



ROTARY DISTRICT 9670 YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM COMMITTEE INC.

RISK MANAGEMENT STATEMENT

In District 9670 the Youth Exchange Program provides young people with the opportunity to experience in short term and long term exchanges the cultures, problems and accomplishments of people in other countries. To ensure the long-term success of this Program, the District 9670 Youth Exchange Program (YEP) Committee is committed to the protection of participants from harm, including exploitation, abuse and harassment.

The Program participants include Students (short term and long term), host family members, Rotarians, Rotary Club student Counsellors, sponsoring and hosting Rotary Club members and the members of the District 9670 YEP Committee and their spouses and partners.

This statement sets out to detail the District 9670 YEP Committee's pro-active approach in dealing with aspects to reduce the risk of harm to the participants.

While a risk management program cannot guarantee the elimination of all risk, the following outline attempts to:

- ❖ Systematically identify and evaluate the exposures to harm in the Program.
- ❖ Identify actions that will prevent or mitigate the possibility of harm.
- ❖ Outline the implementation of procedures to address these possibilities of harm.
- ❖ Periodically monitor the results, and where necessary, revise to ensure the Program remains relevant to the changing dynamics of the society.
- ❖ Review the Program as a regular agenda item questioning its operation, improvement and analysis of feedback from the participants.

OUTBOUND EXCHANGE STUDENTS FROM DISTRICT 9670

1. Promotion of the Program- this involves:

- a) Information meetings.
- b) Advertisements in schools.
- c) Information from the District YEP Committee to Certified Rotary Clubs.
- d) Information from Rotary International.
- e) Use of available media.

2. Student Selection- this involves:

- a) Certified Rotary Club interview processes.
- b) The District 9670 YEP Committee interview processes.

3. Preparation of Outbound students- this involves:

- a) Briefing weekends (the nature varies for short term and long term exchanges).
- b) The group of previous year returned Youth Exchange Students.

- c) The current Inbound Youth Exchange Students being hosted by District 9670 Clubs.
- d) The members of the District 9670 YEP Committee, partners and invited speakers.
- e) The parents of former Outbound Students.
- f) The sponsor Rotary Club members and in particular the Club Outbound Student Counsellor.

4. Overseas Districts with which we exchange- this involves:

- a) Exchange arrangements with overseas Certified Districts that conduct their Youth Exchange Program in accordance with Rotary International guidelines.
- b) Developing established lines of communication between Certified District Youth Exchange Committees.
- c) Developing new exchanges in accordance with Rotary International guidelines.
- d) Systematic processing of Youth Exchange documentation prior to the exchange to determine suitability and placement of Students.

5. Insurance-

The District 9670 YEP Committee ensures that all Students in the Program are covered for personal injury and property damage from when they leave home for their exchange to when they return home after their exchange, in accordance with Rotary International guidelines. All Students participating in the Youth Exchange Program are required to provide evidence that they have insurance organised in their own country to provide cover in the event of mishap during the exchange period. No Student will undertake an exchange without providing evidence of having the insurance cover required.

6. Travel to overseas destinations- this involves:

- a) Students are accompanied to the departure airport by parents and friends.
- b) International travel is facilitated by the District YEP Committee through its agent.
- c) The meeting of the Students by the host Clubs/ Districts is made at the nominated arrival airport according to the arrangements made prior to the departure of the Students.
- d) The Students are instructed to notify their natural family on arrival.

7. Difficulties that may arise during the exchange

To minimise difficulties that may arise, the members of the District 9670 YEP Committee are in contact with the Students regularly. The following procedures are in place.

- a) Students are required to send to the District 9670 YEP Committee a monthly report.
- b) Each Country YEO is required to report to the monthly meeting of the District YEP Committee on the status of their Students.
- c) The maintenance of contact with the parents of the exchange Students.
- d) The Students are encouraged to maintain contact with their sponsor Rotary Club Counsellor during the exchange period.
- e) Regular contact with Youth Exchange Program counterparts in overseas Districts.
- f) YEP Committee contact with sponsoring Clubs in District 9670, mainly through the Club Counsellor.

8. Return trip to Australia

All District 9670 YEP Students are contracted in the exchange Program to return to Australia by the most direct method. Details of the return travel are provided to the parents of the Students and to the YEP Committee usually in October of each year.

9. Reintegration into the Australian Community

- a) The District 9670 YEP Committee acknowledges the difficulties that the exchange Students have in reintegration into their family, with their friends and their future career and life.
- b) A debriefing program is conducted to enable returned exchange Students and their families to discuss all aspects of the Youth Exchange Program and processes to facilitate reintegration and focus on future life.

INBOUND EXCHANGE STUDENTS TO DISTRICT 9670

10. Suitability of Inbound Overseas Exchange Students

- a) It is recognised that the District 9670 YEP Committee does not have the control over the selection of exchange Students from overseas Certified Districts.
- b) The District 9670 YEP Committee can choose the Districts with which youth exchanges are organised.
- c) If there are a number of unsuitable students from any particular District over a period of time the District 9670 YEP Committee may choose to suspend exchanges with that District.
- d) Documentation received from overseas Certified Districts provides information about the potential exchange Students, the family situations, health, education standards, career prospects and recreational pursuits.

11. Student Placement in a District Certified Rotary Club

- a) Host Clubs are notified at the earliest possible date of their proposed host Inbound Youth Exchange Student.
- b) Host Clubs are encouraged to write to the Inbound Students to establish communication prior to arrival.
- c) The Students are notified of their host Rotary Club.
- d) The sponsoring Rotary District is notified of the hosting and the exchange procedures and processes.
- e) The Students and families are required to complete an Inbound Student Agreement before the exchange will be finalised in District 9670.
- f) The Student is required to pay the premium for the Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) prior to the exchange being finalised.
- g) All Students participating in the Youth Exchange Program are required to provide evidence that they have insurance organised in their own country to provide cover in the event of mishap during the exchange period. No Student will undertake an exchange without providing evidence of having the insurance cover required.

12. Information for Rotary Clubs in the Youth Exchange Program.

- a) To assist Rotary Clubs, the District 9670 YEP Committee publishes and distributes the following documents:
 - *A Rotarian's Guide to Sponsoring a Youth Exchange Student.*
 - *A User Friendly Guide for the Inbound Student Counsellor.*
 - *A Host Family Guide to Rotary Youth Exchange.*
 - *The Roles and Responsibilities of the Host Rotary Club.*
 - *RI Sexual Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines*
 - *Commendation and Criticism of Exchange Students.*
 - *Inbound and Outbound Student Agreements.*
- b) Certified host Rotary Clubs are required to interview, assess and appoint an Inbound Student Counsellor for the duration of the exchange
- c) Seminars are conducted to prepare Rotary Club members, Club Inbound Student Counsellors and host families for the exchange.

Preparation of Host Families.

- a) The District 9670 YEP Committee sends to each Certified host Club, the publication, "A Host Family Guide To Rotary Youth Exchange".
- b) It is the responsibility of the host Rotary Club to seek, interview and assess the suitability of each host family according to District YEP Committee policy.
- c) It is the host Club's responsibility to ensure that each prospective family is counselled in relation to the issues that arise in the publication referred to in a).
- d) Host Clubs are also asked to invite prospective host families to the preparation seminars mentioned in Item 12 above.

13. After the Overseas Students Arrive

- a) Briefing meetings are conducted to identify the standards that the Students are expected to maintain during their exchange in District 9670 and to involve them in the activities of the District 9670 YEP Committee.
- b) There is an ongoing encouragement from the District 9670 YEP Committee to the participating host Clubs to adhere to the established Youth Exchange Program guidelines, guarantees and agreements.
- c) Each Inbound Student is required to provide the District YEP Committee with a monthly report identifying what the Student has done in that month and indicating where the Student is currently living.

14. If The Student Is Not Settling In or Is Home-sick- this involves:

- a) Liaisons with the host Club Counsellor and the District Country Youth Exchange Officer.
- b) Liaisons with the host District and sponsor District Chairpersons.
- c) Where appropriate, arrangements are made for Students to be counselled to assist in overcoming difficulties currently being experienced.

15. If Students Wish To Travel

If Students wish to travel in and outside District 9670 during the exchange period, the YEP Committee has developed a Travel Policy which is issued to and explained to each Inbound Student at the Orientation Seminar soon after their arrival in the District. All host Rotary Clubs and Host Families are provided with this policy before the commencement of the exchange so that everyone is aware of the YEP Committee's expectations. This policy is reproduced in a number of documents that are issued to Rotary Clubs, Inbound Student Counsellors, Host Families and Students during the exchange period.

16. Alcohol

- a) Students under the age of 18 must not drink alcoholic beverages in public places or on licensed premises.
- b) Students 18 years or older should not drink alcoholic beverages in a public place.
- c) Students under any circumstances, must not drink alcoholic beverages to excess.
- d) Should problems arise, host families are advised to consult with the host Club Counsellor.

17. Drugs

- a) Students must not use, possess, cultivate or manufacture any illegal drugs or prohibited or restricted substances.
- b) Students must not use cultivated, manufactured or any legal drugs or prohibited or restricted substances unless prescribed by a Registered Medical Practitioner.
- c) If there is any suspicion of a breach of these terms, host families should immediately report this to the host Club Counsellor.

Driving .

Students are not permitted to drive a motorised vehicle or vessel of any kind during the exchange.

18. Promiscuity/Romance

- a) Students should avoid romantic attachments.
- b) If it is considered that any student is promiscuous or developing romantic attachments, the matter must be discussed with the appropriate Student and the host Club Counsellor.

19. Schooling

It is a requirement of the Australian Overseas Student Visa that Youth Exchange Students attend a secondary school on each day of operation unless engaged in an approved activity.

20. Financial Matters

- a) Host families are encouraged to help their Student with their budget.
- b) The host Rotary Clubs provide the Youth Exchange Students with a monthly allowance according to the Rotary International guidelines.
- c) Students are required to have their own funds.
- d) Each Student shall open a separate emergency account. The emergency account is established with the host Club Counsellor as the co-signature. At the end of the exchange, this account is closed and the funds returned to the Student prior to departure.

21. Security

For the duration of the exchange period, the host Club Counsellor will collect from the Youth Exchange Student in that Club the student's passport, return air ticket and any other travel documents and secure them in a safe place known to the Student and the host Club President.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

24. Privacy

The District YEP Committee has developed a policy on Privacy and Confidentiality. The YEP Committee collects information from a variety of sources to ensure that the participants in the Program function appropriately. The information collected by and used by the YEP Committee is held and used in trust and remains confidential. The keeping of information and records by the YEP Committee is set out in document (1) referred to in **25** below.

25. Club Certification and the Procedures for the Protection of Students

In March 2006 the District YEP Committee adopted a policy document prepared for all Australian Rotary Districts by the Australian Rotary Youth Exchange Program Chairs' Conference. This document, entitled **Rotary Youth Exchange Australia A Guide to Club and District Certification (1)**, contains provisions that comply with Rotary International's minimum requirements for District and Club mandatory Certification based on Australian laws and customs. Additionally during 2006, the District YEP Committee has adopted for use in training and briefing sessions the materials contained in the publication by Rotary International entitled **Abuse and Harassment Prevention Training Manual and Leaders' Guide(2)**.

Each member of the District YEP Committee has been issued with a copy of document (1).

The YEP Committee has selected and used appropriate parts of document (1) in communications with District Rotary Clubs, host parents and Students. Materials from document (2) have been developed into a course of instruction that is offered to the YEP Committee, District Clubs, Rotarians, host families and Students. The District YEP Committee has placed the appropriate sections from document (1) on the District 9670 web site and in correspondence sent to Clubs Rotarians are reminded to refer to the web site to access the appropriate information and documents.

26. YEP Committee Members

The Chair of the YEP Committee is a Rotarian and is appointed by the District Governor for a specific term and chairs each meeting of the Committee. All members of the YEP Committee are Rotarians and have been invited to become members of the District Committee by the District Governor. Usually each serves a term of three years in the position, but this term may be extended with the agreement of the District Governor. The partners of Committee members are frequently involved in the on-going affairs of the Committee and provide their time voluntarily for the benefit of the Program. The YEP Committee meets monthly to discuss the issues arising from the Program.

27. International Tensions

The District 9670 YEP Committee is aware that from time to time international situations may occur that may cause concern to parents, students and Rotarians. Members of the District 9670 YEP Committee monitor, at appropriate times, the official web site of the Commonwealth of Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade seeking information on international situations. If the student and parents formally indicate concern about an overseas country involved with an exchange, the District 9670 YEP Committee Chair and the Youth Exchange Officer for that country will liaise with the parents to gather information from that web site and from the overseas District YEP Chair in order to reach an appropriate outcome.

Revised 19 March, 2002

Revised 28th June 2004 (Inclusion of Policy on Student Protection) Revised 8 May 2006, Revised 13 March 2007