

Custom Furniture Making and Cabinet Assembly

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			Elimination Remove the hazard.	
LIKELY	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	4A ACUTE	DO NOT PROCEED	Substitution 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.	Engineering 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:	
4A	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.
3H	Review and approve additional controls before task starts. Senior supervisor sign-off needed.
2M	Ensure all nominated controls are in place and effective. Proceed with caution; monitor conditions.
1L	Proceed, following standard operating procedures. Monitor and keep records.

Consequence Scale:			
Consequence	People (injury/illness)	Project / Assets	Compliance / Reputation
Catastrophic	Fatality or permanent total disability	project shutdown	Significant regulator intervention; criminal prosecution
Major	Serious injury/illness (hospital > 5 days)	critical delay	Improvement notice; major media coverage
Moderate	Medical-treatment injury; lost-time > 1 day	moderate delay	Minor breach; adverse client comment
Minor	First-aid only, no lost time	negligible delay	Isolated non-conformance
Insignificant	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, Duties and Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of clear allocation of WHS duties between PCBUs, directors and supervisors leading to gaps in risk management Inadequate consultation with workers on changes to plant, layout or processes (e.g. new mitre guillotine or clamping system) Failure to maintain up-to-date WHS policies and procedures aligned with WHS Act 2011 and WHS Regulations 2011 Insufficient resourcing for WHS (time, budget, competent persons) resulting in unmanaged hazards in custom furniture and cabinetry operations Poor integration of WHS requirements into business planning, quoting and scheduling for custom projects Inadequate mechanisms for workers (including apprentices, labour hire and contractors) to raise WHS concerns without fear of reprisal 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and maintain a WHS Management System aligned with WHS Act 2011 and relevant Codes of Practice (e.g. Managing Risks of Plant in the Workplace, Hazardous Chemicals, Manual Tasks) Define and document WHS roles, responsibilities and due diligence obligations for officers, managers, supervisors and workers involved in cabinet making and decorative panel work Implement structured worker consultation arrangements (e.g. elected HSRs, WHS committee, toolbox talks) for all custom furniture and cabinet assembly areas Integrate WHS reviews into design, procurement and change management decisions for new plant, glues, coatings and wood working processes Allocate specific budget and time allowances for WHS activities including risk assessments, training, health monitoring and equipment maintenance Conduct annual WHS management review including performance metrics, incident trends and compliance audits with documented improvement actions 	3H
2. Workshop Layout, Traffic Management and Housekeeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Congested workshop layout creating collision risks between pedestrians, forklifts, trolleys and timber stock Poor segregation between cutting/mitre guillotine areas, assembly benches and storage of finished decorative panels and bookshelves Trip hazards from offcuts, clamps, hoses and power leads around cabinet assembly and gluing stations Inadequate storage systems for heavy panels, desks and tables leading to panel toppling or collapse Insufficient planning for handling long mouldings and large cabinet carcasses through doorways and corridors Blocked access to emergency exits, fire equipment and first aid due to 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a documented workshop traffic management plan showing pedestrian walkways, mobile plant routes and no-go zones around cutting and assembly areas Design and maintain clear separation of tasks (cutting, machining, dry assembly, gluing and clamping, packing) using physical barriers, line-marking and signage where practicable Implement housekeeping standards and scheduled inspections focusing on offcut disposal, clamp storage, and management of cords and hoses Provide engineered racking and stillage systems rated and designed for vertical and horizontal storage of timber sheets, decorative panels and assembled cabinets Establish clear access requirements for exits, extinguishers, emergency stops and electrical switchboards with regular supervisory checks Include layout and traffic risks in change management reviews before introducing new benches, presses or panel storage systems 	2M

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	stockpiling of materials or finished furniture			
3. Plant and Equipment Management (Including Mitre Guillotine and Woodworking Machinery)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of formal plant risk assessments for saws, routers, spindle moulders, mitre guillotines and clamping presses Inadequate guarding, interlocking or emergency stop systems on woodworking machinery and panel handling equipment Failure to implement a planned inspection, testing and maintenance program for critical plant (e.g. mitre guillotine blades, clamps, presses, extraction systems) Uncontrolled modifications to plant (e.g. homemade jigs, removal of guards for convenience) creating new hazards Use of unsuitable or poorly maintained hand tools impacting safe assembly of cabinets, drawers, mouldings and bookshelves Inadequate lock-out/tag-out system for servicing, clearing jams or changing blades on guillotine and saws 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement and maintain documented plant risk assessments for all major woodworking machinery, including mitre guillotines and clamping systems, reviewed at set intervals Ensure machinery is inspected, installed and guarded in accordance with Australian Standards and manufacturer instructions, with no operation permitted if guards or interlocks are bypassed Establish a preventative maintenance schedule for all plant, including inspection of cutting blades, clamps, presses, safety devices and emergency stops Create a formal management of change procedure for any plant modifications, requiring competent review and re-assessment of risks Maintain a register of plant and tools, including commissioning records, maintenance logs and out-of-service tagging procedures Implement a lock-out/tag-out procedure and training for all workers, and require isolation before clearing jams, changing cutters or servicing plant 	2M
4. Hazardous Chemicals, Glues and Wood Dust Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exposure to vapours from solvent-based adhesives and finishes used in gluing and decorative panel work Inhalation of hardwood, softwood and MDF dust during machining, moulding, mitre cuts and sanding of furniture components Inadequate storage, labelling and decanting systems for adhesives, sealants and coatings Lack of Safety Data Sheet (SDS) access or understanding for glues, solvents and coatings used in cabinet construction and assembly Failure to assess health risks for sensitising agents in certain glues, resins and composite panels 	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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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor housekeeping leading to accumulation of fine wood dust increasing respiratory risk and fire/explosion potential 			
5. Manual Handling, Ergonomics and Material Handling Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repetitive lifting, pushing and carrying of heavy timber sheets, decorative panels, desks, tables and cabinets Awkward postures during assembly, dry fitting, gluing and clamping of large cabinets and wooden bookshelves Inadequate systems for team lifting or mechanical assistance when handling long mouldings and large custom furniture items Poor bench heights and workstation design leading to musculoskeletal disorders for cabinet makers and assemblers Time pressure and poor job planning resulting in unsafe lifting practices during loading and despatch of finished work Lack of assessment of cumulative manual task exposure over different tasks and shifts 	4A	<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
6. Design, Planning and Job Specification Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poorly detailed drawings or specifications leading to rework, rush changes and unsafe workarounds on the workshop floor Custom designs that exceed the handling or machining capacity of existing plant and layout Lack of design review to consider WHS implications of complex cabinetry, mouldings or bookshelf configurations Inadequate communication of design changes from office to workshop resulting in confusion and errors Failure to standardise components and methods where possible, increasing complexity and risk in custom work 	3H	<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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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conflict between design intent and safe installation or transport requirements for large furniture items 			
7. Training, Competency and Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient training on safe use of woodworking machinery, mitre guillotines and clamping systems Inadequate induction for new workers, apprentices and labour hire staff on site-specific WHS procedures Lack of competency assessment before authorising workers to operate high-risk plant or complex assembly tasks Poor supervision ratios leading to unsafely short-cut procedures during busy periods Training delivered informally without records, assessment or language/cultural considerations Failure to provide refresher training equipment, materials and processes change 	4A	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M
8. Production Planning, Fatigue and Workload Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unrealistic production schedules for custom furniture and cabinet orders leading to excessive overtime and fatigue Inadequate break management during intensive periods of machining, assembly and gluing Rostering practices that do not allow sufficient recovery time between shifts, particularly before deadlines Pressure to work faster or bypass controls (e.g. guards, housekeeping, testing) to meet urgent delivery dates Lack of system to identify and support workers showing signs of fatigue or stress Poor coordination between design, procurement and production causing last-minute changes and rework 	3H	<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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9. Contractor, Visitor and Client Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractors performing specialist tasks (e.g. dust extraction maintenance, electrical work) without adequate integration into site WHS systems Visitors or clients entering workshop areas without awareness of hazards related to cutting, assembly and gluing processes Lack of clear responsibilities between PCBUs when subcontracting installation or transport of custom furniture and cabinets Inadequate exchange of information about hazards, controls and emergency procedures with contractors Uncontrolled access to high-risk areas such as mitre guillotine stations, machine rooms and chemical stores Failure to verify contractor qualifications and insurances before engagement 	3H	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M
10. Emergency Preparedness, Fire and Explosion Risk (Timber, Dust and Solvents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate planning for fires involving wood dust, offcuts, adhesives and solvent-based coatings Insufficient emergency procedures for machinery entrapment, hand cuts, crush injuries from guillotines, clamps and presses Lack of appropriate fire alarm systems for storage of timber, decorative panels and flammable substances Emergency equipment (extinguishers, spill kits, first aid) not maintained or not suited to identified risks Workers not trained or drilled in emergency responses specific to woodworking and cabinet assembly activities Blocked evacuation routes due to storage of panels, cabinets and finished furniture items 	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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11. Quality Control, Rework and Non-Conformance Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rework arising from poor quality control leading to additional manual handling, cutting and assembly tasks • Pressure to salvage defective components (e.g. mis-cut mouldings, incorrect cabinet carcasses) by unsafe modifications • Inadequate procedures for quarantining non-conforming panels, drawers or assemblies, leading to confusion and errors • Lack of feedback loop from defects and rework into design, training and process improvement • Inaccurate or incomplete documentation (job cards, cutting lists) leading to repeated mistakes and unsafe time pressure 	3H	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M
12. PPE, Health Monitoring and Injury Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over-reliance on PPE instead of higher-order controls for dust, noise and chemical exposure in cabinet making processes • Inconsistent use of PPE due to poor fit, comfort, availability or unclear rules • Lack of health monitoring for workers exposed to wood dust and hazardous substances over time • Inadequate systems for early reporting and management of musculoskeletal discomfort from assembly and handling tasks • Poorly managed return-to-work processes increasing risk of re-injury or aggravation • Failure to review injury trends to identify systemic issues in custom furniture and cabinetry operations 	3H	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M
13. Information Management, Documentation and Records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical WHS information (procedures, SDS, plant manuals) not readily accessible to workers in relevant areas 	3H	<p>[REDACTED]</p>	1L

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out-of-date or conflicting procedures for equipment, assembly methods or chemical handling • Inadequate records of maintenance, inspections, training and risk assessments leading to poor assurance of control effectiveness • Reliance on verbal instructions for complex assembly, gluing and clamping operations without supporting documents • Lack of systematic review cycle for WHS documents, resulting in non-compliance with current legislation or best practice 		<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	
14. Change Management, New Products and Process Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of new adhesives, finishes or composite materials without chemical and health risk assessment • Purchase of new plant (e.g. upgraded mitre guillotine, CNC routers, automatic clamps) without full WHS commissioning plan • Layout changes to accommodate new product lines such as decorative panels or bespoke bookshelves without traffic or ergonomics review • Implementation of new work methods (e.g. different jointing systems, new drawer runners) without adequate training and trialling • Failure to involve workers in assessing practical implications and risks of proposed changes • Overlapping changes (equipment, products, staffing) implemented simultaneously creating unanticipated system interactions 	1A	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M

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.