Ergonomics Repetitive Strain and Posture

Business Name:	ABN:	
Business Address:		
Contact Person:	Phone:	Email:

THIS RISK ASSESSMENT IS APPROVED BY THE PCBU OF THE 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:

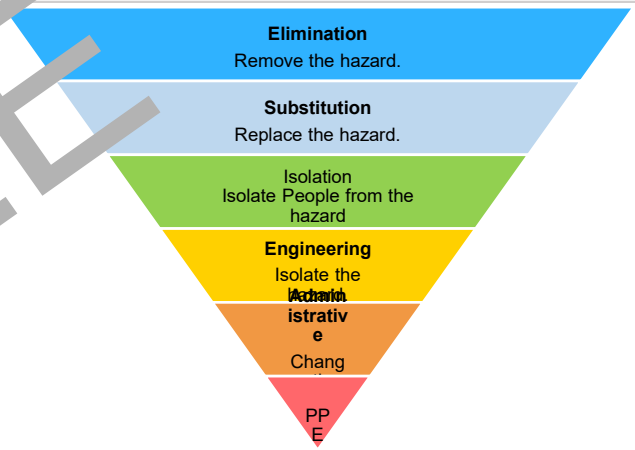
CLIENT OR PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR DETAILS

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
ALMOST CERTAIN	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE		
LIKELY	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	4A ACUTE	DO NOT PROCEED
POSSIBLE	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	3H HIGH	Rev before work
UNLIKELY	1 LOW	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	4 ACU	2M MO RATE	Ensure control measures in place.
RARE	1 LOW	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 H	1L LOW	Monitor and keep records.

HIERARCHY OF CONTROLS



Risk Rating & Required Action:

4A	Stop work. The risk is intolerable. E inate the hazar redesign the activity before proceeding. A Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) or hi er-level authorisati is required.
3H	Review and approve additional c rols b ask arts. Senior supervisor sign-off needed.
2M	Ensure all nominated controls are in ace and effe ive. 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. Ergonomic Governance, Policy and WHS Duties	• Absence of a formal ergonomics and musculoskeletal disorder (MSD) policy aligned with WHS Act 2011 and WHS Regulations • Lack of clear allocation of PCBU, officer and worker duties for ergonomic risk management • No documented organisational targets for prevention of repetitive strain injuries and posture-related harm • Failure to integrate ergonomic considerations into broader WHS management system and risk registers • Inadequate consultation with workers and health and safety representatives (HSRs) on ergonomic risks • No clear process for reviewing compliance with relevant Codes of Practice (e.g. Hazardous Manual Task • Insufficient leadership commitment, resulting in low priority given to arm strain, back injury and re motion injury prevention	4A	• Develop and implement an organisational gonomics an Musculoskeletal Disorder (MSD) Prevention Policy that explicitly addresses repetitive str posture ibration exposure and overexertion risks in line with the WHS Act 2011 • Define and document WHS overnance arrang ents, incl g roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for officers, m gers, supervisors d w ers in managing ergonomic and repetitive motion hazards • Integrate ergo ic and SD ris into the or isation's WHS risk management framework, corporate risk register safety obje ves • Estab sh a fo al cons ation proces with workers and HSRs on ergonomic issues, including regular toolbo ks, sa committee meetings and feedback channels • Align te al proc res with Safe Work Australia's Hazardous Manual Tasks Code of Practice and other re val guidan material • Include rgon ic performance indicators (e.g. number of reported discomfort cases, early intervention ou me s works ion assessment completion rates) in WHS reporting to senior management • Under periodic management reviews of the ergonomics program to ensure ongoing legal mpliance and continual improvement	2M
2. Ergonomic Risk Identification and Assessment Systems	• No systematic pr ess to identif tasks with often repeated ove s or repetitive bodily movement • Failure to identify cumulative load sks from bending and lifting r t y throughout a shift • Inadequate assessment of tasks involving bending or leaning awkwardly for long periods and reaching overhead for long periods • Lack of structured assessment of repetitive lifting tasks, manual sorting at picking stations and swinging heavy tools • No formal evaluation of exert excessive force requirements or overexertion during task design reviews	4A	• Implement a formal hazardous manual tasks and ergonomics risk identification procedure covering all work areas, including installation tasks, manual sorting and repetitive production work • Use validated ergonomic assessment tools (e.g. REBA, RULA or similar) to evaluate tasks involving repetitive motions, overextension reach, sustained awkward postures and forceful exertions • Include assessment of frequency, duration and intensity of repetitive task procedures to capture cumulative load risks and physical risks from repetitive movements • Establish a program of scheduled ergonomic risk assessments for high-risk workgroups (e.g. pickers, installers, machine operators) and review assessments whenever tasks or equipment change • Create and maintain an ergonomic risk register that records identified hazards, risk ratings, controls and review dates • Ensure risk assessments consider both direct physical factors (force, posture, repetition, vibration) and organisational factors (workload, time pressure, job rotation, breaks) • Train supervisors and designated assessors in recognising early indicators of risk such as arm strain complaints, back soreness, and reports of stress and strain injuries	2M

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	• Limited consideration of vibration and repetitive strain injuries associated with powered hand tools and machinery • Absence of documentation for ergonomic hazards, leading to reliance on anecdotal information rather than systematic assessment			
3. Workstation and Task Design (Engineering and Layout)	• Poor workstation design causing repetitive arm strain and extending wrist and limb stress • Work surfaces set at inappropriate heights leading to bending and shaping materials at awkward levels • Storage and racking systems requiring regular reaching overhead for long periods or overextension reach • Inadequate space and layout forcing workers into bending or leaning awkwardly for long periods • Tasks requiring swinging heavy tools or handling heavy or bulky items without mechanical assistance • Lack of adjustable seating, standing supports and ergonomic accessories contributing to static loading and standing for prolonged periods • Insufficient engineering controls to minimise vibration exposure from tools that can cause vibration repetitive strain injuries	4A	• Apply ergonomic design principles to all workstations and tasks, ensuring work heights, reaches and clearances minimise awkward postures, bending and twisting • Specify and provide adjustable workstations, chairs, monitor arms and task lighting to support neutral posture and conscious body posture maintenance • Redesign storage locations so that high-frequency and heavier items are stored between mid-thigh and shoulder height to minimise repetitive lifting tasks and overhead reaching • Introduce mechanical aids such as hoists, lifting tables, conveyors and trolleys to reduce manual bending and lifting repeatedly and prevent over-exertion or strain injuries • Provide anti-fatigue matting and suitable flooring in standing work areas to minimise discomfort and risks associated with standing for prolonged periods • Ensure selection and procurement of powered tools with reduced vibration levels and incorporate tool suspension systems or damping handles where practicable • Include ergonomic requirements in engineering design specifications and capital project reviews for new installations or process changes	2M
4. Work Organisation, Job Design and Task Rotation	• Highly repetitive task procedures without adequate variation leading to repetitive motion injuries • Excessive daily exposure to manual sorting at picking stations and repetitive bodily movement without job rotation • Work schedules that encourage overexertion and insufficient time for recovery of muscles and tendons • Poorly planned workloads resulting in sustained physical demands and	3H	[redacted]	1L

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	minimising cumulative load risks not being considered • No system for rotating workers away from tasks involving bending and lifting repeatedly or reaching overhead for long periods • Inadequate planning for peak periods causing workers to exert excessive force and overextend reach to maintain output • Lack of consideration of part-time or new workers' reduced conditioning, increasing susceptibility to stress and strain injuries		[redacted]	
5. Procurement and Equipment Selection for Ergonomics	• Procurement decisions based solely on cost without assessing ergonomic suitability • Purchase of tools and equipment that require high grip force or awkward wrist postures, increasing extending wrist and limb stress • Acquisition of machinery and fixtures that necessitate bending and shaping materials at low or high l • Selection of storag systems that inherently require petitive reaching, twisting and bendi • Failure to specify low-vibration tool leading to increased risk of vibratio repetitive strain injuries • Lack of standardisation in ergonomic features across similar equipment, complicating training and safe use • Inadequate collaboration between WHS, procurement and end-users when approving new equipment for repetitive tasks	3H	[redacted]	1L
6. Training, Competency and Ergonomic Awareness	• Lack of training in recognising early signs of arm strain, back strain and musculoskeletal discomfort	3H	[redacted]	1L

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	• Workers unaware of techniques for conscious body posture maintenance and safe body mechanics • Supervisors not competent in identifying hazardous repetitive task procedures or overextension reach • No structured induction on manual task and ergonomic risks for new or transferred workers • Inadequate training on correct setup of adjustable workstations, chairs and tools, limiting effectiveness of engineering controls • Failure to address behavioural contributors such as rushing or ignoring pain, leading to preventable over-exertion or strain injuries • Limited understanding of how vibration, force and repetition combine to create physical risks from repetitive moveme		[redacted]	
7. Workload, Fatigue and Break Management	• Insufficient rest pauses for workers performing often repeated movements and repetitive lifting task • High workloads a time pressure increasing the risk overexertion and stress and strain in ies • Break schedules not aligned to the physical demands of tasks, particu y those requiring sustained or leaning awkwardly for long periods • No system to control cumulative vibration exposure from prolonged use of vibrating tools • Failure to consider individual fatigue factors (e.g. heat, shift length, overtime) when allocating physically demanding tasks • Culture of working through breaks or skipping micro-pauses to maintain productivity, increasing risk of over-exertion or strain injuries	3H	[redacted]	1L

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8. Early Reporting, Discomfort Management and Injury Management	• Workers reluctant to report early signs of arm strain, back pain or repetitive motion discomfort due to fear of stigma or job loss • No structured early intervention process to address minor stress and strain injuries before they become serious • Inadequate triage of reports of physical risks from repetitive movements, leading to delayed clinical assessment • Poor communication between WHS, supervisors, and injury management personnel regarding MSD trends • Return-to-work plans that do not adequately modify repetitive task procedures or high-risk postures • Absence of tracking and analysis of low-level reports (e.g. aches, tingling, fatigue) that indicate emerging issues maintaining ergonomic practices	3H	[redacted]	1L
9. Supervision, Monitoring and Behavioural Safety for Ergonomics	• Inconsistent supervisory oversight of manual handling and re task practices • Workers normali g unsafe behaviours such a ng, bending with a rounded back or exer g excessive force • Lack of routine observa sture and movement patterns during critical tasks such as manual sorting at picking stations • No defined process for supervisors to address unsafe ergonomic practices when observed • Limited feedback mechanisms to reinforce positive ergonomic behaviours and conscious body posture maintenance • Supervisors prioritising output over safe work practices, undermining prevention of musculoskeletal disorders	3H	[redacted]	1L

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10. Change Management and Ergonomic Review of New Processes	• Introduction of new equipment or processes without ergonomic assessment, increasing repetitive motion or awkward posture demands • Process changes leading to unplanned increases in manual handling, bending and lifting repeatedly or overexertion • Automated systems redesigning tasks in ways that transfer physical risks from machines to people (e.g. manual rework, repetitive sorting) • No requirement to review vibration exposure, reach distances and force requirements when altering tools or fixtures • Failure to consult workers and HSRs about ergonomic impacts before implementing changes • Lack of post-implementation review to verify that new systems have not introduced additional musculoskeletal disorder risks	3H	[redacted]	1L
11. Maintenance, Housekeeping and Environmental Conditions	• Poorly maintained equi[redacted] increasing required [redacted]tion force, contributing to ove[redacted]xertion and arm strain • Inadequate maintenance of adjusta[redacted]e furniture and fixtures, limiting ability maintain neutral postures • Housekeeping issues (clutter, poorly placed pallets, trip hazards) forcing workers into bending or leaning awkwardly for long periods • Environmental conditions (lighting, temperature, glare) encouraging poor posture and awkward viewing angles • Failure to maintain vibration-damping components on tools, contributing to vibration repetitive strain injuries • Delayed repair of damaged ergonomic aids (e.g. trolleys, hoists) leading to	3H	[redacted]	1L

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	manual handling of loads and swinging heavy tools manually			
12. Manual Handling and Hazardous Manual Tasks Management System	• Absence of a coordinated system for managing hazardous manual tasks across the organisation • Inconsistent application of procedures for bending and lifting repeatedly and repetitive bodily movement tasks • No standardised guidance for preventing back injuries and over-exertion or strain injuries • Failure to integrate manual handling risk controls with broader WHS procedures and safe operating instructions • Lack of documented safe work procedures addressing repetitive lifting tasks and minimising cumulative load risks at a systems level • Reactive rather than proactive management of manual task risks, relying on injury data rather than prevention	4A	[redacted]	2M
13. Health Surveillance, Monitoring and Data Analysis	• Lack of systematic collection of data on musculoskeletal discomfort, near misses and minor strain incidents • No periodic health surveillance for workers exposed to high levels of repetition, force or vibration • Inability to identify high-risk groups or tasks due to poor data quality and analysis • Failure to track long-term outcomes of repetitive motion injury prevention initiatives • Under-reporting of symptoms associated with physical risks from repetitive movements and static postures • Limited integration of data from incident reports, workers' compensation,	3H	[redacted]	1L

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	ergonomic assessments and absenteeism records			
14. Contractor and Supplier Management for Ergonomic Risks	• Contractors performing repetitive or forceful tasks without alignment to the organisation's ergonomic standards • Supplier installation activities involving bending and shaping materials or reaching overhead for long periods without appropriate controls • Inconsistent training and competency of contractor workers in prevention of musculoskeletal disorders • Lack of clarity about responsibilities for managing ergonomic risks during outsourced manual sorting or picking operations • Failure of contractors to provide ergonomically suitable equipment or tools for their workers on site • Limited auditing of contractors' manu handling and repetitive motion injury prevention systems	3H	[redacted]	1L

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

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-of-codes-of-practice

Northern Territory
Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011
Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Regulations 2011
Legislation NT: https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/workplace-safety-laws
Codes of Practice NT: https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/forms-and-resources/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

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.

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

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

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

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