

**Domestic Animal Handling Stables and Pet Care**

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, Consultation and Role Clarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of a documented WHS management system aligned to WHS Act 2011 and WHS Regulation</li> <li>Unclear allocation of WHS duties between officers, managers, supervisors and workers</li> <li>Inadequate consultation with workers, contractors and volunteers on animal handling risks</li> <li>Failure to coordinate WHS responsibilities with labour hire providers and event partners</li> <li>No formal process for workers to report hazards, near misses and animal incidents</li> <li>Insufficient WHS inductions for new staff, volunteers and casuals</li> <li>Failure by officers to exercise due diligence in monitoring WHS performance</li> <li>Policies not addressing specific risks of domestic animal handling, stalls and pet care operation</li> </ul>	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish and maintain a documented WHS management system referencing WHS Act 2011, WHS Regulation and relevant Codes of Practice (e.g. Managing Risks of Hazardous Manual Tasks, First Aid in the Workplace)</li> <li>Define and document WHS roles, responsibilities and authorities for officers, senior management, supervisors, handlers, grooms and support staff</li> <li>Implement formal WHS consultation mechanisms such as CSRs, WHS committees and scheduled toolbox talks that specifically address animal handling, stalls and pet care risks</li> <li>Develop written policies and procedures covering domestic animal handling, public interaction with animals, stabling, transport and pet care services</li> <li>Establish a clear, accessible hazard, incident and near-miss reporting procedure including animal bites, kicks, scratches, falls and near-escape events</li> <li>Provide structured WHS and animal-welfare inductions for all workers, volunteers, contractors and students before they commence work</li> <li>Ensure officers receive training on WHS due diligence obligations including the unique risks of animal handling operations</li> <li>Set WHS objectives and performance indicators (e.g. incident rates, training completion, inspection close-out times) and review them at management meetings</li> <li>Implement a documented change management process for introducing new species, new equipment, new show activities or changes in site layout</li> </ul>	3H
2. Worker Competency, Training and Supervision for Animal Handling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate competency of staff to handle large animals, livestock and aggressive pets</li> <li>Lack of specific training on animal behaviour, bite prevention and safe restraint techniques</li> <li>Insufficient supervision of junior or inexperienced handlers, students and volunteers</li> <li>No formal verification of competency for high-risk activities (e.g. handling livestock, aggressive dogs, stallions, exotic pets)</li> <li>Inconsistent training in administering medication and first aid to injured animals</li> </ul>	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a competency-based training framework for all animal handling roles including large animals, livestock, small animals and exotic species as applicable</li> <li>Maintain written position descriptions specifying required qualifications, experience and animal handling competencies</li> <li>Provide accredited or industry-recognised training in animal behaviour, low-stress handling, bite prevention strategies and aggressive animal management</li> <li>Implement a formal competency assessment process (theory and practical) before authorising workers to perform high-risk tasks such as handling aggressive animals, livestock or stallions</li> <li>Provide targeted training modules on administering medication to animals, including dosage calculations, routes of administration, storage requirements and legal restrictions under veterinary direction</li> <li>Train workers in applying first aid to injured animals within their scope of practice and in accordance with veterinary instructions and animal welfare legislation</li> <li>Deliver specific training on safe capture of escaped animals, use of catch poles, nets, crates and cat/dog rescue equipment (including working at height where relevant)</li> </ul>	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate skills to capture escaped animals safely and use capture equipment correctly</li> <li>Lack of training in managing heat stress in animals and recognising signs of distress</li> <li>Inadequate training in safe preparation and handling of raw meat for feeding</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide refresher and toolbox training on recognising and managing heat stress in animals, including triggers, early signs and emergency response protocols</li> <li>Train staff in safe raw meat handling, cross-contamination prevention, temperature control and zoonotic disease prevention measures</li> <li>Ensure appropriate supervision ratios for trainees, students and volunteers, with higher supervision levels for complex or high-risk animal handling tasks</li> <li>Maintain up-to-date training records, including dates, content, trainers and competency outcomes, and schedule periodic refresher training</li> </ul>	
3. Animal Behaviour Assessment, Selection and Welfare Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of animals with unsuitable temperament for public interaction or shows</li> <li>Failure to conduct behavioural assessments prior to using animals with the public</li> <li>Inadequate monitoring of animals for signs of stress, fear, aggression or illness</li> <li>Overworking animals in shows or pet care activities leading to fatigue and aggression</li> <li>Poor systems for managing heat stress in animals during transport, handling, shows or outdoor work</li> <li>Inadequate veterinary support, vaccination programs and parasite control for animals</li> <li>Failure to isolate or remove animals demonstrating aggressive or unpredictable behaviour</li> <li>Using inappropriate species or breeds for confined public show environments</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a formal animal behaviour assessment and selection protocol prior to introducing animals into public show or setting areas or handling programs</li> <li>Maintain behavioural history records for each animal, including prior incidents of aggression, fear response or escape</li> <li>Develop procedures for ongoing behavioural monitoring by trained personnel, including clear criteria for when an animal is removed from service or isolated</li> <li>Establish maximum working periods, rest breaks and rotation schedules for animals used in shows, educational programs or public contact settings</li> <li>Implement a documented heat stress management plan for animals, including shade structures, ventilation, cooling systems, scheduling of work in cooler periods and temperature/humidity monitoring</li> <li>Develop and maintain a veterinary care program covering vaccination, deworming, parasite management, dental care and regular health checks</li> <li>Provide designated isolation or quiet areas for stressed or ill animals, with procedures for restricting access to authorised handlers only</li> <li>Create and enforce criteria for exclusion of unsuitable animals from public interaction, particularly those with repeated aggressive responses or unpredictable behaviour</li> <li>Ensure animal welfare considerations are incorporated into all operational planning, consistent with relevant animal welfare legislation and codes of practice</li> <li>Include specific welfare and behaviour controls within contracts or agreements with external animal suppliers or exhibitors</li> </ul>	2M
4. Aggressive Animal and Bite Prevention Management System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of a formal system for identifying and flagging aggressive or high-risk animals</li> <li>Inconsistent use of muzzles, harnesses, cages or segregation barriers for aggressive pets</li> <li>Inadequate procedures for dealing with aggressive animals in reception areas, kennels, stables or public spaces</li> </ul>	4A	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No standardised bite prevention strategies for staff and visitors</li> <li>Ineffective communication between shifts regarding animals with recent aggressive incidents</li> <li>Poor incident investigation and learning from animal bite and attack events</li> <li>Failure to provide appropriate PPE and engineering controls for high-risk handling situations</li> </ul>		<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	
5. Medication Administration and Veterinary Treatment Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorrect dosing or administration of medication to animals due to lack of protocols</li> <li>Unauthorised staff administering prescription medication without appropriate direction</li> <li>Inadequate security, storage and control of veterinary medicines and sedatives</li> <li>Poor documentation of medication administration, leading to double-dosing or missed doses</li> <li>Exposure of workers to hazardous veterinary drugs (e.g. cytotoxics, anaesthetics, hormones)</li> <li>Failure to manage withdrawal periods for food-producing animals where relevant</li> <li>Lack of clear authority and communication pathways between veterinarians and handlers</li> </ul>	3H	<p>[REDACTED]</p>	1L

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6. Animal First Aid and Emergency Veterinary Response Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delayed or inappropriate first aid response to injured or distressed animals</li> <li>• Lack of suitable equipment and facilities for safely treating injured large animals or livestock</li> <li>• Workers attempting procedures beyond their competency or legal scope</li> <li>• Poor communication and escalation processes for veterinary emergencies</li> <li>• No clear criteria for euthanasia decisions and humane destruction in severe cases</li> <li>• Stress and psychological impact on workers repeatedly exposed to animal trauma</li> <li>• Inadequate record keeping for animal injuries and treatments</li> </ul>	3H	<p>[REDACTED]</p>	1L
7. Escape, Containment and Capture of Animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate fencing, gates or enclosures leading to animal escapes</li> <li>• Lack of a documented animal escape and recapture plan</li> <li>• Untrained staff attempting to capture escaped animals in unsafe ways (e.g. chasing onto roads)</li> <li>• Insufficient or unsuitable capture and restraint equipment for different species and sizes</li> <li>• Failure to manage public safety during an animal escape event</li> <li>• Poor coordination with emergency services and local authorities during major escape incidents</li> </ul>	4A	<p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M

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			[REDACTED]	
8. Working at Height and Animal Rescue from Elevated Locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncontrolled work at height when installing or using cat and dog rescue equipment up a tree or elevated structure</li> <li>• Lack of fall-prevention systems for staff performing animal rescues at height</li> <li>• Unclear coordination between animal handlers and height-rescue specialists (e.g. arborists, fire services)</li> <li>• Inadequate assessment of tree condition or structural integrity before climbing or ladder use</li> <li>• Improvisation of rescue techniques without proper equipment or training</li> </ul>	3H	[REDACTED]	1L
9. Stable, Kennel and Large Animal Enclosure Infrastructure and Cleaning Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poorly designed stables and enclosures causing crush, kick or entrapment risks</li> <li>• Slippery, uneven or poorly drained floors increasing fall and animal slip risks</li> <li>• Inadequate ventilation leading to build-up of ammonia and respiratory irritants</li> <li>• Manual handling risks associated with cleaning large animal enclosures and stables</li> <li>• Exposure to zoonotic pathogens, faecal contamination and bio-aerosols during cleaning</li> <li>• Inadequate waste management systems for manure, soiled bedding and sharps</li> </ul>	4A	[REDACTED]	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uncontrolled use of pressure cleaners and chemicals creating slip and inhalation hazards</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
10. Zoonoses, Hygiene and Raw Meat Handling Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exposure of workers and visitors to zoonotic diseases via direct animal contact, bites, scratches or contaminated surfaces</li> <li>Inadequate hand hygiene and disinfection facilities for staff and public after contact with animals</li> <li>Unsafe preparation of raw meat for feeding leading to bacterial contamination and cross-infection</li> <li>Inappropriate storage temperatures and handling of raw meat and animal by-products</li> <li>Lack of vaccination policies for staff working with animals (e.g. Q fever risk in livestock settings)</li> <li>Poor segregation of cleaning tasks, equipment and clothing</li> </ul>	4A	[REDACTED]	2M
11. Public Interaction, Animal Shows and Events Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate crowd control and supervision during public animal showings or petting activities</li> <li>Public (especially children) engaging in unsafe behaviour around animals due to poor information or supervision</li> <li>Animals becoming stressed or aggressive due to noise, crowding, lights or handling during shows and events</li> </ul>	4A	[REDACTED]	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient separation between performance areas, stables and public pathways</li> <li>• Lack of emergency procedures for animal-related incidents during shows (e.g. bites, kicks, animal bolt)</li> <li>• Temporary structures and fencing used for events not meeting safety standards</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
12. Livestock and Large Animal Handling Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poorly designed yards, races and crushes increasing risk of kicks, crushing and entrapment</li> <li>• Lack of systems for segregating incompatible animals (e.g. bulls, stallions, mothers with young)</li> <li>• Handlers working alone with large or unpredictable animals without communication systems</li> <li>• Use of ad-hoc or inappropriate equipment to move or restrain livestock</li> <li>• Failure to manage animal flow and movement patterns, causing groups or panic</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	2M
13. Environmental Conditions, Heat Stress and Outdoor Work with Animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to manage heat stress risk for animals during hot weather, transport and outdoor events</li> <li>• Workers and animals exposed to extreme weather without adequate shade, shelter or hydration</li> <li>• Inadequate planning for thunderstorms, high winds or bushfire conditions during outdoor events</li> </ul>	3H	[REDACTED]	1L

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor scheduling of heavy work for animals and handlers during peak heat periods</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
14. Traffic Management, Animal Transport and Access Ways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vehicle and mobile plant interactions with animals and pedestrians in stables, yards and car parks</li> <li>Inadequate design of loading ramps and float access increasing fall and crush risks</li> <li>Poor systems for animal transport, including insufficient ventilation, overloading or long journeys without rest</li> <li>Lack of traffic management plans for events with high public attendance and animal movements</li> </ul>	3H	[REDACTED]	1L
15. Emergency Management, Incident Reporting and Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of integrated emergency plan for animal-related incidents (fire in stable, animal escape, serious bite or crush injury)</li> <li>Inadequate drills involving both human and animal emergency scenarios</li> <li>Under-reporting of incidents, near misses and animal welfare concerns</li> <li>Failure to analyse incident data to identify systemic WHS and animal handling issues</li> </ul>	3H	[REDACTED]	1L

SAMPLE

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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.