

**Animal Transport and Livestock Loading**

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>PPE</b>	

  

Risk Rating & Required Action:	
<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.

  

Consequence Scale:			
Consequence	People (injury/illness)	Project / Assets	Compliance / Reputation
<b>Catastrophic</b>	Fatality or permanent total disability	project shutdown	Significant regulator intervention; criminal prosecution
<b>Major</b>	Serious injury/illness (hospital > 5 days)	critical delay	Improvement notice; major media coverage
<b>Moderate</b>	Medical-treatment injury; lost-time > 1 day	moderate delay	Minor breach; adverse client comment
<b>Minor</b>	First-aid only, no lost time	negligible delay	Isolated non-conformance
<b>Insignificant</b>	No injury	no schedule impact	Deviation caught and corrected on site

  

**Notes on Hierarchy of Controls:**  
Remember to apply controls in the preferred order shown by the coloured pyramid:

1. **Eliminate**
2. **Substitute**
3. **Isolate**
4. **Engineering**
5. **Administrative**
6. **PPE**

Always document **why** a lower-order control is accepted if elimination or substitution is not reasonably practicable.

*aligned with Safe Work Australia's Managing the risk of fatigue at work (2023) and ISO 45001:2018 clauses 6–8.*

JOB STEP	POTENTIAL HAZARDS	IR	CONTROL MEASURES	RR
SPECIFIC WORK STEPS	HAZARDS THAT MAY ARISE	INITIAL RISK	SPECIFIC MEASURES TO BE PUT IN PLACE TO ELIMINATE OR CONTROL THE RISKS	RESIDUAL RISK
1. WHS Governance, Roles and Legal Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of clearly defined PCBU, officer and worker WHS duties in relation to animal transport and livestock loading</li> <li>Failure to identify and comply with WHS Act 2011, WHS Regulations, livestock transport codes of practice and animal welfare legislation</li> <li>Inadequate consultation arrangements between management, workers, contractors and transport providers</li> <li>No formal process for monitoring changes in legislation, standards and industry guidelines</li> <li>Inadequate WHS due diligence by officers, including lack of oversight of transport and loading operations</li> <li>Poor integration of animal welfare obligations with WHS risk controls, leading to conflicting priorities</li> </ul>	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish and document a WHS governance framework that clearly allocates responsibilities for livestock transport and loading across PCBUs, officers and workers</li> <li>Develop and maintain a legal and other requirements register covering WHS Act 2011, WHS Regulations, livestock and animal welfare legislation, Australian standards and relevant industry codes of practice (e.g. Land Transport and Livestock standards)</li> <li>Implement formal consultation and coordination arrangements with transport contractors, saleyards, feedlots and receivers, including written interface agreements outlining WHS responsibilities</li> <li>Require officers to demonstrate due diligence through regular WHS reporting on animal transport risk indicators, audit outcomes and corrective actions</li> <li>Review and update WHS policies and procedures at least annually or when legislation or standards change, as sign-off by senior management</li> <li>Integrate animal welfare standards into WHS policies so that loading densities, journey times and handling methods meet both safety and welfare requirements</li> </ul>	2M
2. Contractor, Transport Provider and Receiver Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No formal process to prequalify livestock transport contractors or receivers on WHS performance and capability</li> <li>Unclear allocation of responsibilities for loading, unloading, supervision and emergency response between parties</li> <li>Inconsistent standards for vehicle ramps, yards and equipment between sites and contractors</li> <li>Reliance on verbal instructions rather than written agreements and documented procedures</li> <li>Inadequate oversight of contractor compliance with fatigue, speed and load restraint requirements</li> <li>Poor management of subcontractors and labour-hire workers involved in animal handling and loading</li> </ul>	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a formal contractor prequalification process requiring evidence of WHS management systems, driver training, vehicle maintenance systems and incident history</li> <li>Develop written interface agreements or service level agreements that clearly define responsibilities for loading, unloading, livestock handling, supervision and emergency procedures at each site</li> <li>Specify minimum engineering and safety standards for vehicles, crates, ramps, races and yards in all contracts and purchase orders</li> <li>Require contractors to provide copies of fatigue management systems, driver rosters, licences, and maintenance schedules as part of onboarding and periodic review</li> <li>Establish a contractor performance monitoring program including site inspections, audits, joint safety walks, and review of non-conformances and incidents</li> <li>Ensure contractor induction covers site-specific livestock handling risks, traffic management plans, biosecurity rules and reporting obligations</li> </ul>	2M

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3. Driver, Handler and Stockperson Competency & Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate competency in low-stress livestock handling and animal behaviour, particularly for large or difficult animals</li> <li>Lack of formal training in loading densities, segregation, and management of sick or injured animals</li> <li>Insufficient instruction on specific risks associated with accepting delivery of live animals and unloading unknown stock</li> <li>No verification of driver licences, heavy vehicle accreditations or animal welfare qualifications</li> <li>Inconsistent induction and refresher training for temporary, seasonal or labour-hire workers</li> <li>Poor understanding of emergency procedures, including escape routes, animal escape management and injury response</li> </ul>	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a competency framework for drivers, handlers and stockpersons covering livestock behaviour, low-stress handling, animal welfare, WHS responsibilities and emergency procedures</li> <li>Require documented verification of relevant licences and qualifications (e.g. HR/HC/MC licence, livestock transport accreditation, animal welfare and handling training) prior to commencing work</li> <li>Provide formal induction and periodic refresher training on accepting deliveries, inspection on arrival, segregation of sick animals, and safe unloading practices</li> <li>Use competency assessments (theory and practical observation in yards, ramps and vehicles) before authorising workers to handle or load livestock independently</li> <li>Maintain training records and implement a scheduled refresher program with additional coaching following incidents or near misses</li> <li>Include scenario-based training for managing aggressive animals, large bulls, horses, or distressed/sick animals during loading, transport and unloading</li> </ul>	2M
4. Vehicle and Livestock Crate Design, Procurement and Modification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of vehicles or crates not purpose-designed for livestock transport or specific species (e.g. cattle vs sheep vs horses)</li> <li>Inadequate structural integrity of crates, gates, partitions and floors leading to collapse or escape</li> <li>Poor design of access points, ladders, walkways and handrails exposing workers to falls from height</li> <li>Insufficient headroom, ventilation, non-slip flooring or drainage leading to slips, animal distress and manual handling strain</li> <li>Uncontrolled vehicle modifications that compromise stability, load restraint or animal containment</li> <li>Lack of engineering assessment of vehicles used for large animals or mixed loads, resulting in unbalanced loads and rollover risk</li> </ul>	4A	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M

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5. Yards, Ramps and Loading Infrastructure Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yards, races and loading ramps not designed to suit animal type, vehicle height or expected volumes</li> <li>• Poorly maintained surfaces, uneven ground or inadequate drainage around loading areas leading to slips and bogging</li> <li>• Bottlenecks and blind corners that increase animal stress, baulking and worker exposure in close proximity</li> <li>• Inadequate lighting for early morning, evening or night-time loading/unloading</li> <li>• Absence of physical separation between pedestrian routes and vehicle movements near loading areas</li> <li>• Ramps too steep or without side protection, increasing risk of animals falling or jumping off</li> </ul>	4A	[REDACTED]	2M
6. Traffic, Site Access and Loading Zone Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncontrolled interaction between trucks, utes, loaders, forklifts and pedestrians around loading and unloading areas</li> <li>• Congestion and queuing of vehicles resulting in rushed loading/unloading and poor communication</li> <li>• Inadequate control of loading drivers and contractors unfamiliar with site layouts and livestock facilities</li> <li>• Lack of designated areas for accepting deliveries of live animals, resulting in ad-hoc unloading in unsuitable locations</li> <li>• Poor signposting and line-marking leading to wrong-way movements or reversing in tight spaces</li> <li>• Insufficient controls for managing public access or third-party vehicles near livestock facilities</li> </ul>	4A	[REDACTED]	2M
7. Journey Management and Fatigue Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate journey planning for distance, rest breaks and maximum journey times for both animals and drivers</li> </ul>	4A	[REDACTED]	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to account for remote routes, poor road conditions, weather and access to yards or holding facilities</li> <li>• Poor scheduling leading to night-time loading/unloading and extended waiting times for drivers and animals</li> <li>• Insufficient fatigue risk management systems for long-haul transport, including secondary employment and roster design</li> <li>• Lack of contingency planning for delays, road closures, breakdowns or emergency unloading of animals</li> <li>• Pressure to continue driving when sick, fatigued or in breach of work/rest requirements</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
8. Animal Acceptance, Inspection and Fitness to Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acceptance of animals that are unfit for loading or transport due to illness, injury, pregnancy or extreme condition</li> <li>• Lack of clear criteria and procedures for rejecting or segregating unfit or at-risk animals on arrival</li> <li>• Inadequate pre-transport inspection resulting in undetected lameness, fractures or disease</li> <li>• No documented system for handling sick or injured animals presented for transport, leading to on-the-spot decisions</li> <li>• Poor communication of prior treatment, sedation, or veterinary instructions between consignor, carrier and receiver</li> <li>• Inconsistent documentation of animal identification, condition and numbers at point of acceptance</li> </ul>	1A	[REDACTED]	2M
9. Management of Sick, Injured and High-Risk Animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate facilities for segregating and safely handling sick, injured or aggressive animals</li> <li>• Improvised handling of large or distressed animals (e.g. bulls, horses, stags) in unsuitable areas</li> </ul>	4A	[REDACTED]	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of procedures for transporting sick animals short distances for treatment or euthanasia</li> <li>Poorly defined criteria for when transport of sick animals is permissible under animal welfare legislation</li> <li>Insufficient veterinary support or advice for complex or high-risk cases</li> <li>Increased risk of zoonotic disease exposure or contamination when handling sick animals without system-level controls</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
10. Load Planning, Density, Segregation and Restraint Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inappropriate stocking densities causing trampling, falls, asphyxiation or increased aggression during transport</li> <li>Failure to segregate animals by species, size, sex, horned vs polled, temperament, leading to fighting and worker intervention</li> <li>Inadequate use of partitions and deck resulting in load shift and vehicle instability</li> <li>Inconsistent application of restraint standards to stock crate and gates</li> <li>Poor documentation and verification of numbers and distribution of animals across decks and bays</li> <li>Unclear procedures for handling partial loads, back-loading and mixed consignments</li> </ul>	4A	[REDACTED]	2M
11. Communication, Supervision and Coordination During Loading/Unloading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of a designated person in charge during loading and unloading operations</li> <li>Poor communication between drivers, stockpersons and yard staff leading to unexpected movements of animals or vehicles</li> </ul>	3H	[REDACTED]	1L

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Language barriers or cultural differences affecting understanding of instructions and safety information</li> <li>Uncoordinated multi-party operations when several PCBUs share a facility (e.g. saleyards, abattoirs, ports)</li> <li>Inadequate use of radios, agreed hand signals or standard commands when vision or noise obstructs communication</li> <li>No systematic process for pre-start briefings before high-risk loading tasks or large consignments</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
12. PPE, Animal Handling Aids and Equipment Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inconsistent provision and enforcement of appropriate PPE for workers in loading and transport environments</li> <li>Use of unsuitable or makeshift animal handling devices (e.g. sticks, pipes) that increase animal stress and worker risk</li> <li>Lack of system for inspection, maintenance and replacement of handling aids such as boards, paddles, flags and crushes</li> <li>Reliance on PPE as primary control instead of engineering and administrative measures</li> <li>Inadequate training on correct use and limitations of PPE and handling equipment</li> <li>Poor storage and housekeeping leading to trip hazards and damaged equipment around loading zones</li> </ul>	3H	[REDACTED]	1L
13. Health Monitoring, Psychosocial and Physical Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chronic musculoskeletal strain from repetitive animal handling, door and gate operation and awkward postures</li> <li>Exposure to psychosocial hazards including traumatic events (e.g. animal deaths), aggressive animals or abusive customers</li> <li>Fatigue, heat stress or dehydration during prolonged loading, transport or unloading in hot conditions</li> </ul>	3H	[REDACTED]	1L

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate management of pre-existing health conditions that could impair safe performance of duties (e.g. cardiac issues, mobility restrictions)</li> <li>Underreporting of aches, pains and stress due to cultural norms or fear of reprisal</li> <li>Lack of support following serious incidents, animal welfare events or driver-involved collisions</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
14. Biosecurity, Hygiene and Zoonotic Disease Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spread of infectious diseases between farms, vehicles and facilities during animal transport</li> <li>Insufficient vehicle and crate cleaning, disinfection and waste management systems between loads</li> <li>Exposure of workers to zoonotic diseases, parasites and contaminated biological material</li> <li>Lack of coordination with property biosecurity plans when accepting deliveries or unloading animals</li> <li>Inconsistent application of PPE and hygiene practices when handling sick or dead animals</li> <li>Poor record keeping, cleaning, disinfection and previous loads carried, impacting traceability</li> </ul>	3H	[REDACTED]	1L
15. Emergency Preparedness and Incident Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate preparedness for road crashes, rollovers or breakdowns involving livestock</li> <li>No clear procedures for dealing with escaped animals on roads, at facilities or in public areas</li> <li>Lack of equipment or training to safely manage injured animals and injured persons simultaneously</li> <li>Poor emergency communication arrangements, particularly in remote areas or low-coverage zones</li> </ul>	4A	[REDACTED]	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to investigate and learn from incidents and near misses involving livestock transport and loading</li> <li>• Insufficient coordination with emergency services, veterinarians and animal welfare authorities during major events</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
16. Documentation, Data, Audit and Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fragmented or outdated procedures for livestock loading, animal acceptance and transport management</li> <li>• Poor record keeping of journeys, inspections, maintenance, training and incidents leading to repeat failures</li> <li>• Lack of performance indicators specific to animal transport safety and welfare</li> <li>• Infrequent or superficial audits that fail to identify systemic issues</li> <li>• Limited worker involvement in reviewing procedures and suggesting improvements</li> <li>• Over-reliance on information knowledge held by a few experienced individuals without system capture</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/factsheets-and-resources/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.