

**Agrochemicals and Weed Control**

Business Name:		ABN:	
Business Address:			
Contact Person:	Phone:	Email:	

**THIS RISK ASSESSMENT IS APPROVED BY THE PCBU ON THIS PROJECT**

Under the Work Health and Safety Regulation (WHS Regulation), a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) is required to ensure that a RISK ASSESSMENT is prepared before the proposed work starts.

Full Name:		
Signature:	Title:	Date:

**CLIENT OR PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR DETAILS**

Client:	SCOPE OF WORKS
Project Name:	
Project Address:	
Project Manager:	
Contact Phone:	
Date Risk Assessment supplied to Project Manager:	



RISK MATRIX																																	
LIKELIHOOD	INSIGNIFICANT	MINOR	MODERATE	MAJOR	CATASTROPHIC	SCORE	ACTION	HIERARCHY OF CONTROLS																									
ALMOST CERTAIN	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE			<b>Elimination</b> Remove the hazard.																									
LIKELY	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	4A ACUTE	DO NOT PROCEED	<b>Substitution</b> Replace the hazard.																									
POSSIBLE	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	3H HIGH	Review before work starts.	Isolation Isolate People from the hazard																									
UNLIKELY	1 LOW	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	2M MODERATE	Ensure control measures in place.	<b>Engineering</b> Isolate the hazard																									
RARE	1 LOW	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	1L LOW	Monitor and keep records.	<b>Administrative</b> Change																									
<b>Risk Rating &amp; Required Action:</b> <table border="1"> <tr> <td><b>4A</b></td> <td>Stop work. The risk is intolerable. Eliminate the hazard or redesign the activity before proceeding. A Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) or higher-level authorisation is required.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>3H</b></td> <td>Review and approve additional controls before task starts. Senior supervisor sign-off needed.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>2M</b></td> <td>Ensure all nominated controls are in place and effective. Proceed with caution; monitor conditions.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>1L</b></td> <td>Proceed, following standard operating procedures. Monitor and keep records.</td> </tr> </table>								<b>4A</b>	Stop work. The risk is intolerable. Eliminate the hazard or redesign the activity before proceeding. A Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) or higher-level authorisation is required.	<b>3H</b>	Review and approve additional controls before task starts. Senior supervisor sign-off needed.	<b>2M</b>	Ensure all nominated controls are in place and effective. Proceed with caution; monitor conditions.	<b>1L</b>	Proceed, following standard operating procedures. Monitor and keep records.	<b>Notes on Hierarchy of Controls:</b> Remember to apply controls in the preferred order shown by the coloured pyramid: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Eliminate</b></li> <li>2. <b>Substitute</b></li> <li>3. <b>Isolate</b></li> <li>4. <b>Engineering</b></li> <li>5. <b>Administrative</b></li> <li>6. <b>PPE</b></li> </ol>																	
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1. WHS Governance, Legal Compliance & Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WHS duties under WHS Act 2011 and WHS Regulations not clearly understood by officers, PCBUs and workers</li> <li>Lack of a documented WHS management system for agrochemical and weed control activities</li> <li>No formal process to identify, review and apply relevant Codes of Practice, Australian Standards and Safe Work Australia guidance (e.g. managing risks of hazardous chemicals)</li> <li>Poor worker consultation on agrochemical and poisonous plant risks leading to unmanaged concerns or informal practices</li> <li>Absence of defined WHS responsibilities for managers, supervisors, contractors and labour-hire workers involved in weed control</li> <li>Failure to monitor regulatory change regarding pesticides, herbicides, fertilisers and LPG/propane equipment</li> <li>Inadequate incident reporting, notifiable incident assessment and root-cause investigation process</li> <li>No clear governance for environmental and neighbour exposure impacts leading to potential breaches of environmental and public health legislation</li> </ul>	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a documented WHS Management System aligned with WHS Act 2011, WHS Regulations and relevant Codes of Practice, with specific modules for agrochemicals, fertilisers and weed management</li> <li>Define and document WHS roles, responsibilities and due diligence duties for officers, managers, supervisors, workers and contractors, including clear accountability for chemical safety</li> <li>Maintain a central and standards register covering WHS, environmental and chemical use legislation (including APVMA requirements), with scheduled reviews and documented compliance checks</li> <li>Establish formal WHS consultation mechanisms such as Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs), WHS committees and toolbox meetings focused on agrochemical and weed-control risks</li> <li>Implement a documented risk management procedure (identify, assess, control, review) specifically referencing hazardous chemicals, poisonous plants and LPG/propane equipment</li> <li>Establish an incident and hazard reporting system (paper or electronic) with mandatory investigation, corrective actions, verification and communication of learnings</li> <li>Integrate contractor and labour-hire workers into the WHS governance framework via documented consultation, information-sharing and agreed risk controls</li> <li>Conduct periodic internal WHS audits and management reviews of chemical and weed-control activities, reporting findings to senior management for action</li> </ul>	3H
2. Chemical Procurement, Approval & Inventory Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uncontrolled purchasing of fertilisers, herbicides and pesticides without WHS review</li> <li>Use of non-approved, off-label or decanted agrochemicals increasing health and environmental risk</li> <li>Lack of Safety Data Sheets (SDS) or access to outdated SDS for hazardous substances</li> <li>Inadequate assessment of chemical hazards (e.g. carcinogenic, sensitising, corrosive, volatile) prior to purchase</li> </ul>	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a formal chemical procurement and approval procedure requiring WHS review of all new fertilisers, herbicides and pesticides prior to purchase</li> <li>Require current SDS (within 5 years) for all hazardous chemicals before approval, ensuring they are readily accessible (digital and hardcopy) at all relevant workplaces</li> <li>Maintain a central hazardous chemical register detailing product name, use, location, quantity, hazard classification and SDS reference for all agrochemicals and fertilisers</li> <li>Apply a chemical substitution hierarchy, preferring less hazardous products (e.g. low-toxicity herbicides or mechanical weeding) where reasonably practicable</li> <li>Set inventory limits and purchasing controls to minimise on-site quantities, aligning with storage capacity and emergency response capabilities</li> </ul>	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excessive stock holdings increasing fire load, spill potential and expiry of products</li> <li>Improper storage segregation of incompatible chemicals (oxidisers, flammables, acids, alkalis)</li> <li>Unlabelled or poorly labelled containers including decanted fertilisers and herbicides</li> <li>No central register of all hazardous chemicals used for weed and fertiliser applications</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specify packaging and labelling standards for suppliers, including GHS-compliant labels and tamper-evident containers</li> <li>Prohibit decanting into unlabelled containers and require secondary labels that meet GHS requirements when decanting is necessary</li> <li>Ensure segregation and storage design requirements for incompatible chemicals are specified at procurement stage and verified by WHS or technical personnel</li> </ul>	
3. Chemical Storage, Handling Infrastructure & Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate storage facilities for fertilisers, herbicides and pesticides leading to spills, contamination or fire</li> <li>Insufficient ventilation in chemical storage areas causing build-up of toxic or flammable vapours</li> <li>Lack of compliant bunding and spill containment for liquid products</li> <li>Poor segregation of LPG/propane cylinders from oxidising fertilisers and other flammables</li> <li>Unauthorised access to chemicals by untrained staff, children, visitors and members of the public</li> <li>Inadequate storage of manual application tools (backpack sprayers, spreaders, propane weed burners) leading to leaks or accidental release</li> <li>Exposure to corrosive or toxic products during manual handling in storage areas</li> <li>Improper stacking of fertiliser bags and containers causing crush or fall hazards</li> </ul>	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design and maintain chemical storage facilities in accordance with relevant Australian Standards and Codes of Practice (e.g. hazardous chemicals, storage and handling of LPG cylinders)</li> <li>Provide bunded, impervious flooring and spill containment for liquid agrochemicals and fertiliser solutions sized to capture at least the largest container plus rainfall allowance where applicable</li> <li>Ensure adequate natural or mechanical ventilation in storage areas to maintain vapour levels well below exposure standards and flammable limits</li> <li>Segregate LPG/propane cylinders, flammable liquids, oxidising fertilisers and other incompatible chemicals using physical barriers and dedicated storage areas</li> <li>Implement secure storage with controlled access (locks, key control, sign-in/out registers) and ensure only trained, authorised personnel can handle agrochemicals and propane equipment</li> <li>Install appropriate safety signage (GHS pictograms, hazardous chemicals, no smoking, PPE requirements, emergency contacts) at storage entrances and on internal racks</li> <li>Develop safe stacking and racking procedures for fertiliser bags and containers, including load ratings, height limits and mechanical aids for handling</li> <li>Maintain a preventative maintenance and inspection program for storage infrastructure, including bunds, ventilation systems, racking, safety showers/eyewashes and LPG/propane cages</li> </ul>	2M
4. Plant, Equipment & Propane Weed-Flaming Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of non-compliant or poorly maintained propane weed-flaming equipment (hoses, regulators, burners, cylinders)</li> <li>Failure of gas connections or regulators leading to leaks, flashback or fire</li> </ul>	4A	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate engineering controls (e.g. flame arrestors, automatic shut-off valves, guards) on flaming equipment</li> <li>Lack of systematic inspection, testing and maintenance of spreaders, backpack sprayers and gas-fired weeders</li> <li>Use of inappropriate or non-rated equipment in potentially flammable or dusty environments</li> <li>Poor management of ignition sources near stored or decanted flammable products</li> <li>Inadequate systems for tagging out or quarantining faulty equipment</li> <li>Insufficient training on safe use, transport and storage of LPG/propane cylinders and associated hardware</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
5. Hazardous Chemicals Risk Management & Exposure Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acute and chronic health effects from exposure to herbicides, pesticides and fertilisers through inhalation, skin contact or ingestion</li> <li>Lack of systematic chemical risk assessments for each product and task type (manual spreading, spraying, flaming in treated areas)</li> <li>Inadequate control of airborne mist, aerosols and dusts during mixing and application</li> <li>Failure to account for vulnerable workers (asthma, allergies, pregnancy) in exposure controls</li> <li>Cross-contamination of eating areas, vehicles, tools and clothing with chemical residues</li> <li>Insufficient decontamination facilities for workers exposed to spills or splash incidents</li> <li>No system for monitoring occupational exposure to key active ingredients where required</li> </ul>	4A	[REDACTED]	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poorly managed fertiliser dusts causing respiratory irritation or sensitisation</li> </ul>			
6. Weed Control Methods & Task Planning (Including Manual Weeding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reliance on chemical-intensive weed control without considering non-chemical alternatives or integrated weed management</li> <li>Ad hoc selection of treatment methods for weeds and harmful plants (e.g. poison ivy-like species) without formal risk comparison</li> <li>Unplanned manual weeding leading to prolonged awkward postures, repetitive movements and musculoskeletal disorders</li> <li>Use of propane flaming in unsuitable conditions (dry vegetation, wind, near combustible materials)</li> <li>Inconsistent assessment of site-specific hazards such as slopes, traffic, water bodies and public access near treatment zones</li> <li>Inadequate coordination of chemical and mechanical methods leading to double handling and increased exposure time</li> <li>Poorly defined criteria when manual application of fertilisers is permissible versus mechanised options</li> </ul>	3H	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M
7. Management of Poisonous & Allergenic Plants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of identification of poisonous plants (e.g. poison ivy-like species, toxic ornamentals and noxious weeds) in work areas</li> <li>Inadequate worker awareness of dermal, respiratory and systemic health effects from poisonous plants and their sap, spores or thorns</li> <li>Uncontrolled manual handling of poisonous plants during weeding or pruning creating contact dermatitis, burns or allergic reactions</li> </ul>	3H	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improper disposal of poisonous plant material leading to further exposure or environmental impacts</li> <li>• No clear procedures for working around highly sensitising plants for workers with known allergies or asthma</li> <li>• Secondary exposure from contaminated tools, gloves or clothing taken home or used for other tasks</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
8. Training, Competency & Supervision for Agrochemical Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workers applying herbicides, fertilisers and using propane weed-flaming equipment without adequate training or licensing</li> <li>• Supervisors lacking competence to verify safe practices or challenge unsafe behaviours</li> <li>• No formal assessment of competency for manual fertiliser spreading or weed treatment methods</li> <li>• Overreliance on toolbox talks without structured training in chemical risk, plant toxicity and fire safety</li> <li>• Lack of refresher training resulting in drift from procedures and normalisation of deviance</li> <li>• Contractors assuming client system cover training, leading to gaps in competencies for specific tasks or equipment</li> </ul>	4A	[REDACTED]	2M
9. PPE, Hygiene Management & Worker Health Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inconsistent or unsuitable PPE use when handling fertilisers, herbicides, poisonous plants or propane equipment</li> <li>• Inadequate systems for selection, issue, fit, cleaning and replacement of PPE</li> <li>• Overreliance on PPE as the primary control measure instead of higher order controls</li> </ul>	3H	[REDACTED]	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor hygiene practices such as eating or smoking with contaminated hands or clothing</li> <li>• No structured approach to health monitoring for workers at risk from specific chemicals or plant allergens</li> <li>• Workers wearing contaminated boots or clothing into vehicles, offices and lunchrooms, causing secondary exposures</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
10. Environmental Conditions, Public Interface & Community Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application of fertilisers and herbicides in windy or adverse weather causing spray drift onto public areas, neighbouring properties or waterways</li> <li>• Use of propane flaming near public access routes or flammable structures creating fire and burn risks to others</li> <li>• Lack of signage and barriers around treatment areas resulting in public exposure, including children and pets</li> <li>• Inadequate planning for work near schools, parks, footpaths and sensitive crops</li> <li>• Run-off or leaching of chemicals into drains, creeks or irrigation systems due to inappropriate timing or over-application</li> <li>• Complaints and reputational damage arising from odours, visible residues or perceived health risks</li> </ul>	4A	[REDACTED]	2M
11. Emergency Preparedness, Fire, Spills & First Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of preparedness for chemical spills, gas leaks or fire arising from propane weed-flaming or combustible fertilisers</li> <li>• Inadequate spill kits, fire-fighting equipment or first-aid resources at storage and application sites</li> <li>• Workers not trained to respond safely to exposures from poisonous plants,</li> </ul>	4A	[REDACTED]	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>chemical splashes or inhalation incidents</li> <li>• Insufficient planning for evacuation and communication in remote or dispersed work locations</li> <li>• No formal interface with local emergency services regarding storage and use of hazardous agrochemicals and LPG</li> <li>• Delayed or inappropriate medical treatment due to poor information on chemicals involved or plant species</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
12. Health & Safety of Remote, Isolated and Seasonal Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workers performing manual weeding, fertiliser spreading and herbicide application alone or in remote areas without effective communication systems</li> <li>• Delayed response to incidents involving chemical exposure, plant-related injuries or burns from propane weeders</li> <li>• Seasonal or temporary workers with limited induction and understanding of local procedures</li> <li>• Fatigue, heat stress and dehydration during outdoor manual work contributing to poor decision-making and accidents</li> <li>• Language or literacy barriers among seasonal workers affecting comprehension of labels, SDS and procedures</li> </ul>	3H	[REDACTED]	2M
13. Contractor, Labour-Hire & Supply Chain Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inconsistent WHS standards between principal contractor, subcontractors and labour-hire providers in relation to chemical and weed-control work</li> <li>• Assumption that other parties manage key risks such as training, PPE, plant maintenance and emergency response</li> <li>• Insufficient pre-qualification and monitoring of contractors using herbicides, fertilisers and propane weed-flaming on behalf of the PCBU</li> </ul>	3H	[REDACTED]	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor communication of site-specific hazards including poisonous plants, public interface and environmental sensitivities</li> <li>Lack of clarity on who controls and maintains shared plant, equipment and chemical inventories</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
14. Documentation, Recordkeeping & Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate documentation of policies, procedures, risk assessments and training for agrochemical and weed-control activities</li> <li>Poor recordkeeping leading to inability to demonstrate compliance with WHS Act 2011 and associated regulations</li> <li>Failure to analyse incident, near-miss and health data to identify systemic issues with chemical handling, plant use or weed-control methods</li> <li>Outdated procedures that do not reflect current products, equipment or legislative requirements</li> <li>Loss of corporate knowledge when key personnel leave due to lack of documented processes</li> </ul>	3H	[REDACTED]	1L

SAMPLE

**EMERGENCY RESPONSE – CALL 000 FOR EMERGENCIES**

Ensure to have an Emergency Management Plan in place as well as adequate numbers of trained first aid staff with easy access to fully stocked first aid kits, rescue equipment, material safety data sheets, adequate access to emergency communication equipment and fire-fighting equipment suitable for all classes of fire and ignition sources.

**LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES**

RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND CODES OF PRACTICE. DELETE THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES FOR ANY STATE THAT ARE NOT APPLICABLE

**Queensland & Australian Capital Territory**

Work Health and Safety Act 2011  
 Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011  
 Legislation QLD: <https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/work-health-and-safety-laws>  
 Codes of Practice QLD: <https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice>  
 Legislation ACT: <https://www.worksafe.act.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/acts-and-regulations>  
 Codes of Practice ACT: <https://www.worksafe.act.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice>

**Victoria**

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004  
 Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017  
 Legislation VIC: <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/occupational-health-and-safety-act-and-regulations>  
 Codes of Practice VIC: <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/compliance-codes-and-codes-practice>

**New South Wales**

Work Health and Safety Act 2011  
 Work Health and Safety Regulations 2025  
 Legislation NSW: <https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/legal-obligations/legislation>  
 Codes of Practice NSW: <https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/resource-library/list-codes-of-practice>

**Western Australia**

Work Health and Safety Act 2020  
 Work Health and Safety Regulations 2022  
 Legislation Western Australia: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/legislation>  
 Codes of Practice WA: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/codes-practice>

**Northern Territory**

Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011  
 Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Regulation 2011  
 Legislation NT: <https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/workplace-safety-laws>  
 Codes of Practice NT: <https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice>

**Safe Work Australia Links**

Law and Regulation (All States): <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/law-and-regulation>  
 Model Codes of Practice: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/resources-publications/model-codes-of-practice>

**South Australia**

Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA)  
 Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012 (SA)  
 Legislation for SA: <https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/resources/legislation>  
 Codes of Practice for SA: <https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/workplaces/codes-of-practice#COPs>

**Model Codes of Practice**

- Managing noise and preventing hearing loss at work
- Confined spaces
- Labelling of workplace hazardous chemicals
- Managing risks of hazardous chemicals in the workplace
- Welding processes
- First aid in the workplace
- Managing the risk of falls at workplaces
- Hazardous manual tasks
- Managing the risk of falls in housing construction
- Managing electrical risks in the workplace
- Demolition work
- Excavation work
- Work health and safety consultation, cooperation and coordination
- Managing the work environment and facilities
- How to manage work health and safety risks
- Managing risks of plant in the workplace
- Construction work

**Tasmania**

Work Health and Safety Act 2012  
 Work Health and Safety (Transitional and Consequential Provisions) Act 2012  
 Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012  
 Work Health and Safety (Transitional) Regulations 2012  
 Legislation for TAS: <https://worksafe.tas.gov.au/topics/laws-and-compliance/acts-and-regulations>  
 Codes of Practice for TAS: <https://worksafe.tas.gov.au/topics/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice>

Details of permits, licenses or access required by regulatory bodies (add or delete as required):

- Permits from local council
- Authorisation to commence work
- Any required documents.