Excursions and Camps PolicyWaratah Special Developmental School





Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school office.

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the processes and procedures Waratah SDS will use when planning and conducting camps, excursions and adventure activities for students.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all camps and excursions organised by Waratah SDS. This policy also applies to adventure activities organised by Waratah SDS, regardless of whether they take place on or off school grounds.

This policy is intended to complement the Department's policy and guidelines on excursions, camps and adventure activities which all Victorian government schools are required to follow. Waratah SDS will follow both this policy, as well as the Department's policy and guidelines when planning for and conducting camps and excursions.

This policy does not apply to student workplace learning or intercampus travel.

DEFINITIONS

Excursions:

For the purpose of this policy, excursions are activities organised by the school where the students:

- are taken out of the school grounds (for example, a camp, day excursion, school sports);
- undertake adventure activities, regardless of whether or not they occur outside the school grounds;

Camps are excursions involving at least one night's accommodation (including school sleep-overs).

Local excursions are excursions to locations within walking distance of the school and do not involve 'Adventure Activities'.

Adventure activities are activities that involve a greater than normal risk. Further information and examples of adventure activities are available on the Department's Policy and Advisory Library, at the following link:

https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/guidance/adventure-activities

Note: workplace learning activities (such as work experience) and intercampus travel are not considered school excursions.

POLICY

Camps and excursions can provide a valuable educational experience for our students which are complementary to their learning, as they provide access to resources, environments and expertise that may not be available in the classroom. Developing social skills is an important component of students' education. Our students benefit greatly by experiencing a range of new situations and practicing skills in real life situations. A number of programs occur out in the community to enable these skills to be taught in context.

For all camps and excursions, including adventure activities, our school will follow the Department's Policy and Advisory Library: <u>Excursions</u>.

Planning process for camps and excursions

All camps and excursions will comply with Department planning requirements.

Part of this planning process includes conducting risk assessments, to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to minimise the risks associated with each proposed camp or excursion. Waratah SDS's risk assessment will include consideration of arrangements for supervision of students and consideration of the risk of bushfire activity in the excursion location. In the event of a Code Red Day being announced, excursions or camp activities in effected locations will be cancelled or rescheduled. Planning will also cover arrangements for cancelling, recalling or altering the camp or excursion for any other reason.

Waratah SDS is committed to ensuring students with additional needs are provided with an inclusive camps and excursions program and will work with families during the planning stage, as needed, to support all students' attendance and participation in camp and excursion activities.

In cases where a camp or excursion involves a particular class or year level group, the Organising Teacher will ensure that there is an alternative educational program available and appropriate supervision for those students not attending the camp or excursion.

Supervision

Waratah SDS follows the Department's guidelines in relation to supervision of students during excursions and camps.

All excursion staff (including parent volunteers) will be familiar with supervision requirements and the specific procedures for dealing with emergencies on each camp and excursion.

All school staff will be aware that they retain overall responsibility for the supervision and care of students throughout all camps and excursions (including adventure activities), regardless of whether or not external providers are managing the activity.

Parent volunteers

Parents may be invited to assist with excursions. School staff will notify parents/carers of any costs associated with attending. School staff are in charge of camps and excursions and parent/carer volunteers are expected to follow teachers' instructions. When deciding which parents/carers will attend, the Organising Teacher will take into account: any valuable skills

the parents/carers have to offer (e.g. bus licence, first aid etc.) and the special needs of particular students.

Volunteer and external provider checks

Waratah SDS requires all volunteers and all external providers working directly with our students to have a current Working with Children Check card.

Parent/carer consent

For all camps and excursions, other than local excursions (within a 2km radius), Waratah SDS will provide parents/carers with a specific consent form outlining the details of the proposed activity. Permission forms will be sent home with students for parents/carers to sign. Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school to discuss any questions or concerns that they or their child may have with a proposed camp or excursion.

For local excursions, Waratah SDS will provide parents and carers with an annual Local Excursions consent form at the start of each school year or upon enrolment if students enrol during the school year. Example School will also provide advance notice to parents/carers of an upcoming local excursion through notes in the school bag. For local excursions that occur on a recurring basis (for example weekly outings to the local oval for sports lessons), Waratah SDS will notify parents once only prior to the commencement of the recurring event.

Cost of camps and excursions, refunds and support

The cost of all camps and excursions are to be paid by parents/carers unless alternative arrangements have been agreed to by the Principal prior to the excursion. All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for all activities. Consent forms will have clearly stated payment amounts and payment finalisation dates.

Waratah SDS will make all efforts to ensure that students are not excluded for financial reasons. Families experiencing financial difficulty are invited to discuss alternative payment arrangements with the Business Manager/Principal/Organising teacher. The Business Manager/Principal/Organising Teacher can also discuss family eligibility for the Department's Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF), which provides payments for eligible students to attend school activities, including camps and excursions. Applications for the CSEF are open to families holding a valid means-tested concession card or temporary foster parents and are facilitated by the school. Further information about the CSEF and the application form are available at Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund.

Refunds

If a camp or excursion is cancelled or altered by the school, or a student is no longer able to attend part or all of the camp or excursion, our school will consider requests for partial or full refunds of payments made by parents/carers on a case-by-case basis taking into account the individual circumstances. Generally, we will not be able to refund payments made for costs that have already been paid where those funds have already been transferred or committed to a third party and no refund is available to the school. Where possible, we will provide information about refunds to parents/carers at the time of payment.

Student health

Parents and carers need to ensure the school has up-to-date student health information prior to camps and excursions. A member of staff will be appointed with responsibility for the health

needs of the students for each camp/excursion. Teachers will administer any medication provided according to our *Medication* policy and the student's signed *Medication Authority Form*. To meet the school's obligations relating to safety, a first aid kit and mobile phone will be taken by teachers on all camps and excursions.

It is the responsibility of parents and carers to ensure their child/children are in good health when attending excursions and camps. If a student becomes ill during a camp and is not able to continue at camp it is the parent/carer's responsibility to collect them and cover any associated costs. If the Principal approves a student joining a camp late, transport to the camp is the parent/carer's responsibility.

Behaviour expectations

Students participating in camps and excursions are required to cooperate and display appropriate behaviour to ensure the camp or excursion is a safe, positive and educational experience for all students involved.

Parents/carers will be notified if their child is in danger of losing the privilege to participate in an excursion or camp due to behaviour that does not meet the standards of behaviour set out in the school's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal or Assistant Principal, in consultation with the Organising Teacher. Both the parent/carer and the student will be informed of this decision prior to the camp or excursion.

If on a camp or excursion the Teacher in Charge considers an individual student's behaviour does not meet required standards, then the Principal or their nominee may determine that a student should return home during the camp or excursion. In these circumstances the parent/carer is responsible for the collection of the student and any costs associated with this.

Disciplinary measures apply to students on camps and excursions consistent with our school's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*, *Student Code of Conduct* and *Bullying Prevention Policy*.

Electronic Devices

Students will be permitted to bring electronic devices (such as iPads, iPods, mobile phones) but these may only be used during times set by the Teacher in Charge.

Food

Students are not permitted to bring their own supply of food items to camps and excursions unless the item is medically indicated and discussed with the Organising Teacher or included as an item on the clothing and equipment list for that camp or excursion.

Accident and Ambulance Cover

Any costs associated with student injury rest with parents/carers unless the Department is liable in negligence (liability is not automatic).

Unless otherwise indicated, Waratah SDS and the Department do not provide student accident or ambulance cover. Parents/carers may wish to obtain student accident insurance cover and/or ambulance cover, depending on their health insurance arrangements and any other personal considerations.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following way: Included in staff induction processes and staff training

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Department polices and guidelines:

- Excursions
- Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund
- Parent Payments Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy

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The following school policies are also relevant to this Camps and Excursions Policy: Statement of Values and School Philosophy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	March 2022
Consultation	With staff
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	March 2026

APPENDIX A

Adventure Activities

The following information is additional to the requirements relating to all excursions. Mandatory guidelines are also provided in relation to specific adventure activities, under each activity name below.

An adventure activity is an activity that involves greater than normal risk which may include:

- physical activities beyond the scope of the regular physical education curriculum
- travel into a relatively undeveloped area of the country in which vehicle contact is difficult and/or uncertain
- confrontation with natural environmental challenges requiring greater reliance upon personal resources than would normally be required in day-to-day life
- less than normal contact by person or by telephone, with medical and other public services available in normal day-to-day life
- exposure to the natural elements with less than the normal physical protection provided in day-to-day life
- theme parks, fun parks and trampoline centres
- an activity listed under the Adventure Activities Guidelines, outlined below.

If a principal does not have detailed knowledge of an adventure activity as listed in the Adventure Activities Guidelines below, it is recommended that further information and advice is sought from:

- activity peak bodies (see activity specific guidelines)
- teachers or other qualified person with recent experience instructing the activity, who can offer an understanding of both the technical requirements and the educational context.

Pre-activity Check Statement

Prior to any adventure activity, the teacher in charge of the activity must undertake a pre-activity check (see template Pre-Activity Check). The pre-activity check aims to identify any reasonably foreseeable issues that could possibly affect the planned activity negatively particularly in regards to the safety of the participants and staff.

A pre-activity check must include establishing:

- the current weather, warnings and forecast conditions
- the fire danger index and current fire conditions and warnings
- the conditions and nature of the environment in which the activity is being undertaken and the impact on the activity
- the psychological and physical health and wellbeing of participants and staff on the activity
- the condition of the activity specific and safety equipment being used in conducting of the activity e.g. helmets, life jackets, bikes etc.

A decision to proceed with the activity, modify it, cancel it or implement contingency plans should be made based on the pre-activity check and any issues that could reasonably be considered to negatively affect the activity and/ or the health and wellbeing of the participants and staff.

Adventure activity guidelines

The safe running of outdoor and adventure activities requires:

- · appropriate planning
- · the identification of potential risks and difficulties
- · active decision making.

These adventure activity guidelines are for developing a risk register specific to the location, activity and group participating. They support teachers' professional judgement and experience. These may be incorporated into the risk register for the overall excursion or developed separately, using the risk registers available in Resources tab – under Activity Specific Risk Registers.

If the excursion has an overnight camping component, the camping guidelines are relevant in addition to any planned specific activities. The length and difficulty of an overnight route should be selected so that groups generally arrive at the camp well before dark, with sufficient energy left to make camp and prepare a meal. This may not, however, be appropriate in all situations, for example, when it is preferable to walk at cooler times of the day.

These adventure activity guidelines are agreed minimum activity standards for adventure operators and they do not necessarily reflect the greater duty of care owed to students.

Specific activities guidelines

- Abseiling
- · Artificial climbing and abseiling walls
- Bushwalking
- Camping
- Canoeing/kayaking
- Challenge ropes courses
- Cycling (including Bicycle Education)
- Horse riding
- Orienteering
- Rafting
- Rock climbing
- Sailing
- Scuba diving
- Sea kayaking
- Snorkelling
- Snow Sports
- Surfing and stand-up paddle boarding
- Swimming and water activities (including instructional swimming)
- Water skiing
- Windsurfing

Adventure activities without guidelines

Schools may consider adventure-based activities for which specific guidelines have not been provided. A thorough risk assessment is critical when undertaking an activity for which guidelines have not been provided.

For these activities schools need to comply with the Australian Adventure Activity Standards, and consider the greater duty of care that is required for students.

Before undertaking these activities, principals must satisfy themselves that the activities:

- are of education value
- are supervised and instructed by appropriately experienced and/or qualified staff
- when offered by an external provider, have appropriate insurance cover.

Further information and advice should also be gathered from more than one source. This may be obtained through:

- peak bodies
- professional associations
- colleagues with experience instructing the activity with students.

Flying Foxes

Flying Foxes are covered under the Challenge Ropes Course Guidelines.

Caving

Caving activities must only be conducted under the following circumstances:

- novices must only attempt the simplest caves
- only teachers and other adults with extensive caving experience lead and supervise students
- there is a ratio of no more than five students to one instructor
- permission to enter caves is obtained from the appropriate land manager.

Flying or hot air ballooning

Only commercial operators licensed to carry passengers can be used for school organised activities.

Unsuitable activities

These activities are unsuitable for school students because of the potential risks involved:

- bungee jumping
- hang gliding or other gliding activities
- parachuting or skydiving
- flying ultra-light aircraft.

APPENDIX B

Approval Proforma for all Excursions and Activities Requiring School Council Approval

Department of Education & Training

This proforma details minimum requirements for school council approval. It must be submitted to the principal for school council approval prior to the excursion.

All information on this proforma is required. Add attachments if necessary.

School councils are responsible for approving:

- overnight excursions
- camps
- interstate/overseas visits
- excursions requiring sea or air travel
- excursions involving weekends or vacations
- adventure activities.

Complete the <u>Student Activity Locator online form</u> three weeks prior to the excursion. Sections with an * have explanatory notes included at the end of this document.

Ensure you have the most current version of this template

Download from the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors website at:

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/outdoor.aspx

PROGRAM NAME, YEAR, LOCATION, DATE(S), TEACHER-IN-CHARGE

Name of program: RDA

Year level(s): MY and Seniors

Location(s): Oaklands Junction

* Date(s): Every Monday of school terms 1-4 2023

Name of teacher-in-charge: Emily Clements

* EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE

Health and Physical Education, Sensory Input, English and Communication, Independence and Social skills

PROGRAM DETAILS

* Program outline, including:

- Students will have their morning tea prior to leaving. Loading of bus will begin at 10:10 and bus departure will be at 10:25am. Bus will reach destination by 11:00am and students will engage in activity.
- A risk assessment has been developed to include all strategies relevant for all students participating in this activity
- If RDA is cancelled on the day due to weather conditions, the students will remain at school and participate in an alternative program

* Overnight accommodation					
Type of accommodation					
☐ Accredited residential campsites ☐ Tents/camping ☐ Other					
Physical location. For example, name, address, or map and grid reference.					
Contact phone number(s): - Residential campsite (if applicable) - Staff mobiles - Other					
A dyonturo activitica					
Adventure activities					
Tick the <u>adventure activities</u> that have been planned to occur during the program:					
☐ Abseiling ☐ Base camping ☐ Bushwalking ☐ Canoeing/kayaking – low ☐ Challenge ropes course – high ☐ Challenge ropes course					
☐ Cycling ☐ Indoor rock climbing					
☐ Orienteering ☐ Rafting ☐ Rock climbing ☐ Sailing ☐ SCUBA diving ☐ Snorkelling					
☐ Snow activities ☐ Surfing ☐ Swimming ☐ Water skiing ☐ Windsurfing ☐ Other:					
The conduct of each activity will comply with the requirements outlined in the Safety Guidelines for that activity.					
Staff providing instruction activities have read the relevant safety guidelines YES					
A risk management plan for the excursion must be completed and attached with this submission. Guidance on the risk management process is available in the section of the website called Planning - Managing Risk .					
* Transport arrangements					
Type of transports and seating capacity: school bus with wheelchair and capacity of 12 people					
Will a member of the supervising staff be driving students? ⊠ Yes ☐ No If yes, list driver(s). Emily Clements and Georgia Tsonis if Emily is away					
Approximate distance between school and destination: 38.2 kilometeres					

All transport requirements comply with the advice in the School Policy and Advisory	
Guide, Transporting Students and VicRoads regulations. YES	

Student Fees	
Student Fees	Registration fee of \$215.00. Parents will be invoiced termly costs directly by RDA

STUDENTS AND STAFF

Students

Number of female students: 4

Number of male students: 1

List required student preparation, if any: See risk assessment and management plans

* Emily Clements and Ha Dang

Where possible all staff members including teachers, school support staff, parents, volunteers and external contractors should be listed. Indicate those who have a current first aid qualification. Indicate staff members with first aid and CPR training including the qualification or certification held.

Emily Clements		

DOCUMENTATION TO BE LODGED PRIOR TO DEPARTURE

Copies of the following completed documents will be lodged with the principal or nominee and the designated school contact, before the program commences. Signed informed consent from parents/guardiansCompleted medical form for all students and staff Detailed itinerary with specific locations and contact numbers

A copy of map(s), including map name, access routes and grid references if required

Staff and student equipment and clothing lists ☐ Group equipment list(s) if necessary A supervision plan that outlines staffing allocations for activities and for non-

programmed periods. This may form part of the detailed itinerary. It must maintain at least the minimum prescribed staffing for adventure activities. Completed staffing details proforma Risk management plan Emergency response plan, including contacts for police, ambulance, doctor, hospital, fire brigade, 24-hour school emergency contact number. This is to be held by staff on the excursion and by the nominated school contact person Other school-specific information:						
Acknowledgement by the teacher-in-charge that all required documentation indicated on this form will be completed prior to the program starting.						
Teacher-in-charge:						
Name Emily Clements Signed Quents Date 02/03/13						
Acknowledgement of receipt of approval proforma for activities requiring school council approval.						
Principal:						
Name Bronwyn Welch Signed From Welch Date 02/03/23						
Approved and minuted at a school council meeting on School Council President: Linda Bollas						
Name Linda Bollas Signed hard copy signed Date 03/03/23 and in policy folder						

APPENDIX C

Explanatory Notes to Approval Proforma

Dates

Consider how the time of year may impact on the wider school program or the effect of seasonal weather conditions.

Educational purpose and program outline

Whatever you hope the students will learn from the program is its educational purpose. The program overview should give school council a basic understanding of how the program aims to achieve the educational purpose.

For example: A three-day residential camp including bushwalking and orienteering to encourage an understanding of the natural environment; develop team working ability; and, introduce map reading and navigational skills in an experiential way.

The supervision strategy should include the nature and level of supervision provided throughout the excursion or activity. You must consider all programmed and non-programmed periods.

Each different location in must be detailed, including the dates at each location. This will have an impact on transport requirements and the emergency response needs of the program.

Contact land managers to determine if permit or access requirements apply for activities that are conducted on public land or in state/national parks.

Joint excursions with other schools must be approved by each school council. Each school must submit an online notification to the Emergency Management and Security Branch.

Overnight accommodation

This includes all forms of overnight accommodation.

Residential camping is at sites with permanent facilities like dormitories, kitchen, showers, toilets, phones and recreation options.

Residential campsites operated or used by Victorian government schools must be accredited with a Department of Education & Training recognised accreditation provider. Refer to the School Policy and Advisory Guide, <u>Venue Selection</u> for current accreditation providers.

When using venues that do not require accreditation such as caravan parks, motels/hotels or ski lodges, schools may wish to refer to the accreditation criteria of a recognised accreditation provider when developing their risk management plan.

Provide details of all accommodation being used with your submission to school council.

Transport

Internal transport is provided by school-owned or private, staff-owned vehicles. External transport is transport provided by contractors, parents or other external providers.

The parent consent form should include a statement advising parents if a private vehicle is used as part of the emergency management plan for a camp or excursion.

If a teacher or staff member will be driving students, the program should allow them adequate rest time prior to driving, consistent with the advice on the <u>transport</u> page of the Safety Guidelines.

Give careful consideration to securing equipment during transportation, including equipment on trailers, roof racks and inside vehicles.

Supervising staff

A <u>Working with Children Check</u> is required for staff members who will supervise students and who are not registered teachers. This does not apply to parent volunteers whose child is participating in the activity/excursion.

Forms

The forms below have been developed by the Department to ensure that schools' legal obligations with regard to the duty of care towards students are met.

Schools are not required to use these exact forms if they have other communication methods for seeking consent and collecting information for excursions. However, schools should ensure that they do not make substantive modifications to the key information, or remove questions contained in these forms, without seeking advice from the Department's Legal Division.

- Template Local Excursion Annual Consent Form (login required)
- Sample Local Excursions Notification (login required)
- Template Parent Consent Form (login required)
- Confidential Medical Information for non-local Excursions
- Confidential Medical History Form for Introductory Scuba Experience

Schools are also reminded that privacy legislation covers the collection of personal information by schools. Further information about the collection of personal information may be found at Privacy and Information Sharing.

Planning Documentation

These documents have been developed to assist in the planning of excursions

- Summary of Excursion Documentation when planning your excursion, use this summary to make sure you have met the minimum documentation requirements
- Excursion Principal Approval Form this must be completed and submitted to the principal for all overnight, adventure activities, interstate, overseas excursions or travel by air or water.
- Excursions and Camps Planning Checklist checklist in line with Department policy to assist staff and principals in planning excursions.
- Pre-Activity Check suggested template for completion of the Pre-Activity Check, a compulsory on the day check before embarking on any adventure activity.
- Documentation of participant preparation, prerequisite skills/knowledge —
 when conducting adventure activities, students' experience, skills and
 preparation pertaining to the activity must be documented in this form.
- Documentation of Staff Qualifications and Experience when conducting adventure activities, staff qualifications and experience (including external providers) pertaining to the activity must be documented in this form.
- Clothing and equipment list (general) sample clothing/equipment list to be adapted by the school relevant to the activity undertaken.
- Sample Emergency Response Procedures a tool to support schools in developing their Emergency Management Plan.
- Communications Plan Template suggested template for communications plans for overnight, overseas, interstate excursions or adventure activities.
- Attendance form for contact-tracing (login required) to assist schools with
 providing excursion venues student details for contact-tracing purposes. An
 electronic or hard copy of the form should be provided to the venue at the
 time of the excursion. Schools can opt to use their own prepared list, but
 excursion organisers must refer to this proforma to ensure they capture all

required information. Please see the School Operations Guide (page 18) (login required) for more information.

Risk Management Tools

- Template Risk Assessment for Local and Day Excursions (login required) template for compulsory risk assessment for local or day excursions.
- Risk register and Emergency Management Plan template (login required) —
 blank risk register template for all overnight, adventure activities, interstate,
 overseas excursions or travel by air or water. This also includes a template for
 the Emergency Management Plan.
- Sample Excursion or Camp Risk Register sample risk register template for all overnight, adventure activities, interstate, or travel by air or water.
- Sample Overseas Travel Risk Register sample risk register for overseas excursions.
- Risk analysis tools understand how the Department's risk rating matrix works.
- Department Risk Management Framework (PDF) this document outlines the Department's approach to risk management. It defines our risk management process, model, appetite, training, reporting and establishes the responsibilities for implementation.
- Department Risk Management Framework (Word) accessible version.
- Risk Management in Schools the Department's risk management policy and guidance for schools.

Activity Specific Risk Registers

Schools may use the below risk registers, developed for specific activities. School must tailor these risk registers to the individual circumstances of their activity and participating group. For guidance on specific activities, see the Guidance tab.

- abseiling
- artificial climbing and abseiling walls
- bush walking
- camping
- canoeing and kayaking
- challenge ropes courses
- cycling
- horse riding
- orienteering
- rafting
- rock climbing
- sailing
- SCUBA diving
- sea kayaking
- snorkelling
- snow activities
- surfing and paddle boarding
- swimming activities
- water skiing
- windsurfing

External information resources

- Ambulance Victoria
- Asthma Australia
- Australian Adventure Activity Standards
- Bureau of Meteorology Telephone Weather Services Directory
- Bus Association of Victoria
- Council of Professional Teaching Associations of Victoria
- Country Fire Authority
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
- Equip Wilderness First Aid Institute
- Marine and Ocean for coastal waters forecast and observations
- MetEye
- Metropolitan Fire Brigade
- Outdoors Victoria
- Parks Victoria
- Red Cross
- St Johns Ambulance (Victoria)
- State Emergency Service
- SunSmart
- Transport Safety Victoria Maritime Safety
- VicEmergency
- VicRoads
- Victoria Police
- Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
- · Victorian Institute of Teaching
- WorkSafe (Victoria)