

**Building Facade Cleaning**

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.	Administrative Change	
								PPE	

  

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. Governance, WHS Duties and Legal Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of clear allocation of WHS duties between PCBU, principal contractor, building owner, property manager and subcontractors for facade works</li> <li>Failure to identify and comply with WHS Act 2011, WHS Regulations and relevant Codes of Practice for construction work, falls, plant and hazardous chemicals</li> <li>Inadequate classification and control of work as construction work, high risk construction work (HRW) and notifiable work (e.g. facade replacement at height, demolition of façade elements)</li> <li>Poor consultation, cooperation and coordination arrangements between multiple PCBUs sharing the workplace (e.g. tenants, building management, cleaning contractor, facade replacement contractor)</li> <li>Absence of a documented WHS management system covering facade cleaning and facade replacement activities</li> <li>Failure to ensure due diligence by officers (directors, senior managers) in resourcing and verifying WHS controls for facade-related work</li> <li>Non-compliant or missing Safe Work Method Statements (SWMS) for high risk construction activities associated with facade access and replacement</li> <li>Inadequate management of design duties for existing and replacement facade systems (e.g. anchor points, building maintenance units (BMUs), façade access systems)</li> </ul>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish and maintain a documented WHS Management System (WHSMS) aligned to WHS Act 2011, WHS Regulations and relevant Australian Standards, specifically referencing facade cleaning, external facade cleaning and facade replacement activities</li> <li>Define and document PCBU roles, responsibilities and consultation arrangements in all contracts and service agreements for facade works, including responsibilities for access systems, emergency response and exclusion zones</li> <li>Develop a compliance register identifying applicable legislation, Codes of Practice and Standards (e.g. Managing the Risk of Falls in Housing Construction, AS/NZS 1891 fall arrest systems, AS 2550 for cranes and hoists, AS 1657 for access systems, AS 4488 for industrial rope access, AS/NZS 4801/ISO 45001 equivalents)</li> <li>Ensure corporate officers exercise due diligence by periodically reviewing WHS performance data, facade access inspection reports, incident trends and audit findings relating to facade work</li> <li>Implement a formal approval process requiring review and sign-off of SWMS for all high risk construction work related to facade cleaning and replacement, ensuring they integrate with building emergency procedures</li> <li>Establish documented consultation, coordination and cooperation procedures between PCBUs (building owner, managers, tenants, contractors) for scheduling facade work, isolating areas and communicating risks</li> <li>Integrate design duties into procurement and project planning for facade replacement, requiring designers to provide safety-in-design reports, access and anchor layouts, and maintenance requirements</li> <li>Schedule regular independent WHS system audits with specific scope items for elevated work, facade access systems, rope access arrangements and BMU operations</li> </ul>	Medium
2. Contractor Management and Procurement of Facade Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement of facade cleaning, external facade cleaning or facade replacement contractors without adequate WHS competence or high-risk experience</li> </ul>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a formal contractor pre-qualification system requiring evidence of WHSMS, licences, high-risk work permits, insurance, training records and references for facade cleaning and facade replacement projects</li> </ul>	Medium

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reliance on lowest-cost selection without assessing safety performance, insurances, licences and accreditation (e.g. IRATA rope access, EWP tickets, rigging licences)</li> <li>Insufficient pre-qualification around history of incidents, near misses and enforcement notices relating to work at height and façade access</li> <li>Poorly specified contracts that do not define WHS responsibilities for plant, anchorage, exclusion zones, waste handling and interaction with occupants and the public</li> <li>Use of subcontractor chains with limited visibility of downstream contractors' WHS systems and competencies</li> <li>No system for verifying that contractors' SWMS, risk assessments and emergency plans are site-specific and integrated with building procedures</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt a weighted tender evaluation process that gives substantial weighting to WHS performance, technical capability and previous facade-related work rather than price alone</li> <li>Require all facade contractors to provide incident statistics, evidence of regulator notices, and independent audit reports as part of the selection process</li> <li>Standardise contractual WHS clauses covering responsibilities for plant provision, inspection of anchor systems, control of public areas, emergency rescue capability and reporting obligations</li> <li>Prohibit uncontrolled subcontracting by requiring written approval for all subcontractors and subjecting them to the same WHS pre-qualification criteria as primary contractors</li> <li>Establish a system for reviewing and approving contractor WHS documentation (risk assessments, SWMS, emergency and rescue plans, façade access plans) prior to work commencing and at defined intervals for long duration projects</li> <li>Include performance-based WHS requirements in contracts (e.g. mandatory participation in joint inspections, toolbox meetings and incident investigations for facade works)</li> </ul>	
3. Design, Engineering and Structural Integrity of Façade and Access Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate structural assessment of existing facades before cleaning or replacement, leading to failure of panels, fixings or decorative elements under load or cleaning pressure</li> <li>Non-compliant or undocumented design of facade access systems (BMUs, davit arms, monorails, rope access anchors, platforms, swing stages)</li> <li>Failure to consider access for ongoing cleaning and maintenance in facade replacement design (creating future high-risk access methods such as ad-hoc rope access or ladder work)</li> <li>Unverified load ratings and fixings for anchor points and support systems used for industrial rope access or fall arrest</li> <li>Lack of engineering assessment of dynamic loads from high-pressure</li> </ul>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require competent structural engineers to assess existing facades prior to establishing cleaning or replacement methodologies, including inspection of fixings, cladding, window systems and decorative elements</li> <li>Ensure all facade access systems (BMUs, rope access anchors, monorails, davit systems, swing stages) are designed, installed and certified by appropriately qualified engineers in accordance with relevant Australian Standards</li> <li>Incorporate safety-in-design principles into all facade replacement projects, including permanent safe access provisions for cleaning and inspection (e.g. walkways, anchors, BMU tracks, maintenance platforms)</li> <li>Maintain a current engineering register and certificates for all anchor points, BMUs and access systems, including location plans, design loads, inspection dates and re-certification due dates</li> <li>Implement change management procedures requiring formal engineering review for any modifications to facade elements or access systems that may alter loads, access routes or tie-in points</li> <li>Require design documentation for new or replacement facades to explicitly address cleaning methods, frequency, access systems, and restrictions on high-pressure cleaning or abrasive methods</li> <li>Conduct periodic design and engineering reviews for ageing facades or those exposed to harsh environments (coastal, industrial) to confirm ongoing suitability of access methods and structural capacity</li> </ul>	Medium

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	<p>cleaning, suspended platforms, wind and façade replacement activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor interface design between new façade elements and existing structure, leading to water ingress, corrosion or long-term structural weakening that later compromises safe access</li> <li>• Undocumented modifications to facades (e.g. installed signage, shading devices, window awnings) that affect access routes or introduce dropped-object risks</li> </ul>			
4. Work-At-Height Systems and Fall Protection Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systemic failure to control risks of falls from height for facade cleaners and facade replacement workers using BMUs, rope access, EWPs, scaffolds or ladders</li> <li>• Inadequate selection and management of fall arrest versus restraint systems leading to inappropriate reliance on PPE without higher-order controls</li> <li>• Poor integration of different access methods on the same facade (e.g. rope access above EWP) resulting in conflicting controls and increased fall or collision risk</li> <li>• Expired, uncertified or incorrectly installed anchor points used for rope access or fall arrest systems</li> <li>• Failure to establish and enforce no-go zones beneath facade work areas to protect workers and the public from falling objects</li> <li>• Inadequate supervision and monitoring of at-height work practices, resulting in bypassing of anchor systems or incorrect use of lanyards and devices</li> </ul>	High	<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>	Medium
5. Plant, Equipment and Technology for Façade Access and Replacement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of non-compliant, poorly maintained or unsuitable plant (e.g. EWPs, BMUs, suspended scaffolds, pressure cleaners, hoists, cranes) for facade tasks</li> </ul>	High	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	Medium

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of standardised pre-use inspection and defect reporting systems for critical facade access plant</li> <li>Incompatible or ad-hoc integration of new equipment with existing facade access infrastructure (e.g. attaching temporary rigs to unverified structures)</li> <li>Plant selection based solely on availability or cost rather than engineering suitability, reach and safe working load for specific façade geometry</li> <li>Unmanaged software or control system faults in modern BMUs or EWPs that rely on electronic safety interlocks, sensors and limit switches</li> <li>Poor systems for storage, inspection and replacement of rope access equipment, harnesses and associated hardware used in facade cleaning</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
6. Training, Competency and Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workers undertaking facade cleaning or facade replacement without formal competency in high-rise rope access, BMU operation, EWP operation or rigging as applicable</li> <li>Reliance on informal on-the-job training without structured assessment of competence or verification of previous experience</li> <li>Supervisors lacking specific expertise in at-height façade work, resulting in inadequate oversight and poor decision-making about changing conditions</li> <li>Inadequate training on site-specific risks such as fragile facade elements, historical building features, glazed curtain walls or non-standard anchor layouts</li> <li>Poor understanding of emergency and rescue procedures for workers suspended on ropes, BMUs or EWPs during facade activities</li> </ul>	High	[REDACTED]	Medium

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No system to verify currency of licences, qualifications and medical fitness for high-risk facade work</li> </ul>			
7. Site Planning, Public Interface and Traffic Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insufficient planning for facade works in highly trafficked urban environments, leading to exposure of pedestrians, vehicles and building occupants to falling objects and plant movements</li> <li>Inadequate segregation between facade access zones and public/tenant access routes to and from the building</li> <li>Lack of integrated traffic management planning for delivery of facade panels, removal of old facade elements and positioning of EWPs or cranes</li> <li>Unmanaged interaction between facade work activities and other contractors or building operations (e.g. fit-out works, loading dock operations, retail trade)</li> <li>Failure to plan work sequencing for progressive facade replacement, leaving areas temporarily unprotected from weather or structural damage</li> <li>Poor communication with tenants and the public leading to people entering exclusion zones or missing signage around facade works</li> </ul>	High	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	Medium
8. Environmental and Chemical Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of hazardous cleaning chemicals on external facades without adequate assessment of health, environmental and compatibility risks with facade materials</li> <li>Uncontrolled overspray or run-off from high-pressure cleaners or chemicals impacting pedestrians, traffic, adjacent properties or sensitive environmental receptors</li> <li>Inadequate systems for managing dust, debris and waste materials from facade replacement, including silica dust from cutting or drilling and legacy</li> </ul>	Medium	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	Low

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	<p>materials such as lead-based paints or asbestos-containing components</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selection of cleaning agents or methods that degrade facade materials, sealants or anchors, compromising future structural integrity and safety</li> <li>• Insufficient ventilation or exposure control measures when working in recesses, atriums or partially enclosed facade spaces where vapours or mist may accumulate</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
9. Emergency Planning, Rescue and Incident Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of coordinated emergency response procedures for workers suspended from ropes, BMUs, suspended scaffolds or EWP's during facade tasks</li> <li>• Over-reliance on external emergency services without site-specific rescue capability for timely retrieval from height</li> <li>• Inadequate planning for structural or facade failures (e.g. panel detachment, glass breakage) that may lead to falling objects and building evacuation needs</li> <li>• Poor communication channels between facade workers, building management, security and emergency responders</li> <li>• Absence of clear procedures for incident reporting, investigation and corrective actions specific to facade cleaning and replacement activities</li> <li>• Failure to test and review emergency plans for complex facades, multi-building sites or high-rise structures</li> </ul>	High	[REDACTED]	Medium
10. Monitoring, Audit and Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WHS system for facade work becoming outdated, with controls not reflecting current best practice, technology or regulatory expectations</li> <li>• Inadequate field verification that documented controls for facade cleaning and replacement are implemented and effective</li> <li>• Lack of data collection and analysis specific to facade-related risks,</li> </ul>	Medium	[REDACTED]	Low

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	incidents, near misses and non-conformances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to incorporate lessons learned from previous facade projects, regulator guidance or industry alerts into future planning and procedures</li> <li>• Inconsistent supervision and management oversight across multiple sites or contractors performing facade work</li> </ul>		[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	

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/lis>

**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.