

Australian Lutheran College

Hebart Hall: Building Evacuation Policy and Procedure

Introduction

ALC has clearly defined evacuation procedures and evacuation points for a rapid, coordinated and controlled response to emergencies where evacuation of ALC's main teaching and administration building, Hebart Hall, is necessary.

Purpose

These guidelines are designed to provide a clear, step by step procedure for a safe and orderly evacuation of occupants from the building in an emergency, to an assembly point at a safe place for a roll call. A key objective is to ensure that everyone in the building is accounted for following the evacuation.

Organisational scope

All occupants of Hebart Hall.

Policy

In order to avoid delay, confusion and possible injury in the event of an emergency, it is essential that evacuation procedures and organisational arrangements are well understood and regularly practised by staff and students who occupy the building at any time.

The evacuation is to be undertaken as quickly as possible, with all present in the building exiting from it. This will occur

- at the initiation of a fire/emergency evacuation drill; or
- in the event of an actual emergency or situation arising such as a fire, earthquake or other natural event necessitating leaving the building as soon as possible.

Evacuation procedure

Whether an evacuation is a real event or a practice drill, everyone is to respond when the alarm is sounded as though it is a genuine emergency, and is to exit the building immediately.

Exit routes

Each room in the building has a posted evacuation route. All building occupants are advised to familiarise themselves with the respective site plan and predetermined exit routes.

Summary

- The building evacuation will commence with the sounding of an alarm/signal device.
- All occupants—staff, students and/or visitors—are to leave offices and classrooms immediately, moving in an orderly manner and following predetermined exit routes. These are shown in site plan fire evacuation route signs adjacent to or as close as possible to the exits from Hebart Hall rooms and offices. Primary exits are to be used wherever possible. In some instances secondary exit routes are available and provided for cases where the primary exit is not able to be used.
- Students in each classroom are to follow directions from the person in charge (lecturer or group leader overseeing the session.)
- When all students and visitors have left the room, the person in charge should leave and close the door to prevent spread of fire and smoke.
- All occupants are to assemble on the sacred lawn for roll call.

Responsibility

Nominated staff will have the responsibility to account for designated individuals and groups of staff members and students.

Staff

Fire wardens

Six staff members, whose offices are located on the ground and first floors in the north, south and west wings respectively, shall be nominated as fire/emergency wardens. Staff are to be informed as to who is their warden.

Role of fire wardens

The primary role of wardens is not to combat fire and emergencies, but to ensure, as far as practicable, the safety of occupants and their orderly evacuation from emergencies.

The role includes maintaining an updated list of staff in the building section for which they are responsible. This list is to be checked each morning with notations of staff who are absent on that day.

Wardens are to receive prior notice of fire/emergency drills.

All staff

The role of fire wardens in maintaining and checking daily staff lists reinforces an element of human resource management that requires all staff who have not given previous notice that they will be absent on the current day, to notify via a SharePoint announcement or to Enquiries of their absence. This notification is to be given as soon as practicable but not later than 10:00 am. If required, Enquiries shall notify both the staff member's line manager and the respective fire warden of such absence.

The documentation also shall indicate staff who are absent from ALC for work purposes, and where applicable staff who are absent on recreation, recuperative, sick leave, or any other leave paid or unpaid, or absences for any other purpose. SharePoint notifications are to be considered documentation of absences for the purposes of this policy.

Warden evacuation duties

Following the signal to evacuate the building, wardens are to check the rooms in the respective wings for which each has responsibility to ensure that all staff have left the building.

When an evacuation is a practice drill, there is no actual safety issue involved in undertaking this check. The drill's major objective is to see whether the prescribed procedures are observed, and that they are appropriate and effective. Where problems become evident, such as procedures not observed or aspects of procedures not achieving the desired outcome, details are to be recorded and corrective action taken. As one example of dealing with a potentially serious weakness, wardens are to document and report where occupants fail to leave their rooms immediately, and the administration subsequently will reinforce to those persons the importance of leaving the building without delay. Failure to observe this could lead to serious injury and possibly even fatalities should an actual emergency arise.

If an emergency—that is, not a drill—occurs and the alarm is sounded, wardens will not enter offices. All staff, including wardens, are to leave the building immediately. Wardens are to take the respective 'staff present' lists with them.

In the case of both drills and emergency situations, staff and others who leave the building shall assemble on 'the sacred lawn'—the area immediately east of the southern wing of the building. Staff shall identify themselves to the wardens and names will be marked from lists.

Immediate action is to be taken if a staff member is not accounted for. In the case of a drill the wardens may re-enter the building in an endeavour to locate those whose names appear on the lists as being present in the building on that day who are not accounted for at the assembly point.

Where the evacuation is the result of a situation occurring and is not a drill, details of those not accounted for are to be provided to the specialist services group (e.g. fire or accident emergency) who will have been called by ALC to deal with the situation and who have the knowledge and skill to re-enter the building where safety permits, to ascertain whether anyone is still inside, and if so, to get them out. This is entirely in the province of the professionals dealing with the situation, and under no circumstances is any staff member to attempt to re-enter the building on their own initiative.

In the case of a drill, wardens can give the all clear for staff and students to re-enter the building. Where there is a situation that is not a drill, neither wardens nor any other staff member are to re-enter the building until appropriate clearance is given and the building declared safe by the emergency services group in attendance.

Leaders and students attending classes

Emergency procedure reminders

Lecturers should ensure that at the commencement of semester, or before commencing seminars or other meetings, those present are advised of the exits to use in the event of a fire or other emergency.

Attendance records

Because of the constant and ongoing movement and change of students attending various classes at scheduled times during the week, the maintenance of accurate records is essential for all students attending classes. The keeping of accurate attendance records also is a requirement of independent quality associated student accreditation standards.

At the commencement of each class or group, the person in charge of the class or meeting (lecturer, supervisor, coordinator etc.) shall mark attendees present.

Evacuation procedures

Irrespective of whether the signal to evacuate the building arises from a drill or from an actual emergency, each person in charge shall ensure that all attendees leave each room immediately and follow the prescribed exit route. Leaders shall take attendance lists with them. Leaders and students shall rendezvous in the same area as ALC staff. The leader of each class or group shall mark students' names from attendance lists and report to the Chief Fire Warden. Action taken with regard to students not accounted for on the lists shall follow the same process applied in respect of any staff who may not have been accounted for.

Obtaining clearance is essential before re-entering the building and returning to classrooms. Wardens are to authorise this in the case of a drill, or the emergency services group in attendance has the prerogative to do so in the event of a situation that is not a drill.

Location and usage of fire extinguishers

Wardens are to be familiar with the location points of all fire extinguishers and are to be trained in their use. Wardens are to meet twice yearly with representatives of the firm that supplies and

services fire extinguishers. Professional advice sought is to include guidance on the types of situations when ALC staff may use extinguishers with safety thereby avoiding calling fire services unnecessarily; or where fire services are called, the use of extinguishers pending the arrival of fire services could be warranted to prevent or reduce the risk of personal injury or property damage. The overriding factor in all such circumstances is the safety of all staff involved and for this reason regular advice and direction from professionals on what to do in emergency situations is essential.

Fire/emergency exit drills

Two drills are to be held during each academic year at times to optimise involvement of as many staff and students as possible.