

**Decking Pergolas and Outdoor Timber**

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, Leadership and Legal Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of clear WHS roles and responsibilities for decking and pergola activities</li> <li>Directors and officers not exercising due diligence under WHS Act 2011</li> <li>Inadequate WHS policy coverage for construction of decks, verandas, patios and pergolas</li> <li>Poor integration of WHS obligations into business planning and tendering</li> <li>Non-compliance with relevant Australian Standards, NCC and local council requirements for timber structures</li> <li>Inadequate consultation with workers and subcontractors on WHS matters</li> <li>Failure to monitor legal changes in WHS, building codes and environmental obligations</li> </ul>	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish and maintain a documented WHS Management System (WHSMS) aligned with ISO 45001 and WHS Act 2011 obligations for all decking, pergola and outdoor timber works</li> <li>Define and document WHS roles, responsibilities and authorities for directors, managers, supervisors and workers involved in decks, gazebos, verandas and patios</li> <li>Implement a due diligence framework for officers, including regular WHS briefings, WHS performance reports and documented decision making on risk control</li> <li>Maintain a legal and standards register covering WHS Act and Regulations, NCC, AS 1684, AS 1720, AS 3600 where relevant, and timber treatment standards, with scheduled reviews</li> <li>Integrate WHS criteria into project planning, tendering and subcontractor selection for decking and pergola projects</li> <li>Establish formal WHS consultation arrangements (toolbox talks, HSRs, WHS committee) that specifically address risks associated with outdoor timber construction</li> <li>Conduct regular management reviews of the WHSMS, including incident trends, audit findings and performance indicators for decking and pergola works</li> </ul>	3H
2. Design, Engineering and Structural Adequacy of Decks and Pergolas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate structural design of decks, verandas and pergolas leading to collapse or structural failure</li> <li>Failure to account for imposed loads, wind loads, balustrade loads and corrosion in design</li> <li>Use of non-compliant or undersized timber members and fixings</li> <li>Lack of engineering review for complex or elevated platform decking and timber overlays</li> <li>Inadequate detailing for connections to existing structures (e.g. house, veranda, patio roof)</li> <li>Design not considering access for inspection, maintenance and replacement</li> <li>Insufficient consideration of fire performance and bushfire attack levels where applicable</li> </ul>	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require that all decks, pergolas, gazebos and outdoor timber platforms are designed or verified by a suitably qualified engineer or competent designer with experience in timber structures</li> <li>Implement a design control procedure that mandates compliance with NCC, AS 1684, AS 1720, AS 1170 loading codes and relevant local planning controls</li> <li>Establish engineering review and approval workflows for elevated decks, multi-level platforms, veranda repairs, and unusual geometries</li> <li>Maintain standard design details and connection schedules for decks and pergolas that have been verified by an engineer and periodically reviewed</li> <li>Require documented design calculations, drawings and certification prior to construction commencement and retain on file for the life of the structure</li> <li>Develop design checklists that include durability, corrosion resistance, bushfire zoning, termite management and drainage considerations</li> <li>Implement a change management process so that site variations to deck and pergola designs are reviewed and approved by the designer or engineer before implementation</li> </ul>	2M

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3. Planning, Approvals and Site Assessment for Outdoor Timber Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commencing deck or pergola construction without building approvals or planning permits</li> <li>Failure to identify underground and overhead services prior to footing excavation or veranda repair</li> <li>Inadequate assessment of soil conditions affecting footing design and stability</li> <li>Poor site access planning leading to vehicle and plant interface risks</li> <li>Inadequate consideration of neighbouring properties, public interfaces and shared access ways</li> <li>Lack of environmental impact assessment for run-off, sediment and vegetation disturbance</li> <li>Inadequate identification of existing structural defects in verandas and patios prior to repair</li> </ul>	3H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a pre-construction planning procedure that requires confirmation of all statutory approvals, notifications and permits for decks, patios and pergolas before work starts</li> <li>Mandate site-specific WHS and environmental assessments, including services location using Dial Before You Dig and local service plans, prior to any excavation or post installation</li> <li>Use a standardised site risk assessment form to capture access constraints, public interfaces, overhead powerlines, ground stability and weather exposure risks</li> <li>Require geotechnical soil assessment where ground conditions are uncertain or for large or elevated timber platforms</li> <li>Establish procedures for assessing existing verandas and decks for structural integrity prior to repair work including photographic records and engineering input where required</li> <li>Include stakeholder and neighbour communication protocols in project planning where works impact shared boundaries or common areas</li> <li>Ensure planning documentation includes traffic management needs, material laydown areas, waste handling and emergency access routes</li> </ul>	2M
4. Contractor, Subcontractor and Supplier Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of subcontractors without verified competency in building decks, pergolas and outdoor timber structures</li> <li>Poor oversight of subcontractor WHS performance on residential and commercial sites</li> <li>Inadequate verification of licence, trade qualifications and high work authorisations</li> <li>Suppliers providing non-compliant or incorrectly graded timber, fixings or coatings</li> <li>Lack of clear WHS expectations and contractual obligations for deck and pergola projects</li> <li>Fragmented communication between principal contractor, subcontractors and suppliers about design changes and hazards</li> </ul>	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> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M

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5. Worker Competency, Training and Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workers lacking competency in structural carpentry related to decks, gazebos and pergolas</li> <li>Insufficient training in WHS procedures, risk assessment and incident reporting</li> <li>New or young workers undertaking high-risk tasks without adequate supervision</li> <li>Inadequate understanding of safe use of power tools, access equipment and lifting aids</li> <li>Poor awareness of manual handling risks associated with heavy or awkward timber members</li> <li>Failure to maintain records of training, licences and verification of competency</li> </ul>	3H	[REDACTED]	2M
6. Design and Management of Working at Heights and Fall Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate systems controlling falls from incomplete decks, verandas and platforms</li> <li>Lack of formal process selecting appropriate fall prevention systems (guardrails, scaffolds, EWPs)</li> <li>Inconsistent installation of edge protection on elevated decking and pergola frames</li> <li>Poorly planned access for installation of roof members, rafters and beams on pergolas and gazebos</li> <li>No systematic inspection of temporary edge protection, scaffolding or access systems</li> <li>Reliance on ladders without a hierarchy-of-control based assessment</li> </ul>	4A	[REDACTED]	2M

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7. Plant, Tools and Equipment Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate maintenance and inspection system for power tools used in decking and pergola construction</li> <li>• Use of non-compliant electrical equipment or damaged extension leads in outdoor areas</li> <li>• Lack of guarding or safety features on saws, nail guns and other timber-processing equipment</li> <li>• Uncontrolled use of small plant (mixers, compactors, post-hole diggers) around unstable ground or edges</li> <li>• Insufficient control of noise and vibration from power tools and equipment</li> <li>• Poor storage and transport systems for equipment leading to damage and unplanned failures</li> </ul>	3H	[REDACTED]	2M
8. Material Selection, Handling and Storage of Timber and Ancillaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selection of inappropriate or non-durable timbers for outdoor decks and pergolas leading to premature failure</li> <li>• Inadequate system for verifying timber treatment levels and grading for structural applications</li> <li>• Unsafe manual handling of long or heavy timber members and deck boards</li> <li>• Poor storage leading to warping, decay, slip hazards and pest infestation</li> <li>• Uncontrolled use of chemical timber treatments, adhesives, sealers and coatings</li> <li>• Insufficient segregation of flammable materials from ignition sources</li> </ul>	3H	[REDACTED]	2M

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9. Environmental and Site Condition Management (Weather, Ground and Public Interface)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adverse weather (rain, heat, wind) affecting stability of partially built decks and pergolas</li> <li>• Slips, trips and falls on wet, uneven or debris-covered ground around work areas</li> <li>• Uncontrolled public or client access to construction zones at residences and commercial sites</li> <li>• Ground movement or erosion undermining deck and veranda foundations during construction</li> <li>• Heat stress and UV exposure for workers during extended outdoor tasks</li> <li>• Noise, dust and vibration affecting neighbours and adjacent occupants</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>	2M
10. Hazardous Substances, Dust and Silica Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exposure to wood dust from cutting, sanding and drilling of timber and decking materials</li> <li>• Potential silica exposure where composite or cement-based decking products or substrates are used</li> <li>• Inhalation of fumes and vapours from paints, stains, sealers and adhesives used on decks and pergolas</li> <li>• Skin and eye irritation from timber treatments and cleaning chemicals</li> <li>• Poor labelling, storage and disposal of hazardous substances on small residential sites</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>	2M

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11. Electrical Safety and Temporary Services for Outdoor Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of portable electrical equipment in wet outdoor environments without adequate protection</li> <li>• Uncontrolled temporary power leads across access paths and decking surfaces</li> <li>• Accidental contact with underground or overhead electrical services during footing installation or veranda repair</li> <li>• Overloading of temporary power supplies on small residential sites</li> <li>• Inadequate system for inspection and tagging of extension leads, RCDs and portable electrical tools</li> </ul>	3H	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	1L
12. Traffic, Access and Site Logistics Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncontrolled interaction between delivery vehicles, mobile plant and workers on residential streets or driveways</li> <li>• Inadequate planning for loading and unloading long timber members and prefabricated pergola components</li> <li>• Blocked or unsafe access routes to deck and veranda work areas, especially at the rear of properties</li> <li>• Poor control of visitors and clients accessing work areas during construction</li> <li>• Emergency vehicles unable to access the site due to poor parking and materials placement</li> </ul>	3H	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M
13. Incident Management, Emergency Preparedness and First Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delayed response to injuries occurring during decking or pergola construction or veranda repair</li> <li>• Workers not knowing emergency procedures, site address or access instructions</li> <li>• Inadequate provision of first aid equipment suitable for outdoor carpentry and construction tasks</li> </ul>	3H	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	1L

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failure to investigate incidents and near misses to identify systemic causes</li> <li>Lack of planning for fire, structural instability or severe weather emergencies on partially completed structures</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
14. Inspection, Testing, Handover and Ongoing Structural Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of systematic inspection regime for completed decks, verandas and pergolas prior to handover</li> <li>Failure to identify construction defects or deviations from approved design</li> <li>No guidance to clients on maintenance requirements for outdoor timber structures</li> <li>Progressive deterioration of structural elements due to moisture, UV, pests or corrosion</li> <li>Inadequate record-keeping of inspections, certifications and handover documentation</li> </ul>	3H	[REDACTED]	2M
15. Fatigue, Wellbeing and Remote or Isolated Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workers undertaking long or consecutive days on outdoor decking projects leading to fatigue-related errors</li> <li>Lone work or isolated work during small veranda repairs or remote pergola installations</li> <li>Insufficient consideration of mental health and psychosocial risks associated with high workloads and client pressures</li> <li>Poor planning of travel to and from remote or regional decking sites</li> </ul>	2M	[REDACTED]	1L

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			[REDACTED]	
16. Documentation, Records, Audit and Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate documentation of WHS procedures and project-specific risk controls for decks and pergolas</li> <li>• Loss or inaccessibility of critical records such as designs, certifications and incident reports</li> <li>• Failure to review and update WHS systems in response to incidents, legislative changes or new technology</li> <li>• Inconsistent application of WHS procedures across different decking and pergola projects</li> <li>• Limited internal verification that controls remain effective over time</li> </ul>	3H	[REDACTED]	2M

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.