**Policy Rationale**

Schools, kindergartens and child care facilities determined by the DEECD to be at high-risk of fire danger were placed on a Bushfire At-Risk Register.

Inclusion on this register is a trigger for the school, kindergarten or child care facility to close on days declared by fire authorities as being Code Red.

The process of determining which schools, kindergartens and child care facilities are included on the register involves the facilities themselves, the Department’s Regional Offices, the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, the Independent Schools Association of Victoria, the Municipal Association of Victoria and information from fire and emergency services.

Ahead of a Code Red Fire Danger Rating Day, an immediate warning will be issued to staff and students located in identified high-risk regions where Echuca CCAE has a campus.

If a Code Red Rating is applied on the CFA website by 2pm for the following day to any of the following Fire Danger Ratings Regions: Central, North Central and Northern Country CCAE will be closed. Should the CFA downgrade the Code Red rating after 2pm CCAE will remain closed.

**Policy Aims**

In meeting the needs of CCAE clients and personnel, CCAE will ensure that regardless of the actual events occurring in and around the Echuca area, if a Code Red is declared in Northern Country, then CCAE will be closed.

Possible accountability associated with discretionary decision making if an employee or student were to be injured or killed as a result of a bush fire are removed.

**Procedure - Administration**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Code Red</strong></th>
<th>These are the worst conditions for a bush or grass fire. Homes are not designed or constructed to withstand fires in these conditions.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extreme</strong></td>
<td>Expect extremely hot, dry and windy conditions. If a fire starts and takes hold, it will be uncontrollable, unpredictable and fast moving. Spot fires will start, move quickly and come from many directions. Homes that are situated and constructed or modified to withstand a bushfire, that are well prepared and actively defended, may provide safety. You must be physically and mentally prepared to defend in these conditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Severe</strong></td>
<td>Expect hot, dry and possibly windy conditions. If a fire starts and takes hold, it may be uncontrollable. Well prepared homes that are actively defended can provide safety.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CFA** Country Fire Authority.

**DEECD** Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.
School Sites and Excursions to other Victorian/NSW Regions

- If Echuca Hare Street Campus is closed due to a declared Code Red fire danger in Northern Country, Echuca CCAE staff and students will not attend off-campus sites while the Echuca Hare Street Campus is closed. All personnel and students will be sent home and advised not to attend CCAE Echuca or any other off-site venue which CCAE staff and students may attend for education and training. This extends to trainees or students undertaking work placement or work experience in industry settings.
- The Victorian Department of Education publishes a list schools in areas of high risk to bushfires. The list can accessed via the following link: [www.education.vic.gov.au](http://www.education.vic.gov.au)

Payment Arrangements

- Permanent, Casual and Contracted Employees not on pre-arranged leave will be paid for each day they are unable to work because the Echuca Campus and all associated off-campus training sites are closed for a Code Red Day.
- Staff will not be expected to apply for the leave as it will be assumed that all staff not on pre-arranged leave would be on Code Red Leave.
- Volunteers to the CFA and other Fire Fighting agencies that have registered with the CCAE Board of Management will be paid for the time they are volunteering in accordance with the relevant staff agreement.

Travelling into a Fire Region

- Staff must not travel to deliver a course in a Fire Region which has been declared Code Red.
- If the CCAE Hare Street Campus is closed because a Code Red has been declared in Northern Country, staff will not be expected to deliver a course in another region that has not been declared a Code Red.

Communication Strategy

- Internal communication is sent out to all staff via an email by the Manager or 2IC
- Internal communication is posted on Echuca CCAE’s intranet, and external communication is posted on the Echuca CCAE website after email from Manager or 2IC is received
- VETtrak text messaging will be utilized to inform students of Code Red Alert.
- Further external communication is arranged via advertisements for the following day, in relevant newspaper publications - dependent on where the Code Red Fire Danger has been declared.
- Internal/external communication is arranged via window posters/signs for relevant campuses to display regarding Fire Danger Rating. Signage is emailed to administration staff at individual campuses.
- A copy of this procedure will be provided to students during the enrolment process.

Annual Graduation Ceremony

- If a Code Red fire danger rating is declared for the Echuca Region (Northern Country) on the day of the Echuca CCAE Annual Graduation Ceremony, it will be cancelled.
- Echuca CCAE will post cancellation information on our website: [www.ccae.vic.edu.au](http://www.ccae.vic.edu.au)
- Should Echuca CCAE cancel the Annual Graduation Ceremony, all payments made will be refunded in full. The Annual Graduation Ceremony will not be rescheduled and certificates/diplomas will be posted out to students.
- If a Code Red day is declared in any region other than Echuca (Northern Country), graduates and guests in affected regions will need to make their own decision as to whether to travel to Echuca for the Graduation or not.

Cambodia Immersion Excursion

- If the students have left Echuca Hare Street Campus prior to a Code Red Alert, the excursion will continue as planned.
- If Code Red Alert is for Echuca Region (Northern Country) is declared for the day students/staff are expecting to leave:
  - Excursion will be moved forward with staff/students accommodated in Melb until planned flight
  - Excursion will be cancelled if students/staff would have to travel through other Code Red declared areas
- If Code Red Alert exists upon return to Australia, staff/students will be accommodated in Melb until Alert is withdrawn.
- Echuca CCAE will post cancellation information on our website: [www.ccae.vic.edu.au](http://www.ccae.vic.edu.au)
- Should Echuca CCAE cancel the Cambodian Immersion Excursion, all payments made will be refunded in full. The Excursion will not be rescheduled and CCAE would seek to claim on Insurance for outstanding costs.
- If Code Red Alert is declared in a region other than Echuca (Northern Country), staff and students in affected regions will need to make their own decision as to whether to travel to Echuca or Melb for Cambodia Immersion Excursion.

Associated Documents


Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually.

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Review Date: 21/01/2014
Version Control: V1-21/02/2013