Machine Guarding Procedure

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this Machine Guarding Procedure is to establish a systematic approach for identifying, assessing and controlling risks associated with plant and machinery at [Company Name]. This procedure aims to:

- Prevent serious injuries such as amputations, crush injuries, entanglement, impact, cutting and shearing.
- Ensure all fixed and mobile plant is fitted with effective guarding and safety devices.
- Support compliance with relevant Australian WHS legislation, regulations, Codes of Practice and Australian Standards.
- Provide clear guidance for workers, supervisors, contractors and visitors regarding safe use of guarded machinery.

This procedure applies to all machinery and plant used in manufacturing and production, metal fabrication and welding, farming and agriculture, and mining and resources operations controlled by [Company Name].

2. Scope

This procedure covers all items of plant and machinery where there is a risk of contact with moving parts or other hazardous components, including but not limited to:

- Production lines, conveyors, presses, guillotines and packaging machinery in manufacturing.
- Lathes, mills, drill presses, bandsaws, grinders, welding rotators and positioners in fabrication workshops.
- Agricultural machinery such as tractors, augers, harvesters, PTO-driven equipment, seeders and balers.
- Mining and resources plant including crushers, screens, feeders, conveyors, drilling rigs and mobile equipment with moving attachments.

The procedure applies to:

- Design, purchase and commissioning of new plant.
- Modification, relocation and decommissioning of existing plant.
- Day-to-day operation, inspection, maintenance, cleaning and repair.
- Contractors and labour hire workers operating or working near guarded machinery.

This procedure does not replace specific safe work procedures (SWPs) for high-risk plant (e.g. presses, guillotines, mobile plant) but must be used in conjunction with them.

3. Definitions

3.1 Key Terms

- **Plant / Machinery** – Any machinery, equipment, appliance, container, implement and tool, and any component or anything fitted or connected to these items.
- **Guard** – A physical or interlocked barrier designed to prevent access to danger points or moving parts of plant.
- **Fixed Guard** – A permanent physical barrier that cannot be opened or removed without the use of tools.
- **Interlocked Guard** – A guard connected to a monitoring system so that the machine cannot operate unless the guard is closed, or will stop if the guard is opened.
- **Adjustable Guard** – A guard that can be manually adjusted to suit different sizes of work, while still providing adequate protection.
- **Presence-Sensing Device** – A device such as a light curtain, pressure-sensitive mat or laser scanner that stops machine motion when a person enters a danger zone.
- **Danger Zone** – Any area within or around machinery where a person is exposed to risk to health and safety from contact with moving or hazardous parts.
- **Isolation** – The separation of plant from all energy sources (electrical, hydraulic, pneumatic, mechanical, chemical, thermal) in a way that prevents unintentional energisation.
- **Lockout** – The application of a lock and tag to an isolation point to prevent re-energisation while work is being performed.
- **Authorised Person** – A person who has received specific training and approval to operate, maintain or modify guarded machinery.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Officers and Senior Management

Officers and senior management at [Company Name] must exercise due diligence to ensure this procedure is implemented and resourced. They must:

- Ensure plant and machinery risks are identified, assessed and controlled in accordance with WHS legislation.
- Provide sufficient budget for compliant guarding, interlocks, presence-sensing devices and engineering controls.
- Ensure competent persons are engaged for plant design, guarding design, installation and inspection.
- Monitor WHS performance indicators related to plant incidents, near misses and non-conformances.

- Support consultation with workers and Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) about changes to plant and guarding.

4.2 Managers and Supervisors

Managers and supervisors must:

- Implement this procedure within their areas of control.
- Ensure all plant has been risk assessed and fitted with appropriate guarding before use.
- Confirm that safe work procedures for each machine reflect actual guarding arrangements.
- Verify operators and maintenance personnel are trained and competent in the use and limitations of guards.
- Enforce lockout/tagout and isolation requirements before removal or bypassing of any guard.
- Stop work immediately if guarding is missing, damaged or ineffective and arrange prompt rectification.
- Conduct regular workplace inspections focusing on machine guarding.

4.3 Workers and Operators

Workers and machine operators must:

- Use plant and machinery only as trained and authorised.
- Never remove, modify, bypass or defeat guards or interlocks without authorisation and isolation.
- Report immediately any damaged, missing or ineffective guards, interlocks or safety devices.
- Follow all safe work procedures, signage and permit requirements.
- Participate in consultation, training and risk assessments relating to plant.

4.4 Maintenance Personnel

Maintenance personnel must:

- Plan and carry out maintenance, repairs and adjustments in accordance with isolation and lockout procedures.
- Ensure guards and interlocks are correctly reinstalled and tested prior to returning plant to service.
- Verify that temporary guarding arrangements (if used) provide equivalent or better protection.
- Document any modifications to guarding and initiate review of risk assessments and SWPs.