

# Firearms Policy

SAMPLE

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## Purpose

The purpose of this Firearms Policy is to set out [Company Name]'s expectations, rules and procedures for the safe possession, storage, carriage and use of firearms in all work activities. This policy supports [Company Name]'s duty under work health and safety (WHS) legislation to eliminate or minimise risks to workers and other persons arising from the use of firearms in farming and agricultural operations.

This document applies to all workplaces, properties, vehicles, plant and activities controlled or influenced by [Company Name], including paddocks, livestock yards, sheds, workshops, staff accommodation and remote or isolated work locations.

## Scope

This policy applies to:

- All workers, including employees, labour hire workers, contractors, subcontractors, consultants, apprentices, trainees, volunteers and work experience students.
- All visitors who may be in areas where firearms are present or used, such as contractors, service providers, family members, customers, hunting parties and guests.
- All firearms including rifles, shotguns, handguns (where lawfully held), air rifles, and any other device that is regulated as a firearm under relevant State or Territory firearms legislation.
- All firearm-related activities carried out for work purposes, including but not limited to:
  - humane destruction of injured or sick livestock
  - feral animal and pest control
  - crop and produce protection
  - security of high-value stock or property in remote locations
  - training and competency assessment.

This policy does not authorise recreational, sporting or personal use of firearms on [Company Name] property unless expressly approved in writing by senior management and fully compliant with this policy and relevant legislation.

## Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

- **Firearm** – any gun or weapon that is regulated as a firearm under relevant State or Territory firearms legislation, including rifles, shotguns, handguns and certain air rifles.
- **Authorised firearm user** – a worker who holds a current, appropriate firearms licence, has been specifically approved in writing by [Company Name] to use firearms for work, and has completed the required training and competency assessments.

- **Responsible Person** – a manager or supervisor appointed by [Company Name] to oversee firearms management, including licensing, storage, record-keeping and compliance.
- **Workplace** – any place where work is carried out for [Company Name] and includes any place where a worker goes, or is likely to be, while at work (e.g. paddocks, stock routes, sale yards, machinery sheds, vehicles).
- **Remote or isolated work** – work that is isolated from the assistance of other people because of location, time or the nature of the work, such as mustering on large properties or feral animal control in remote paddocks.

## WHS Legislative Framework

[Company Name] will manage firearms-related risks in line with:

- Work Health and Safety Act and Regulations applicable in the relevant State or Territory.
- Applicable Firearms Act and Regulations in the relevant State or Territory.
- Codes of Practice and guidance material on managing risks of remote or isolated work, hazardous manual tasks, and violence and aggression where relevant.

Under WHS legislation, [Company Name] has a primary duty of care to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that workers and other persons are not exposed to health and safety risks arising from the use, storage or presence of firearms.

Workers also have duties:

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety.
- Take reasonable care that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others.
- Comply, so far as they are reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction and cooperate with any reasonable policy or procedure relating to WHS, including this Firearms Policy.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Officers and Senior Management

Officers and senior managers at [Company Name] must exercise due diligence to ensure that firearms risks are effectively managed, including by:

- Ensuring that appropriate firearms licences, permits and authorities are in place and current.
- Providing adequate resources for safe storage facilities, training, PPE, and supervision.
- Ensuring that firearms risks are identified, assessed and controlled in consultation with workers.
- Monitoring compliance with this policy and relevant legislation.

- Reviewing incident reports, near misses and audit findings and ensuring corrective actions are implemented.

## **Responsible Person (Firearms Coordinator)**

[Company Name] will appoint a Responsible Person (or Firearms Coordinator) who is accountable for day-to-day firearms management, including:

- Maintaining a register of all firearms and ammunition owned, leased or used by [Company Name].
- Verifying firearms licences and endorsements for all authorised firearm users.
- Coordinating training, competency assessments and refresher training.
- Overseeing safe storage arrangements on all properties and in all vehicles.
- Approving and documenting all work-related firearms activities.
- Ensuring firearms and ammunition inspections are carried out and recorded.

## **Supervisors**

Supervisors must:

- Implement this policy in their areas of responsibility.
- Ensure only authorised firearm users carry or use firearms for work.
- Confirm that risk assessments and safe work procedures (SWPs) are in place and followed.
- Provide adequate supervision, particularly for less experienced workers.
- Stop any unsafe firearms activity immediately and report it to management.

## **Workers and Contractors**

All workers and contractors must:

- Comply with this Firearms Policy and associated procedures.
- Never use, handle or transport firearms for work unless authorised in writing.
- Immediately report any loss, theft, damage or malfunction of firearms or ammunition.
- Participate in training, inductions and competency assessments as required.
- Report hazards, near misses and incidents involving firearms without delay.

Contractors who bring firearms onto [Company Name] sites for pest control or other work must provide evidence of licensing, insurance and safe systems of work, and must comply with this policy and any additional site-specific requirements.

## **Risk Management**

### **Firearms-Related Hazards in Farming and Agriculture**

Common firearms-related hazards in farming and agriculture include: