Regulation 97:
Emergency and Evacuation Procedures

This information sheet is intended to clarify the requirements of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, regulation 97.

How can I ensure that our education and care service complies with Regulation 97?

1. Conduct a risk assessment to identify potential emergencies that are relevant to the service.

The National Regulations do not specify which emergency and evacuation procedures a service must have in place.

Instead, each service must conduct a risk assessment to identify potential emergencies that are relevant to the service.

Potential risks that may be relevant to education and care services include (but are not limited to) fire, flooding, bushfires, wildlife, bomb threats and intruders.

2. Develop emergency and evacuation procedures for each identified emergency.

Education and care services must ensure that an emergency and evacuation procedure is in place for each emergency identified as part of their risk assessment.

It is acceptable for a service to use one procedure for more than one type of emergency.

The following table provides an example of how a service might develop one evacuation procedure and one ‘lockdown’ procedure to cover a range of identified risks and emergencies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evacuation Procedure</th>
<th>‘Lockdown’ Procedure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fire</td>
<td>Wildlife (e.g. snakes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flood</td>
<td>Intruder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bomb threat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Rehearse each emergency and evacuation procedure every three months, and document the rehearsals.

Services are required to rehearse each emergency and evacuation procedure once every three months, regardless of the number of emergencies covered by that procedure.

For example, a service with one evacuation procedure and one ‘lockdown’ procedure would be required to rehearse both of these procedures once every three months, even though each of these procedures covers multiple emergencies.

Services are also required to document these rehearsals (for example, in a diary or communication book). This will ensure that there is a record that the rehearsals have taken place, and will demonstrate to an Authorised Officer that the service complies with this part of the regulation.

If our service complies with Regulation 97, does this mean element 2.3.3 will be assessed as ‘met’ during Assessment and Rating?

Compliance with regulation 97 does not guarantee that element 2.3.3 will be assessed as ‘met’ during Assessment and Rating. As is the case with all 58 elements of the National Quality Standard,

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1 Education and Care Services National Regulations, Regulation 97(2).
2 Education and Care Services National Regulations, Regulations 97, 168.

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3 Education and Care Services National Regulations, Regulation 97(3).
4 Element 2.3.3: ‘Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented’.
Authorised Officers will gather a range of evidence through observations, discussions and sighting documents in order to determine whether element 2.3.3 is 'met'.

For example, Authorised Officers may ask the following questions:

- How does the service identify relevant risks?
- How does the service discuss and practice emergency skills with children?
- How does the service ensure that all children, families and casual/relief educators are aware of the service’s emergency and evacuation procedures?
- How does the service evaluate the effectiveness of its emergency and evacuation procedures?

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