



# AUSTRALIAN REFUGEE VOLUNTEERS INC

## EXTREME WEATHER POLICY & PROCEDURE

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### SCOPE AND PURPOSE

**This policy applies to:** Australian Refugee Volunteers Inc (ARV) Executive Committee, Program ICs, program managers, client managers and volunteer managers. It is the responsibility of program/admin team ICs to ensure that the rest of their team is aware of and familiar with this policy.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of both clients and volunteers on days of extreme weather or other emergency situations.

This policy has been developed in consultation with Program ICs. ARV reserves the right to amend this policy at its discretion, and will notify users of amendments.

### POLICY

On days of extreme weather or other emergency situations, ARV activities may be cancelled to ensure the safety of volunteers and clients.

Extreme weather may include extreme wind, rain, hail or thunderstorms. This will include but may not be limited to situations where severe weather warnings have been issued by the Bureau of Meteorology.

**Decision-making:** Program ICs are responsible for deciding whether or not a program is to be cancelled. Decisions to cancel programs should not be made lightly although should be carefully considered where there is a risk to clients and/or volunteers if the program proceeds. Programs should be cancelled with the agreement of both Program ICs. If both Program ICs are unable to agree on whether a program should be cancelled or continue (or if there is only one Program IC at the time), they should contact the ARV Presidents immediately, who will assist with the final decision.

**Note regarding wet weather:** Programs should not be cancelled simply for wet weather unless it is extreme weather. Contingency plans for indoor activities should be in place where wet weather is foreseeable. Program Admin teams should remind volunteers to bring umbrellas/raincoats in the event of wet weather and to seek that clients also bring umbrellas/raincoats. Volunteers should also be reminded not to allow clients to walk in more than light rain showers without wet weather protection.

### PROCEDURE

**Timing:** The decision to cancel a program should be made and communicated as soon as possible, ideally this should be done one day before the program. If, on the day before a program, it is possible although not yet necessary that the program may be cancelled, communication should still be made to volunteers the day before the program foreshadowing the possibility of its cancellation. This should then be followed up in the morning by 7.30am with the final decision (including if the program is to continue).

Where the decision to cancel a program could only reasonably be made on the morning of the program (for example, due to sudden extreme weather conditions overnight or that morning), the decision must be made and communicated to volunteers by no later 7.30am on the



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morning of the program. This is to ensure that volunteers have not yet unnecessarily left their homes in dangerous conditions.

**Notification:** In the event of cancelling a program, notification of the cancellation should be made *as soon as possible* to those involved as follows:

- **Program ICs:** must notify their Volunteer Manager, client Manager and Program Manager as soon as possible after the decision has been made to cancel a program. This notification should be by way of phone call, or otherwise ensuring that the notification has been received, and that each person is aware of their responsibilities for notifying others of the cancellation. Program ICs should also notify the ARV Presidents of the cancellation as soon as possible, followed up with an email confirmation setting out why the cancellation was necessary and confirming that all involved have been notified. Program ICs may also be required to assist Client Managers and/or Volunteer Managers with telephone calls if required.
- **Volunteer Manager:** must notify all confirmed volunteers of the cancellation by way of text message requesting acknowledgement from the volunteer. If acknowledgment is not received, volunteers should be telephoned to ensure they are aware of the cancellation.
- **Client Manager:** must notify all confirmed clients of the cancellation by way of telephone call to the clients' parents.
- **Program Manager:** must notify all facilitators and venues of the cancellation by telephone call, setting out why the cancellation is necessary and enquiring about cancellation policies regarding payment of fees and refunds. The cancellation should also be confirmed in email to each relevant party.

**Admin days:** In the case of extreme weather or another emergency situation on an Admin day, the Presidents are responsible for deciding whether or not Admin Day should be cancelled. Notification of the decision to be made as follows:

- **The Presidents** should advise all ICs of any decision to cancel Admin Day as early as possible, and no later than 7.30am on the day.
- **All ICs** (both for Program and Admin teams) will be responsible for contacting their respective team members about the cancellation as soon as possible and by no later than 8am on the day. Program ICs will also be responsible for ensuring that their admin team proceeds with the arrangements and planning for the following program day.
- **The Recruitment team** will be responsible for contacting new recruits regarding the cancellation of their training as soon as possible and by no later than 8.30am.
- **The Presidents** will be responsible for contacting STARTTS to notify them of the cancellation of venue hire. The Executive Committee will also be available to assist with contacting admin team members or new recruits where necessary.



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### VERSION HISTORY

<b>Versions</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Drafted/reviewed by</b>
Version 1	August 2016	Kiri Libbesson, co-Vice President