**Emergency & Security Management Unit**

**Responding to bomb and armed attack threats**

The safety of all school students and staff is of paramount importance to the Department of Education. Schools are periodically the subject of bomb or armed attack threats. Whilst the majority of such threats are later determined to be hoaxes the duty of care to staff and students requires each threat to be considered real until proven otherwise.

All threats to schools will be responded to and investigated by the Queensland Police Service (QPS).

Threats being received by schools can be:

* **Bomb threats;**
* **Armed attack threats; and**
* **A combination of bomb and armed attack threats.**

The following protocols have been developed and consultation has occurred with the QPS.

**Responding to a Bomb Threat**

**The School Response**

1. On receiving a threat indicating a bomb is within the school, the school staff member receiving the threat will:
2. Record the call electronically where possible;
3. Make written notes including the telephone number receiving the call, the time of the call and the contents of the conversation;
4. Not end the call and leave the line open for tracing purposes; and
5. Advise the Principal, or appointed school delegate, immediately.

2. The Principal, or appointed school delegate, will:

1. Activate the school **Evacuation** Procedure for all staff and students;
2. Contact the QPS and provide all necessary details including that it is a **bomb threat**;
3. Manage the movement to, and assembly at, the designated Evacuation Point(s);
4. Contact the appointed delegate of any co-located service/s on the school site (e.g. ECEC facility) and advise them of what is occurring.
5. As soon as possible the Principal or their delegate will communicate with their Regional office and provide essential information. (The Region is then responsible for communicating with the broader department).
6. On arrival of the QPS the Principal or their delegate will:-
7. Provide all relevant information to the officers;
8. Coordinate activities with the QPS and support their response; and
9. Consider QPS advice and comply with any directions given under legislation, e.g. the *Public Safety Preservation Act (PSPA).*
10. Consider discussing with the QPS how the search may be managed to be able to move students back into suitable buildings as soon as practicable to mitigate the impact of the elements or any further risk from other threats, i.e. by identifying a place of shelter and, where practical, commence searching this location and surrounds first to declare it safe as a priority;
11. The Principal may consider communicating with the school community after considering any advice from the QPS.
12. Upon being advised that the site is clear, the Principal, or appointed school delegate, will then communicate with the Region.
13. Once the school has resumed normal operations the Principal, or appointed school delegate, will then communicate with the Region.
14. As soon as practicable the Principal will prepare an Initial Debrief Report to the Regional Office and when practicable conduct a formal debrief with staff.

**The DET Region and Executive Response Team**

1. On being advised by a school Principal, or their delegate, that a threat has been received, the Region will activate any local support required.
2. The Region will send a group SMS to the following key DET representatives:
3. **0488 755 413**  for State Schooling
4. **0408 785 606** for SCE (Media Unit)
5. **0428 031 783** for ESMU (SMS messaging only)
6. **0467 767 388** for ECEC
7. The text message will provide key information similar to the following:

<*School name*> *<Bomb Threat >* <*Time received> <Action>*

1. Recipients of the Group SMS will immediately acknowledge receipt of the SMS in the form: *<Recd by State Schooling/SCE/ESMU/ECEC>*
2. The Region will support the School response as requested or per local arrangements.
3. Other areas should refrain from contacting any school and liaise through the Regional representative.
4. Upon being advised that the site is clear, the Region will communicate via SMS to State Schools, SCE, ESMU and ECEC as previous.
5. Upon being advised that the school has resumed normal operations, the Region will communicate via SMS to State Schools, SCE, ECEC and ESMU as previous.
6. If the Executive Coordination Centre (ECC) is activated, it will be the Department’s ‘single point of truth’ and will manage support to the Regions if requested. The ECC will prepare and distribute SITREPS and Media Releases in consultation with the Regions.
7. The ECC will be responsible for liaising with the Brisbane Police Communications Centre (PCC) or any overarching QPS Investigation Centre (IC) established for this or related incidents.
8. At the conclusion of the policing actions and upon the resumption of normal operations the Region will coordinate obtaining an Initial Debrief Report from the school on the same day of the incident and forward to the ESMU or ECC.

**The QPS Response**

1. The QPS will task suitable resources to the school as soon as possible.
2. Upon arrival at the school the police may:
3. Locate the Principal, or appointed school delegate, and obtain all relevant information;
4. Assess the situation and develop strategy to search the school for any improvised explosive device;
5. If adequate resources are available, make a search of the perimeter for any other threat; and

d) Coordinate with the school staff and any other co-located service, e.g. ECEC facility.

1. At the conclusion of the search, advise the Principal of such and;
2. Should a suspicious device be located progress the response as required and keep the Principal advised of the situation; and
3. Obtain all relevant information from the Principal, or appointed school delegate to support any further investigation.

**Responding to an Armed Attack Threat**

**The School Response**

1. On receiving a threat of an **armed attack**, the school staff member receiving the threat will:
2. Record the call electronically where possible;
3. Make written notes including the telephone number receiving the call, the time of the call and the contents of the conversation;
4. Do not end the call and leave the line open for tracing purposes; and
5. Advise the Principal, or appointed school delegate, immediately.
6. The Principal, or appointed school delegate, will:
7. Activate the school **Lockdown** Procedure for all staff and students;
8. Contact the QPS via Triple Zero (000) and provide all necessary details including that it is an **armed attack threat**;
9. Manage the movement of staff and students external to the buildings to places of safety;
10. Communicate with staff as per the Lockdown procedure; and
11. Contact the appointed delegate of any co-located service/s on the school site (e.g. ECEC facility) and advise them of what is occurring.
12. As soon as possible the Principal or their delegate will communicate with their Regional office and provide essential information. (The Region is then responsible for communicating with the broader department).
13. On arrival of the QPS the Principal or their delegate will:

a) Provide all relevant information to the officers;

b) Coordinate activities with the QPS and support their response; and

c) Consider QPS advice and comply with any directions given under legislation, e.g. the *Public Safety Preservation Act (PSPA).*

1. The Principal may consider communicating with the school community after considering any advice from the QPS.
2. Upon being advised that the site is clear, the Principal, or appointed school delegate, will then communicate with the Region.
3. Once the school has resumed normal operations the Principal, or appointed school delegate, will then communicate with the Region.
4. As soon as practicable the Principal will prepare an Initial Debrief Report to the Regional Office and when practicable conduct a formal debrief with staff.

**The DET Region and Executive Response Team**

1. On being advised by a school Principal, or their delegate, that a threat has been received, the Region will activate any local support required.
2. The Region will send a group SMS to the following key DET representatives:
3. **0488 755 413**  for State Schooling
4. **0408 785 606** for SCE (Media Unit)
5. **0428 031 783** for ESMU (SMS messaging only)
6. **0467 767 388** for ECEC
7. The text message will provide key information similar to the following: <*School name*> *<Bomb Threat >* <*Time received> <Action>*
8. Recipients of the Group SMS will immediately acknowledge receipt of the SMS in the form: *<Recd by State Schooling/SCE/ECEC/ESMU>*
9. The Region will support the School response as requested or per local arrangements.
10. Other areas should refrain from contacting any school and liaise through the Regional representative.
11. Upon being advised that the site is clear, the Region will communicate via SMS to State Schools, SCE, ECEC and ESMU as previous.
12. Upon being advised that the school has resumed normal operations, the Region will communicate via SMS to State Schools, SCE, ECEC and ESMU as previous.

**The QPS Response**

1. The QPS will task suitable resources to the school as soon as possible.
2. Upon arrival at the school the police may:
3. Locate the Principal, or appointed school delegate, and obtain all relevant information;
4. If they hear gunfire within the school, they will adopt a tactical response and may not communicate with the Principal until sometime later when the threat has been contained or mitigated;
5. Otherwise, if no visible or audible threat, then they will assess the situation and develop a strategy to search the school for any armed attacker(s) and as soon as practicable commence operations to search the facility; and
6. Coordinate with the school staff and any other co-located service, e.g. ECEC facility.
7. Should any suspicious person or persons be located they will proceed as required and should communicate with the Principal as soon as practicable of the situation.
8. At the conclusion of the policing actions and when the school area is considered safe, the Principal, or appointed school delegate, will be notified so the necessary steps can be taken for the school to recommence.
9. Obtain all relevant information from the Principal or appointed school delegate for the investigation.

**Responding to a Combined Bomb Threat and Armed Attack Threat**

This type of combined threat poses an additional problem for schools. Generally, a bomb threat elicits an Evacuation strategy whereas an armed attack threat elicits a Lockdown strategy. So the combination of threats poses a dilemma for school decision makers as to respond in either manner introduces a contrary level of risk from the alternate threat which would normally be unacceptable. However, any considered solution to this type of threat leaves a residual risk.

In the absence of any clarifying information or intelligence about the dual threat, and with time permitting, the recommended practice would be to Lockdown the school until the police arrive. On the arrival of the Police, take advice but also consider the need to quickly establish a secure location and evacuate the students to that location. It may be in the open initially but should transition to a building as soon as one is cleared and safer for occupation. A bomb search and perimeter search for suspect persons could then be commenced but whilst still securing the students and staff.

**The School Response**

1. On receiving a phone call of a combined bomb threat and armed attack threat, the school staff member receiving the threat will:
2. Record the call electronically where possible;
3. Make written notes including the telephone number receiving the call, the time of the call and the contents of the conversation;
4. Do not end the call and leave the line open for tracing purposes; and
5. Advise the Principal, or appointed school delegate, immediately.
6. The Principal, or appointed school delegate, should:
7. Depending on the available information, decide to activate the **Evacuation** or **Lockdown** Process for all staff and students;
8. Contact the QPS and provide all necessary details and specifically that it is a **bomb and armed attack threat**;
9. Manage the movement of staff and students to the places of relative safety;
10. Communicate with staff as per the Evacuation or Lockdown process; and
11. Contact the appointed delegate of any co-located service/s on the school site (e.g. ECEC facility) and advise them of what is occurring.
12. As soon as possible the Principal or their delegate will communicate with their Regional office and provide essential information. The Region is then responsible for communicating with the broader department.
13. On arrival of the QPS the Principal or their delegate will:
14. Provide all relevant information to the officers;
15. Coordinate school activities with the QPS and support their response;
16. Consider QPS advice and comply with any directions given under legislation, e.g. the *Public Safety Preservation Act (PSPA).*
17. The Principal may consider communicating with the school community after considering any advice from the QPS.
18. Coordinate and be prepared to direct the transition from a Lockdown to an Evacuation Procedure or vice versa. Take advise from the QPS.
19. As soon as practicable, the Principal, or appointed school delegate, will communicate with the Regional and advise essential information.
20. Upon being advised that the site is clear, the Principal, or appointed school delegate, will communicate with the Regional and advise essential information.
21. The Principal may discuss with the QPS the maintaining of a QPS presence at the school for an interim period.
22. Once the school has resumed normal operations the Principal, or appointed school delegate, will communicate with the Regional and advise essential information.
23. As soon as practicable the Principal will prepare an Initial Debrief Report to the Regional Office and when practicable conduct a debrief with staff.

**The DET Region and Executive Response Team**

1. On being advised by a school Principal, or their delegate, that a threat has been received, the Region will activate any local support required.
2. The Region will send a group SMS to the following key DET representatives:
3. **0488 755 413**  for State Schooling
4. **0408 785 606** for SCE (Media Unit)
5. **0428 031 783** for ESMU (SMS messaging only)
6. **0467 767 388** for ECEC
7. The text message will provide key information similar to the following:

<*School name*> *<Bomb and Armed Threat >* <*Time received> <Action>*

1. Recipients of the Group SMS will immediately acknowledge receipt of the SMS in the form : *<Recd by State Schooling/SCE/ECEC/ESMU>*
2. The Region will support the School response as requested or per local arrangements.
3. Other areas should refrain from contacting any school and liaise through the Regional representative.
4. Upon being advised that the site is clear, the Region will communicate via SMS to State Schools, SCE, ECEC and ESMU as previous.
5. Upon being advised that the school has resumed normal operations, the Region will communicate via SMS to State Schools, SCE, ECEC and ESMU as previous.
6. If the Executive Coordination Centre (ECC) is activated, it will be the Departments ‘single point of truth’ and will manage support to the Regions if requested. The ECC will prepare and distribute SITREPS and Media Releases.
7. The ECC will be responsible for liaising with the Brisbane Police Communications Centre (PCC) or an established overarching QPS Investigation Centre (IC) for this or related incidents.
8. At the conclusion of the policing actions and upon the resumption of normal operations the Region will coordinate obtaining an Initial Debrief Report from the school on the same day of the incident and forward it to the ESMU or ECC.

**The QPS Response.**

1. The QPS will task suitable resources to the school as soon as possible.
2. Upon arrival at the school, if they hear gunfire within the school they may adopt a tactical response and may not engage with the Principal until sometime later when the threat has been contained or mitigated. This will cause a larger and more protracted police response and presence at the school.
3. Should any suspicious person or persons be located they will proceed as required and should communicate with the Principal as soon as practicable of the situation.
4. Otherwise, as soon as practicable the police may:
5. Locate the Principal, or appointed school delegate, and obtain all relevant information;
6. Assess the situation and develop strategy to search the school for any possible armed attacker; and
7. Coordinate with the school staff and any other co-located service, e.g. ECEC facility.
8. Work with the Principal to coordinate the movement of staff and students to more secure areas.
9. At the conclusion of the policing actions to search for armed attackers or bombs and when the school area is considered safe, the Principal, or appointed school delegate, will be notified so the necessary steps can be taken for the school to recommence.
10. Obtain all relevant information from the Principal or appointed school delegate for the investigation.

**Date for Review**

Due to the nature of the threats that have caused the compilation of this strategy having only recently emerged, it is necessary that these protocols should be reviewed on 30 June 2018.

