

Livestock Handling Procedure

SAMPLE

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SAMPLE

Purpose and Scope

This Livestock Handling Procedure sets out the minimum work health and safety (WHS) requirements for the safe handling, movement, transport and restraint of livestock at [Company Name] workplaces and operations.

The procedure applies to all workers, including employees, contractors, labour-hire personnel, volunteers and visitors involved in:

- On-farm livestock activities (e.g. mustering, yard work, drafting, loading, unloading)
- Transport and logistics activities (e.g. loading ramps, stock crates, saleyard transfers, depot handling)
- Associated tasks such as inspection, treatment, feeding, weighing and recording.

This document supports [Company Name]'s WHS management system and should be read in conjunction with relevant policies, risk assessments, safe work method statements (SWMS) and manufacturer instructions for plant and equipment.

Definitions

Key Terms

- **PCBU:** Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking, as defined in WHS legislation.
- **Worker:** Any person who carries out work in any capacity for [Company Name], including employees, contractors and volunteers.
- **Livestock:** Cattle, sheep, goats, pigs and other farmed animals handled as part of [Company Name]'s operations.
- **Low-stress handling:** Handling techniques that minimise fear, agitation and physical pressure on livestock.
- **Crush:** A purpose-built restraining device used to safely hold individual animals for treatment or inspection.
- **Race:** Narrow passage used to guide livestock in single file or small groups.
- **Yard:** Enclosed area used for holding, sorting or treating livestock.
- **Fit to load:** Livestock that meet accepted animal welfare and transport standards for loading and travel.
- **Competent person:** A person who has acquired, through training, qualification or experience, the knowledge and skills to carry out the task safely.

Roles and Responsibilities

Officers and Senior Management

- Ensure adequate resources are provided to implement this procedure, including fit-for-purpose yards, ramps, vehicles and equipment.
- Verify that systems are in place for hazard identification, risk assessment and control relating to livestock handling.
- Promote a safety culture that supports reporting of incidents, near misses and hazards.
- Review WHS performance data relating to livestock handling and ensure corrective actions are implemented.

Managers and Supervisors

- Implement this procedure within their area of control and integrate it into daily operations.
- Ensure risk assessments are completed for livestock handling tasks and are reviewed when conditions change.
- Confirm that workers are trained, competent and supervised according to their level of experience.
- Plan livestock activities to allow sufficient time and staffing to avoid rushing and fatigue.
- Ensure plant and equipment (e.g. crushes, ramps, vehicles) are inspected, maintained and fit for purpose.
- Investigate livestock-related incidents and near misses and implement corrective actions.

Workers

- Follow this procedure, associated SWMS and reasonable safety directions.
- Use low-stress handling techniques and avoid practices that may agitate or distress animals.
- Inspect work areas, yards, ramps and equipment before use and report hazards immediately.
- Wear and correctly use required personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Do not undertake livestock handling tasks for which they are not trained or competent.
- Report all incidents, injuries and near misses as soon as practicable.

Contractors and Transport Operators

- Comply with this procedure and any site-specific rules when operating on [Company Name] sites.