THE LAPTOP POOL (updated January 2011)

1. A pool of laptops has been supplied to accompany year 9 1:1 laptops. While allocated to schools it is viewed as a state wide resource. As explained in DER Implementation Procedures, school numbers of pool devices can be adjusted in and out based on Regional DER Manager tracking of needs and excess.

2. The allocated pool of laptops (originally 10% above student enrolment numbers) is intended to provide for loans to students while their laptop is in for repairs or in case of loss or theft, being replaced regardless of cause. Due to the requirement that year cohort has the same vintage laptop it is also intended to provide a source of laptops for students who enrol at the school in later years. In the case of Year 9 2009 red 2009 vintage laptops, this would be new enrolments in year 10 2010, year 11 2011 and year 12 2012. The pool will be supplemented as students leave the school and return their laptops. The pool is also used for loan and day use.

3. Additional allocations of laptops to the pool will only take place if there has been an increase in enrolments throughout the year and student numbers exceed the ERN based census figure used for allocation.

4. When a laptop is stolen or broken beyond repair through causes deemed to have no culpability, the school is required to submit a claim to the Treasury Managed Fund (TMF). Where a loss, theft or breakage is as a result of negligence or malice, it is expected that the school will recoup the cost of replacement or repairs from the user and purchase a replacement. (see point 8 below)

5. Damage or loss occurred from carelessness, inattention or an apparent disregard is deemed to be due to negligence. Damage or loss caused or partly caused by negligence is not covered by TMF.

The DER Implementation Procedures document states:

Where a loss, theft or breakage is the result of negligence, carelessness, inattention or apparent disregard for the laptop or malice it is expected that the school will recoup the cost of replacement or repair from the user.

The school then has a responsibility to purchase a replacement laptop for the student (who may be loaned a pool laptop in the interim). In some instances to date, school staff have been allocating replacements from the pool but have not yet purchased so as to keep the pool replenished.

There have been instances where the school cannot recoup costs from the student. The following are examples where a school may incur costs to maintain its laptop program:

- a student is allocated a replacement laptop from the pool and the incident appears to have no culpability attached, but the TMF declines the claim.
- a school cannot recoup costs from the student due to financial difficulties, outright refusal by the family to pay or disagreement over the causes of the incident.
- parents have believed that laptops are exempt from usual school requirements that students replace lost or damaged school equipment they have borrowed. Revisions to the charters address this issue.
- the principal has made a decision not to recoup costs from the student based on special circumstances of the student (e.g. who may instead be required to do community service as repayment) but has not reimbursed the pool using school funds.

In such cases the student can either be loaned a pool laptop for day use only or allocated a replacement laptop. Once again the school has the responsibility to purchase a replacement laptop for the student. In this case also in some instances to date, school staff have been allocating replacements from the pool but not yet arranged to purchase so as to keep the pool replenished.

6. Also as stated in Implementation Procedures laptops lost directly from the pool cannot be replaced by DER. Thus it is imperative that stringent storage and tracking processes are in place and students and teachers reminded of their responsibilities in managing pool laptops securely.

7. Costs to schools relating to laptop loss and repair will occur under the following circumstances as outlined above:
   I. Where no recoup is possible from the user;
   II. School decisions not to recoup due to special student circumstances;
   III. Replacement of laptops which are not eligible for recoup from TMF or the user due to peculiarities in the circumstances of the incident;
   IV. Laptops not retrieved from school leavers which are meant to be returned to the pool. Where a laptop is not returned by a school leaver, it is to be reported on RMU by the TSO.

8. To assist principals to gather historical data on the use of the pool and number of laptop purchases required, a new RMU process has been developed: Managing Replacement DER Devices in RMU. Reasons for replacement purchases may include the decision to cover the cost of a laptop damaged or lost by a teacher or student due to the circumstances or to replenish the laptop pool due to losses not covered by TMF. As a result RMU will now differentiate which is which.
   - PP – Program Purchased – This is part of the Standard DER program
   - SR – School Replacement – This is where a school has paid for a replacement device
   - SE – School Enhancement – This is where a school has elected to buy additional devices

9. Pool data will be reviewed centrally on an ongoing basis to monitor and report on pool effectiveness.
10. There are already a number of schools where the 2009 vintage laptop pool (red) has run out due to increased school enrolments of students from non NSW government school sources. Principals should contact their Regional DER Manager who will arrange for a data check and source the top up laptops.

11. The ITD Equipment website will list latest laptop prices for school replacement purchases and supply order forms. This cost should be used as a basis for calculating repayment from users.