, fear, or injury to AHE students and/or staff.
- 4.3 AHE will ensure that it has in place a structured approach in responding to critical incidents as they occur and providing appropriate support and counselling services to international students.
- 4.4 Below are examples of Critical Incidents and Key Response Steps. Further information concerning procedures on how AHE responds is contained in Section 5 below. Refer to [Appendix 1](#) for names of personnel identified by titles in the table below.

## Critical Incidents Affecting Persons

### These include (but are not limited to):

- Any fatality or serious injury that affects or is likely to affect staff or students.
- Injury to a staff, student, or visitor whilst on-campus requires emergency medical treatment.
- Serious road accidents.
- Attempted suicide of a student.
- Life threatening illness/injury of a student.
- Sexual and/or physical assault of a student.
- Threats or acts of violence by or towards students, staff and/or their family members.
- Hold up or robbery.
- Missing student.
- Severe verbal or psychological aggression.
- Issues such as sexual assault, domestic violence, drug, or alcohol abuse.
- Acute illness of a person.
- The death or critical injury of a staff member, student, or visitor on AHE premises.
- Staff and/or students being taken hostage.
- Students being killed/injured while engaged in an AHE-sponsored activity.

## Key Response Steps

1. Person affected (or close contact of person affected) to immediately contacts the Registrar. If outside of office hours, the person to call is the CEO or the delegate.
2. Registrar, the CEO or the Delegate to take immediate steps to ensure the person affected is safe. This may include contacting the police or ambulance as relevant.
3. Complete the **Critical Incident Report Form** within 24 hours of the incident (student assisted by staff or AHE staff).
4. Registrar contacts the CEO or the Delegate (as relevant).
5. CEO or the Delegate to assess the critical incident, identify needs, priorities, personnel, and activate a **Critical Incident Action Plan**.

## Threats to AHE premises

**These include (but are not limited to)**

- A break-in accompanied by major vandalism.
- The threat of damage to premises that AHE occupies (e.g., a terrorist threat).
- The destruction of whole or part of premises that AHE occupies (e.g., by fire).
- Fire, explosion, bomb threat or acts of terrorism.

**Key Response Steps**

1. The person who witnessed or discovered the incident, is to immediately contact the SSO. If outside of office hours, the person is to call the CEO or the Delegate.
2. Registrar, CEO or the Delegate to take immediate steps to ensure staff and students are safe. This may include contacting the police or ambulance or evacuating the premises as relevant.
3. Complete the **Critical Incident Report Form** within 24 hours of the incident (student assisted by staff or AHE staff).
4. Registrar contacts the CEO or the Delegate (as relevant).
5. CEO or the Delegate to assess the critical incident, identify needs, priorities, personnel, and activate a **Critical Incident Action Plan**.

**Imminent Community/ Regional/ National Threats**

**These include (but are not limited to)**

- A natural or other major disaster in the community.
- Infection or threatened infection of serious communicable diseases such as the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Infection or threatened infection of serious communicable diseases.
- Natural disasters.

**Key Response Steps**

1. When the incident or threat is identified, the CEO or the Delegate takes immediate steps to ensure all staff and students are safe. This may include contacting the police or ambulance or evacuating the premises as relevant.
2. If relevant, complete the **Critical Incident Report Form** within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident (student assisted by staff or AHE staff).
3. CEO or the Delegate to assess the critical incident, identify needs, priorities, personnel, and activate a **Critical Incident Action Plan**.
4. CEO or the Delegate to report the matter to the Board of Directors (BoD) immediately if urgent or report it at the next BoD meeting and activate aspects of the Business Continuity Plan (BCP).

- 4.5 Emergency Critical Incidents involves the possibility of immediate or imminent threat, to staff and/or students and may require an immediate response.
- 4.6 Non-emergency Critical Incident do not involve the need for an initial emergency response (for example the development of a pandemic from a lower phase). In such cases the government instructions will need to be followed.
- 4.7 The CIP is designed to complement other procedures concerning providing a safe environment for students and staff, regular maintenance of buildings and facilities and evacuation procedures in case of emergency.
- 4.8 Nothing in this Procedure is to be taken as contrary to guidelines and procedures laid down elsewhere concerning these matters.

#### 4.9 The Procedure includes:

- 4.9.1 All staff are made aware of critical incident management through the **Staff induction materials**.
- 4.9.2 Students are properly informed during **Orientation** and through the **Student Handbook** on how to respond to a critical incident and what support is available to them.
  - 4.9.2.1 This will include information on safety and awareness relevant to life in Australia and how to seek assistance for and report an incident that significantly impacts on their well-being, including critical incidents.
  - 4.9.2.2 Updates to information will be provided to students as required.
- 4.9.3 All critical incidents must be recorded using the **Critical Incident Report Form** (completed for each incident) and sent to the CEO or the Delegate.
- 4.9.4 All facilities are subject to regular maintenance (refer to the **Resources Monitoring and Improvement Procedure**).
- 4.9.5 Emergency exits are clearly marked and always kept clear of obstacles.
- 4.9.6 Fire prevention measures and protection equipment are in place (e.g., fire wardens appointed, smoke detectors, alarm systems and fire extinguishers are in place and maintained).
- 4.9.7 Normal safe work practices are followed routinely, and staff are familiar with fire drill and emergency evacuation procedures, and
- 4.9.8 Back-ups of computer records are stored off-site and retrievable (refer to the **Data Security and Recovery Procedure**).

#### 4.10 How the CIP relates to international students

- 4.10.1 AHE will ensure that all international students are made aware during orientation of:
  - 4.10.1.1 What to do in the case of a critical incident.
  - 4.10.1.2 The point of contact for any issues which require student support, including critical incidents.

4.10.2 AHE will also ensure that where required, and as appropriate:

- 4.10.2.1 As soon as practical after a critical incident occurs, the appropriate regulator(s) is/are notified about the details of the incident including the time, location, and nature of the incident.
- 4.10.2.2 In the case of an international student's death or other absence affecting the student's attendance or course progress, the incident is reported via PRISMS.
- 4.10.2.3 That the incident, and how the incident is managed, are recorded on the affected students' files.

## 5. Procedures

### 5.1 Reporting a Critical Incident

5.1.1 In the case of a critical incident, it is important that key people are notified. In an emergency, the primary objective is the safety of human lives. Salvage and recovery operations will be of secondary importance and will take place only when the affected area is declared safe.

5.1.1.1 When a Critical Incident has been identified, the staff member receiving the news:

- Immediately verbally contacts the CEO or the Delegate.
- Completes a **Critical Incident Report Form** within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident.
- Provides full details of the situation including the exact location of the incident, the type of incident and details of any person or persons who may be injured, in distress or at risk.

5.1.1.2 Students can also report critical incident to student support staff via email to the Registrar, who in return can contact the CEO or the Delegate. The Registrar will assist the student in completing the **Critical Incident Report Form** within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident.

### 5.2 Responding to a Critical Incident

5.2.1 CEO or the Delegate will immediately assess the critical incident. If unavailable, the Registrar is delegated to respond.

- 5.2.2 If it is assessed as a critical incident, the CEO or the Delegate will also be responsible for the assessment and co-ordination of responses to the incident. The Registrar will be called upon as necessary to deal with specific aspects.
- 5.2.3 The CEO or the Delegate will take the following actions as deemed necessary:
- 5.2.3.1 Identify the person(s) affected by the critical incident.
  - 5.2.3.2 Identify the needs and priorities based on the assessment and recommend response in terms of personnel and resources required and allocate individual roles/responsibilities for ongoing tasks. Delegate the Registrar to take notes for all meetings to keep records of content and decisions.
  - 5.2.3.3 Arrange to offer immediate assistance to persons involved in the incident. Put into action the evacuation procedures if required and provide first aid or medical assistance as needed.
  - 5.2.3.4 Get in touch with Emergency services and ensure that all details known about the incident are provided.
  - 5.2.3.5 Develop and implement a **Critical Incident Action Plan** after discussions with Registrar / Delegate for responding appropriately in a timely manner.
  - 5.2.3.6 Contact relevant next-of-kin or relevant emergency contacts for the individuals involved in a critical incident and provide appropriate support. If an international student dies or sustains serious injury, this support may extend to many of the tasks that may otherwise have been dealt with by the family.
  - 5.2.3.7 Brief the Registrar and ask to deal with telephone / counter inquiries.
  - 5.2.3.8 Initiate pastoral care services to be provided to individuals including victims and other persons affected by the incident.
  - 5.2.3.9 Set up a quiet area for the use of victims and/or their families. This area shall be protected from intrusion by anyone not immediately affected in the incident.
  - 5.2.3.10 Provide an officially agreed response to the media, where deemed necessary and ensure other staff involved are aware of the appropriate response to the media.

5.2.3.11 Complete the **Critical Incident Report Form** within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident and keep appropriate and adequate records.

5.2.3.12 In the case of death of the student put a stop on the student's record and enrolment and confirm access to Emergency funds at AHE if necessary.

### 5.3 Follow Up Action

The CEO or the Delegate will:

5.3.1 Assess the need for counselling, further information and debriefing sessions and may need to arrange resources to implement an ongoing plan for support.

5.3.2 In implementing an ongoing plan of support, ensure follow up concerning the well-being of individuals involved in the incident. This support may be extended to provide accommodations or adjustments to student or staff workload to provide for recovery from injury and delayed stress and the onset of post-traumatic stress disorder.

5.3.3 Ensure that AHE complies with any legislative reporting requirements that may arise as a consequence of this incident.

5.3.4 Manage long term consequences such as insurance, inquests, and legal proceedings if any.

5.3.5 If the critical incident requires student's suspension or cancellation of studies, then the incident needs to be reported in PRISMS and recorded in Student Management System (SMS).

5.3.6 Prepare a detailed report of the management of the incident including recommendations for the management of such incidents in the future as appropriate.

5.3.7 Instruct the Registrar to record the incident in the **Critical Incident Register**.

5.3.8 Review and evaluate the response to the critical incident and seek approval from BoD as to any changes to policy and procedure where applicable.

### 5.4 Complete and Maintain Critical Incident Records, and Safe Environment

5.4.1 The CEO or the Delegate will, on finalisation of the critical incident, complete the **Critical Incident Report Form** within 24 hours of the incident.

5.4.2 The Registrar will record the incident in the **Critical Incident Register** and give it to CEO or the Delegate for checking.

- 5.4.3 The Registrar will file a copy of the **Critical Incident Report Form**, and all other related documents prepared as part of this incident and remedial action on the SMS for at least two (2) years after the student ceases to be an accepted student.
- 5.4.4 CEO or the Delegate will a copy keep the **Critical Incident Action Plan, Critical Incident Report Form, Critical Incident Register** and all related documents in the **Critical Incident File**.
- 5.4.5 The Register will be tabled and reported at the AHE BoD's at every meeting and any remedial action / delegated actions, including additional allocation of resources, will be taken.
- 5.4.6 As relevant, policies and policies and any documentation at AHE, including **Student Handbook, AHE Staff induction materials and Orientation** materials, and training procedures will be revised to ensure continuous improvement for AHE in particular for preventative measures and provision of a safe environment. These may include:
- 5.4.6.1 Conducting risk assessments at AHE and implementing preventative controls for the risks identified.
  - 5.4.6.2 Providing advice about actions to take, staff to contact and support services that are accessible.
  - 5.4.6.3 Conducting relevant prevention education programs and training for students and staff
  - 5.4.6.4 Providing support for affected students where needed (whether directly or through another party).
  - 5.4.6.5 Improving systems and processes to respond to incidents and prevent recurrences.

## 6. Relevant Legislation, Benchmarking Documents and Relevant Websites:

### Legislation

- [Education Services for International Students Act 2000](#)
- [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#) – Standard 2, 6 & 7 (specifically 2.3.5, 6.2.1j, 7.3.3c).
- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)
- [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to International Students 2018](#)

### Benchmarking Documents

- [TEQSA Guidance Note: Corporate Governance](#)
- [TEQSA Guidance Note: Wellbeing and Safety](#)
- [TEQSA Good Practice Notes: Preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual harassment in the Australian higher education sector](#)

## Relevant Websites

- [Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for International Students \(CRICOS\)](#)
- [Department of Home Affairs](#)
- [TEQSA National Register](#)

## 7. Related Documents

- Critical Incident Action Plan
- Critical Incident Register
- Critical Incident Report Form
- Data Security and Recovery Procedure
- Health and Safety Policy and Procedure
- Institutional Quality Assurance Framework
- Orientation
- Resources Monitoring and Improvement Procedure
- Staff induction materials
- Student Academic and Non-Academic Support Policy and Procedure
- Student Handbook

## 8. Definitions

Please refer to:

- Table Acronyms and Definitions

## Version Control

<b>Document Name</b>		Critical Incident Policy and Procedure		
<b>Document Code</b>		HE-BPR03		
<b>Department</b>		Executive Management		
<b>Approved By</b>		Board of Directors	<b>Date Approved</b>	March 2024
<b>Revision History</b>				
Version	Date of Changes	Change Summary	Author	Review Due
V1.0	20 January 2018	New Document	CEO	January 2021
V1.1	27 February 2018	Amended – Student Services Officer named.	CEO	February 2021
V1.2	3 December 2018	Amended policy names and roles	CEO	December 2021
V2.0	15 January 2019	Clarified certain procedures	CEO	January 2022
V2.1	21 September 2019	Revised that all critical incidents are to be recorded in the AHE Student Academic Central Register. Approved: Board of Directors	CEO	September 2022
V3.0	26 August 2021	Revised document to be ESOS Act 2000 and National Standards 2018 compliant including procedure for reporting critical incidents and benchmarking. Approved: Board of Directors	CEO	August 2024
V3.1	2 September 2021	Revised document based on comments of A Schofield who audited document. Key Response Steps are now included for each type of Critical Incident	CEO	September 2024
V4.0	20 January 2022	PRV and CRICOS Code inserted	CEO	January 2025
V5.0	October 2023	Updated formatting, added Melbourne emergency contact details and evacuation plan, embedded links, updated version control table. Reviewed and noted at BoD meeting – 04.12.2023	Senior Compliance and Risk Manager	October 2026
V5.1	March 2024	Added in names of Registrar, CEO and the Delegate into Appendix A. Changes approved at the BoD meeting – 18.03.2024	Senior Compliance and Risk Manager	March 2027
V5.2	December 2025	Added in name & email of Registrar, updated WHS legislation, included “Minor” injuries and “Staff”	Senior Compliance and Risk Manager	
<b>Organisation</b>		Apex Australia Higher Education		

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A

#### Emergency Contacts

CONTACT INFORMATION			
Designated Student Contact Officer	Registrar	Name	Mrs. Baljinder Kaur
Opening Hours	8 am – 5 pm Monday to Friday at Reception.		
Additional hours	Open till 9 pm if evening classes are held; open during the weekend if classes are held.		
Phone (during office hours)	02 – 8007 6262		
Email	(24/7 for response within 24 hours): <a href="mailto:Registrar@apexaustralia.edu.au">Registrar@apexaustralia.edu.au</a>		
Emergency Contact	Dean	Mob: 61 410 570 960	Name Dr. Jeffery Gosper
	CEO	Mob: 61 409 368 093	Name Mr. Roch van Delft
Note	Contact details are indicative at time of update.		

#### Emergency and Support Services – Parramatta

2 Sorrell Street, Parramatta, NSW, 2150

Service	Phone Number	Address
Police	000 or 112 from a mobile	
Fire Brigade	000 or 112 from a mobile	
Ambulance Service	000 or 112 from a mobile	
Local hospitals		
1. Parramatta Medical Centre	9762 1041	Shop 2 Entrada Building, 20 Victoria Road, Parramatta NSW 2150 (Cnr Victoria Rd & Church St) opposite McDonalds.
2. Westmead Hospital Emergency Room	8890 5555	Hawkesbury Road and Darcy Road, Westmead NSW
Other relevant numbers		

State Emergency Service	132 500	
Nearest Police Station	9633 0799	Parramatta Police Station 95 Marsden St, Parramatta NSW 2150
Plumber	TBA	
Electrician	TBA	

### Emergency and Support Services – Sydney

Level 3, 22-26 Goulburn St, Sydney, NSW, 2000

Service	Phone Number	Address
Police	000 or 112 from a mobile	
Fire Brigade	000 or 112 from a mobile	
Ambulance Service	000 or 112 from a mobile	
<b>Local hospitals</b>		
1. World Square Medical Centre	02 9777 0024	Within Priceline Pharmacy, World Square Shopping Centre, Lower Ground Level, Shop 9.01c/644 George St, Sydney NSW 2000.
2. St Vincent's Hospital Emergency Room	02 8382 1111	390 Victoria St, Darlinghurst NSW 2010
<b>Other relevant numbers</b>		
State Emergency Service	132 500	
Nearest Police Station	02 9265 6499	Day Street Police Station 192 Day St, Sydney NSW 2000
Plumber	TBA	
Electrician	TBA	

### Emergency and Support Services – Melbourne

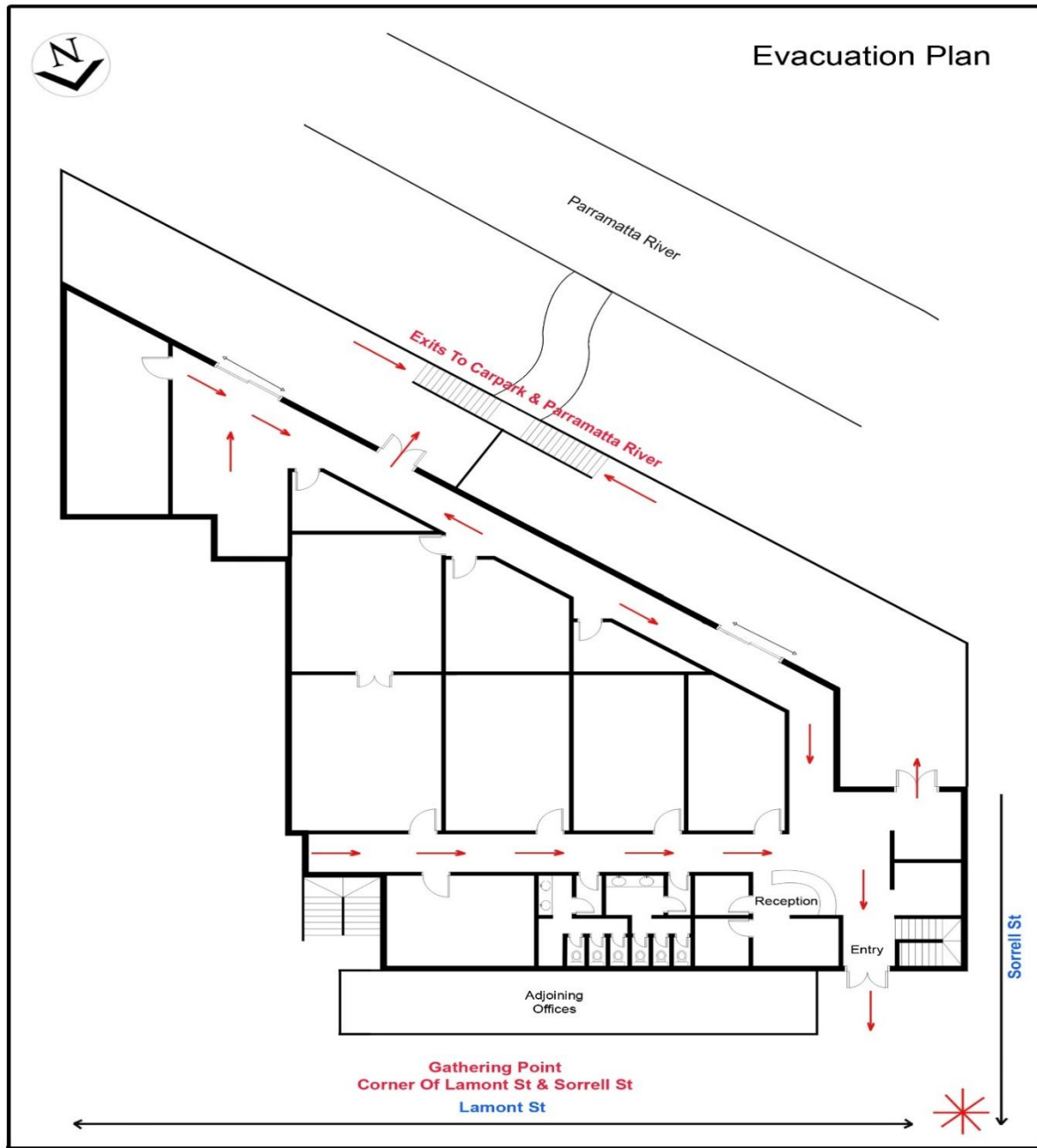
Level 7, 123 Lonsdale St, Melbourne, Victoria, 3000

Service	Phone Number	Address
Police	000 or 112 from a mobile	
Fire Brigade	000 or 112 from a mobile	
Ambulance Service	000 or 112 from a mobile	
<b>Local hospitals</b>		
1. St Vincents Hospital Melbourne	9231 2211	41 Victoria Parade, Fitzroy VIC 3065

2. The Royal Melbourne Hospital	9342 7000	300 Grattan St, Parkville VIC 3052
<b>Other relevant numbers</b>		
Victoria State Emergency Service	132 500	
Nearest Police Station	8628 3270	Melbourne Police Station 456 Lonsdale St, Melbourne VIC 3000
Plumber	TBA	
Electrician	TBA	


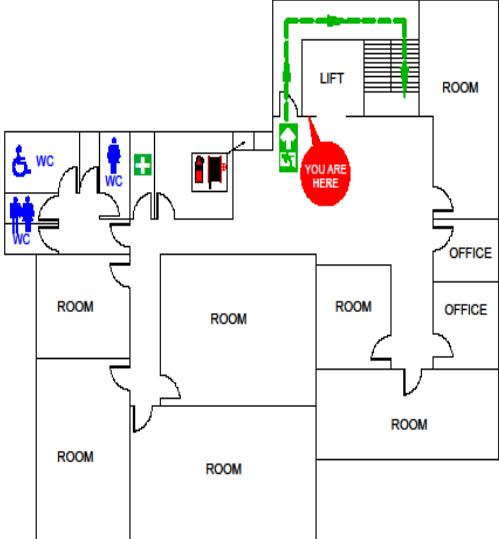
Appendix B  
Evacuation Plans

2 Sorrell Street, Parramatta, NSW, 2150











# EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN

## 22-26 GOULBURN ST, SYDNEY 2000 - LEVEL 3






NOT TO SCALE

**LEGEND**

-  FIP Fire Indicator Panel
-  Water Extinguisher
-  CO2 Extinguisher
-  DCP Extinguisher
-  Fire Hose Reel
-  Fire Blanket
-  Exit
-  First Aid

EXPIRY 14/07/2028

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS	FIRE EXTINGUISHERS	EVACUATION PROCEDURES	SITE PLAN	
<p><b>REMOVE PEOPLE</b> ONLY IF SAFE TO DO SO</p> <p><b>ALTER OTHERS - RAISE THE ALARM</b> NEARBY RESIDENCY AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC</p> <p><b>CONFINE - FIRE &amp; SMOKE</b></p> <p><b>EVACUATE TO ASSEMBLY POINT</b> REMAIN AT THE ASSEMBLY AREA (IF SAFE TO DO SO)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>IN CASE OF EMERGENCY</b> FIRE / POLICE / AMBULANCE <b>RING 000</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>FIRE EXTINGUISHER OPERATION</b></p> <p><b>P</b> - PULL PIN <b>A</b> - AIM AT EDGE OF FIRE <b>S</b> - SQUEEZE THE HANDLE <b>S</b> - SWEEP THE FIRE</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. REMAIN CALM. DO NOT PANIC</li> <li>2. LEAVE BUILDING BY DESIGNATED EXIT OR THE NEAREST SAFE EXIT</li> <li>3. PROCEED TO THE CLOSEST ASSEMBLY AREA OR AS DIRECTED BY STAFF / EMERGENCY SERVICES</li> <li>5. REMAIN IN ASSEMBLY AREA UNTIL OTHERWISE DIRECTED BY STAFF / EMERGENCY SERVICES</li> </ol>		<p>Superior Fire Systems Pty Ltd Unit E5 / 15 Nareng Way, Belrose NSW 2065 02-4228-7555   service@superiorfiresystems.com.au</p> 

**Level 7, 123 Lonsdale St, Melbourne, Victoria, 3000**

