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Version 02

How to Prepare a PEEP Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan

For

Specialist Disability Accommodation



ADDRESS

Unit 6, 20 Duerdin Street
Clayton, Vic, 3186
Australia



CALL US

(03) 9001 5805
1300 994 890



EMAIL & WEB

office@equalaccessgroup.com.au
disabilityaccessconsultants.com.au

Overview

Equal Access, disability access and egress consultancy has prepared a series of documents to assist organisations in meeting their responsibility to provide a safe living environment for people with disability in their care. Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) is provided to National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participants who meet the eligibility criteria of 'having an extreme functional impairment and/or very high support needs.'

These documents provide the tools for organisations to prepare Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) for SDA participants in their care in case of an emergency.

This template is intended to identify the needs of individuals; there may be further considerations that are not detailed within the standard template. Any additional required actions should be listed in the applicable summary section.

What is a PEEP?

A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) documents how people with disability will be assisted to evacuate in an emergency when they have difficulty responding to an alarm or escape from a building unassisted.

PEEPs are essential for people with disability living in SDA, including people with Physical, Sensory, Intellectual, Psychiatric, Neurological and Learning Disabilities.

Each PEEP shall be unique to the individual and based on their abilities during an emergency. It considers what procedures, equipment or human supports are needed to enable them to reach a place of safety quickly and efficiently.

A PEEP should be completed before moving into the SDA to ensure all processes and equipment if required, will be available from day one

Using this Guide

This document will provide a step-by-step guide on preparing a PEEP for a participant being supported in SDA .

This document references two other key documents:

- SDA PEEP Questionnaire – This document provides a framework to examine the building the SDA is provided within and to assess the participant's ability during an emergency.
- SDA PEEP Template – This document is a blank template that includes fields to be completed based on the responses obtained from completing the questionnaire. It also summarises the participant's needs when emergency services personnel arrive on-site.

Consultation

When developing individual Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans, consultation must be had with the building's owner and the building Fire Protection Consultant and should be included within the developed evacuation plan.

NOTE: These documents have been provided as guidance documents only; Equal Access Group Pty Ltd will not accept any liability for their use.

Evacuation Plan Considerations

Important points to remember in an emergency

- The issue of safety is an important one for people with disability if they need to rely on another person for assistance
- Some people may not hear or respond to emergency warnings, sirens, bells, shouts or lights
- Visual clues or communications may be limited by poor visibility due to smoke or electrical failure

Fire Engineering

If the building involves fire engineering as part of its certification, request a copy of the fire-engineered report from the building owner/manager to determine what has been proposed for occupants with disability, including:

- Physical – wheelchair users, amputees, etc.
- Intellectual – autism, down syndrome, etc.
- Psychiatric – schizophrenia, depression, etc.
- Sensory – hearing, vision, touch
- Neurological – epilepsy, acquired brain injury, Parkinson's disease, MS

Fire Ratings

Some SDA homes or apartments will be designed with fire-rated walls, doors or compartments. This will be detailed within the fire-engineered report. However, fire ratings typically will be 30 minutes, 60 minutes or 90 minutes. It is important to understand this applies only to the structural integrity of the building elements such as walls, doors, ceilings etc. The fire rating does not consider the smoke developed during a fire, so whilst the dwelling may still be structurally sound, the building could still be full of smoke. The longer the evacuation takes, the more smoke will potentially be developed.

This video demonstrates how quickly a fire can develop: [Residential Fire Development](#)

Fire Sprinklers

Fire sprinklers' impact within Specialist Disability Accommodation for life protection cannot be underestimated. In most cases, fire sprinklers will extinguish the fire or at least slow its spread and reduce the production of toxic smoke and gasses. Their activation may also provide more time for the evacuation of participants.

This video shows how effective fire sprinklers are: [Fire Sprinkler Effectiveness](#)

The Role of the On-site Overnight Assistance (OOA) in Evacuation

On-site Overnight Assistance (OOA) is staff who provide support services overnight to participants living in SDA. The primary role of an OOA is the delivery of care:

- Getting in or out of bed
- Personal care
- Turning and repositioning
- Medication and pain relief
- Hydration and nourishment

- Temperature regulation
- Reassurance and emotional support
- Supervision and safety

The author of this document believes that staff providing OOA should not be responsible for emergency evacuation. Staff providing OOA have the same right to evacuate a building safely in an emergency as any other occupant; they do not participate in emergency evacuation training.

If multiple occupants are in an SDA, the staff providing OOA must not be responsible for deciding who to evacuate and in what order. This is further exacerbated based on the ratio of one OOA staff managing ten participants in SDA apartments.

Who, other than Emergency Services, should evacuate SDA Participants?

Incorrect Assumptions - Robust and Improved Liveability Participants

SDAs are based on four broad categories of design: Improved Liveability, Fully Accessible, Robust, and High Physical Support.

Although Fully Accessible & High Physical Support cater for people that use wheelchairs and will generally require assistance to evacuate, participants within the Improved Liveability and Robust categories, whilst not likely to require wheelchairs, will, in most cases, still need a high level of assistance to evacuate.

People with cognitive, intellectual, neurological and learning disability or physical disability requiring crutches or walking frames may take longer to evacuate a building, increasing the risk of injury. It is not satisfactory for certifiers, fire engineers, and Supported Independent Living (SILs) to accept that people within Improved Liveability and Robust homes can self-evacuate. PEEPs must be prepared for all SDA participants.

The Role of Emergency Services

The following items need to be considered when developing the PEEP:

- How will emergency services be notified? OOA or participants calling, Smoke/ Thermal Detection systems or automated with the fire indicator panel?
- For evacuation, how will emergency services know:
 - How many SDA participants are on site?
 - The location of SDA participants is especially important in multi-storey developments
 - What disability do the participants have?
 - How can participants be evacuated so as not to cause further injury?
 - Do participants require life safety equipment such as respirators to take with them?
- What are the expected Time Frames?
 - How long will it take emergency services to arrive on site and take control?
 - How long will emergency services take to get to the level the participant is on?
 - How long will it take for emergency services to evacuate the participant from arrival on-site?
 - Due to extended evacuation times, should protection from smoke be considered?
- How will emergency services personnel evacuate the participant?
 - Will the participant be manually carried out of the dwelling, possibly risking participant injury?

- For a single-level building, will they be placed in an emergency evacuation device?
- For a multi-level building, will they be placed in a stairway emergency evacuation device?
- If the participant is in bed, will they be placed into a non-motorised chair to be carried out?
- Will they be placed in a stairway emergency evacuation device?
- Will participants require additional equipment to be taken out with them, like a respirator?

Make contact with your local fire station, as you will find they will be very willing to assist.

Assistance Animals

If the participant has an assistance animal, has consideration been given to how it will be rescued? Items to consider include:

- Does the animal have a suitable ID?
- How will the animal be evacuated?
- Can the animal be secured with a leash?
- Ensure an assistance animal first aid kit is available

Preparing the PEEP

Answering the Questionnaire

The first part of preparing a PEEP is to complete the questionnaire. This questionnaire will detail the building risks and participants' physical, neurological/cognitive and general medical considerations.

- Step 1 Complete the questionnaire within the template.
- Step 2 Review the responses for sections 1- 4 from the questions and prepare a summary

Completing the Template

Complete the PEEP template as follows:

- Step 1 Complete the details section
- Step 2 Copy the summaries from the questionnaire into the respective areas of the PEEP
- Step 3 Based on the summarised information, prepare the emergency evacuation processes
- Step 4 Prepare and complete the summary for emergency services at the top of the form
- Step 5 Complete the final check
- Step 6 Place a copy of the PEEP in either the fire indicator panel or switchboard for easy access by emergency services

Appendix A: Evacuation Equipment

Having the right equipment can be the difference between survival and disaster in an emergency. Is the Specialist Disability Accommodation you are responsible for equipped with the tools you need to ensure the participants living in the home stay safe in an emergency?

Types of Evacuation Equipment

Evacuation Chairs

Evacuation Chairs are compact and foldable mobile chairs used to evacuate people with disability downstairs. Evacuation chairs may be manual or have a battery-powered motor, and the chairs have wheels and rubber tracks, allowing for a controlled descent. Generally, evacuation chairs have speed regulation devices and braking systems that control the speed of descent and have an additional brake when stationary.



Standard Evacuation Chair

Two-wheeled chair and tracks, including two retractable wheels.

This style is a lightweight single-user operation emergency evacuation chair. It glides downstairs quickly and smoothly to ensure no heavy lifting or manual handling.

These chairs include a chest and head strap for support, wall mounting brackets and a dust cover.

SDA Suitability

- Improved Liveability
- Fully Accessible



Premium Evacuation Chair

Four-wheeled chair and tracks.

A single operator can use it thanks to the unique friction-controlled tracked system. These evacuation chairs include over-shoulder head straps for support, wall mounting brackets and a dust cover. The over-shoulder straps provide a higher level of support than a chest strap for people with little or no core strength, preventing them from slumping forward during evacuation.

SDA Suitability

- Improved Liveability
- Fully Accessible
- High Physical Support (Recommended)



Motorised Evacuation Chair/ Stairclimber Four-wheel chair with motorised tracks.

A motorised evacuation chair/stair climber can assist people with mobility impairment or health conditions up and down stairs. It is perfect for use in commercial and residential sectors where there are issues with lift reliability. These devices provide an industry-proven, easily managed solution that staff can implement without creating an OH&S risk for the operator or the transported individual.

SDA Suitability

- Improved Liveability
- Fully Accessible
- High Physical Support

Evacuation Sleds

Evacuation Sleds are devices that can easily evacuate a non-ambulatory person down multiple flights of stairs quickly and safely. They allow staff to transport evacuees 2 – 3 times their weight with no lifting as they use a roll-and-drag method of movement.



Rigid Style Evacuation Sled

Made from high-density plastic that can be dragged over debris with minimal to no damage. Along with being easy to use and manoeuvre through hallways, the sled can be lowered safely downstairs for the evacuation of multiple floored buildings. Depending on the model, a braking system can be provided on every sled, allowing for controlled stairs descent.

SDA Suitability

- Improved Liveability
- Fully Accessible
- High Physical Support



Mattress Style Evacuation Sled

Made out of the world's strongest fibre, Dyneema (15 times stronger than steel), these evacuation mattresses include head blocks to support the head and a board at the foot's end to stabilise the weight. These are comfortable and easy-to-use evacuation mattresses that can help you safely evacuate an immobile individual from a building in case of fire or other emergency events. Ready to use in 30 seconds, when every second counts.

SDA Suitability

- Improved Liveability
- Fully Accessible
- High Physical Support

Smoke Masks

If your home is at risk of fire, having the appropriate emergency escape hoods as part of your evacuation plan ensures you are well prepared. The need for additional evacuation safety measures is greatly increased for people with mobility disability who live within a multi-level building or complex. By including emergency escape hoods as part of your fire evacuation plan, you can provide additional protection for yourself and those in your care.



Toxic smoke kills faster than fire – these emergency smoke escape hoods protect you from this fate. If you can protect yourself, you can help others, especially when an evacuation takes longer due to the participants' abilities.

Effective minutes: Maximum 60 minutes with good air tightness

Protect from :

- Carbon monoxide (CO)
- Hydrogen cyanide (HCN)
- Toxic smoke
- Heat radiation

SDA Suitability

- Participants
- Staff

Deaf Alarms

Deafgard is a portable wireless device that alerts people in an emergency. It works by placing the vibration pad underneath the sleeping person's pillow or mattress. The pad vibrates at the sound of the alarm and awakens the person, so they can quickly get to safety without unnecessary assistance or intrusion.



As soon as your fire or smoke alarm sounds, Deafgard will vibrate and display bright flashing LED lighting and an LCD screen displaying "FIRE", sure to wake even the soundest sleeper into action. Wireless technology makes the device portable and adapts to your existing fire alarm system.

SDA Suitability

- Participants that are hearing impaired

Appendix B: Additional Resources

The following links are provided to guide how the evacuation of people with disability can be managed.

EvacuLife

- How would you feel if you were left behind in an emergency?
evaculife.com.au/blog/how-would-you-feel-if-you-were-left-behind-in-an-emergency-disability/
- Residential High Rise Evacuation
evaculife.com.au/blog/residential-high-rise-evacuation/
- Home Fire Safety Tips for High-Risk Groups
evaculife.com.au/blog/home-fire-safety-tips-for-high-risk-groups/
- Stairway Evacuation Devices, Fire Engineering Reports and the Building Codes
evaculife.com.au/blog/stairway-evacuation-devices-fire-engineering-reports-and-the-building-codes/
- Emergency Management and Evacuation
evaculife.com.au/blog/emergencymanagement-and-evacuation/
- Evacuation of people with a disability
evaculife.com.au/blog/evacuation-of-people-with-a-disability/
- Lift Breakdowns: Why Powered Evacuation Chairs Are Critical During Lift Failures
evaculife.com.au/blog/lift-breakdowns/
- Disabled Can't Get Down Low and Go Go Go
evaculife.com.au/blog/get-down-low-and-go-go-go/

SDA Consulting

- Making Emergency Management Compliance of SDA's Simple
sdaconsulting.com.au/making-emergency-management-compliance-of-sdas-simple/
- SDAs Must Have Sprinklers
sdaconsulting.com.au/sdas-must-have-sprinklers/
- Alarm Notifications For The Deaf And Hard Of Hearing Community
sdaconsulting.com.au/alarm-notifications-for-the-deaf-and-hard-of-hearing-community/
- The Failures of SDA and Fire Safety
sdaconsulting.com.au/failures-of-sda-and-fire-safety/
- Fire Safety for Specialist Disability Accommodation
sdaconsulting.com.au/fire-safety-for-specialist-disability-accommodation/
- Why your SDA might be a Class 3 and not a Class 1a or 1b
sdaconsulting.com.au/dwelling-might-class-3-not-class-1/

Disclaimer

SDA Consulting Australia, Access & Safety and EvacuLife are part of the Equal Access Group Pty Ltd. The recommendations made within this document should not be considered a recommendation to use any of the businesses listed above to provide products or services. The recommendations are made only to highlight requirements or products required, not the equipment or services discussed.