

Ceasing of centrally and regionally funded Program Coordinator School - FAQs

July 2015

Why is the department ceasing Program Coordinator School arrangements?

Program coordination was a flawed model. Through IBAC and our own audits, the model was found to lack the necessary controls to ensure public funds could be properly accounted for.

Most seriously, program coordination arrangements were used to disguise corruption. More broadly, they were used to move money outside Department procurement and governance processes and avoid public scrutiny.

The model has been abolished as one of the Secretary's first actions to bring greater accountability to how the Department uses public funds, see [Message from Secretary 1 July 2015](#).

Will all the programs that PCS arrangement was supporting cease?

All central and regional funded program coordination arrangements have been ceased with the exception of arrangements subject to binding contracts, including employment contracts. Program areas within the Department wishing to continue any arrangement subject to a contract must seek an exemption from the Secretary.

The Department will contact schools with program coordination funds directly to advise of the exemptions or the recovery of funds.

If you have any questions about exemptions or the recovery of funds, contact Toniann Stitz, Director of School Resource Allocation, on 9637 3464 or stitz.toniann.t@edumail.vic.gov.au

If the PCS funds are to be returned to the region or central office, what will be the process for this to occur?

The Department will send instructions directly to schools on how to return PSC funds not subject to an exemption back to the Department.

Where a secretary exemption is granted so that an existing PCS arrangement can continue, what is the framework for financial management?

All PCS funds that receive an exemption must be administered within the existing PCS governance framework. See [DET – Program Coordinator School Governance Framework](#), these arrangements will be closely monitored by the Department. This is an interim measure until a new approach for delivering grants to schools is finalised by the Department and communicated with schools.

In situations where the program is to continue but with the funds managed by the region or the centre, what will be the process for financial management of the program?

The Department will make an assessment in consultation with the relevant school/s about the ongoing need for the program connected to recalled PCS funding.

If the program is to continue, the Department will oversee the financial management of that program in accordance with established financial management and procurement processes. This is an interim measure until the new approach is developed.

Will there be a new system for managing shared services or programs between schools in the future?

The Secretary announced a new, rigorous approach for delivering grants to schools at IBAC.

The approach, which is being developed alongside external experts, will restrict joint purchasing arrangements and monitor them closely. Only key trained and authorised staff will be able to process grants, and will do so through a segregated payment process to increase oversight and accountability.

The new approach will bring the way grants are managed in the Department in line with public sector best practice for grants management.

Does this affect school initiated pooling of funds, such as network arrangements, or arrangements using Student Resource Package (SRP) funded programs?

The cessation and recall does not apply to school funding for pooled arrangements that are funded through the SRP or school-initiated pooling of resources for appropriate education purposes, such as interschool sports days. As part of the new approach, steps will be taken to improve the accountability and oversight of these practices.

Do the new arrangements impact on School Sports Victoria (SSV) program coordinator schools?

The ceasing of central or regional funded program coordinator school arrangements does not apply to funds provided to schools by SSV, as the funds are not provided by central or regional offices. Funds for SSV are sourced from Victorian Government, Catholic and Independent schools through an annual affiliation fee.

Who do I speak to for further advice about the new arrangements?

Any questions in relation to the recovery of program coordinator funds should be directed to the Director, SRAB, Toniann Stitz, on 9637 3464 or stitz.toniann.t@edumail.vic.gov.au