

Fall Arrest Systems

| | | |
|-------------------|--------|--------|
| 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 for the task parts. 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. Governance, WHS Duties and Design of Fall Arrest Systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure of PCBUs and officers to understand and discharge primary duties under WHS Act 2011 for work at height and fall arrest systems Absence of a documented organisational standard for fall protection hierarchy of control, leading to over-reliance on fall arrest instead of elimination or fall prevention Inadequate integration of fall arrest system requirements into WHS management system, policies and consultation arrangements Selection of fall arrest solutions without competent engineering input or consideration of load paths, anchor capacities and clearance requirements Use of non-certified, non-compliant or improvised anchorage points and system components Poor alignment between corporate WHS policies and site-level procedures creating inconsistent implementation of fall arrest controls | High | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and endorse a corporate Work at Height and Fall Protection Policy that explicitly embeds the hierarchy of control and references WHS Act 2011, WHS Regulation and relevant Australian Standards (e.g. AS/NZS 1891 series, AS/NZS 5532, AS 4557) Define and document governance arrangements for fall arrest systems, including clearly allocated PCBU and officer responsibilities, due diligence activities and reporting expectations Mandate formal risk assessment and consultation with Workers and Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) for all tasks where fall arrest systems are being considered, with documented justification when higher order controls are not reasonably practicable Require that all fall arrest system designs including anchors, lifelines, static lines and rescue provisions, are verified or certified by a competent engineer or suitably qualified person Implement a documented design review process to ensure structural adequacy of anchorage points, calculations of fall clearance, swing-fall risks, and system compatibility before installation Embed fall arrest system requirements into the organisation's WHS Management System, including procedures, standards and audit criteria that apply across all sites Prohibit the use of improvised or uncertified anchor points through written procedures, toolbox materials and supervisory checks Undertake periodic legal and standards compliance reviews (e.g. every 2–3 years or on legislative change) to confirm that fall arrest governance and design requirements remain current | Medium |
| 2. Procurement and Contractor Management for Fall Arrest Systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement of low quality, untested and non-compliant fall arrest equipment and components Engagement of installers, inspectors without verified competency or appropriate licencing Lack of specification for standards compliance, traceability and certification in purchase and contract documents Inadequate pre-qualification of contractors leading to poor installation practices and undocumented variations Absence of clear requirements for handover documentation, system certification and user instructions at completion of projects | High | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a corporate procurement standard for fall arrest systems and equipment that mandates compliance with applicable Australian Standards (e.g. AS/NZS 1891 series, AS/NZS 5532) and prohibits untested products Include explicit technical specifications, certification, traceability and documentation requirements for fall arrest systems in purchase orders, tender documents and contracts Implement a formal pre-qualification process for fall arrest designers, installers, inspectors and trainers, including verification of competency, insurance and WHS performance Establish an approved supplier and contractor list for fall arrest equipment, installation and inspection services, maintained by WHS and procurement functions Require written installation and certification reports from contractors, including as-built drawings, load ratings, anchor locations, inspection schedules and limitations of use Mandate that all supplied equipment is individually identifiable (e.g. serial numbers, batch codes) and comes with manufacturer's instructions, conformity statements and maintenance recommendations Standardise fall arrest equipment brands and models across the organisation where practicable, to reduce incompatibility and simplify training and inspection systems | Medium |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of multiple brands and incompatible components across sites, increasing risk of misuse or failure | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include performance clauses and audit rights in contracts, enabling the organisation to review contractor compliance with WHS and technical requirements for fall arrest work | |
| 3. System Design, Integration and Engineering Controls | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fall arrest systems installed where fall prevention or elimination was reasonably practicable, increasing exposure to arrest-only solutions Incorrect layout or positioning of anchors, static lines and connectors resulting in inadequate fall clearance, swing-fall or edge impact Lack of engineering assessment of building or structure capacity to withstand fall arrest loads Incompatibility between different system components (e.g. harnesses, lanyards, connectors, energy absorbers) from multiple manufacturers Complex system designs that are difficult to understand or encourage unsafe shortcuts by workers Fall arrest systems installed without integrated rescue and considerations | High | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed a mandatory design decision process that first seeks to eliminate work at height or use fall prevention (e.g. permanent guardrails, walkways, platforms, EWP) before permitting fall arrest solutions Require engineering assessment and documentation of structural capacity for all new and existing anchor points, static lines and rail systems in accordance with relevant standards and manufacturer requirements Implement design standards that specify minimum anchor spacing, positioning relative to edges, compatible connectors, and fall clearance requirements, including allowance for deflection and dynamic load Standardise system components (harnesses, lanyards, connectors, inertia reels, static line brands) to ensure compatibility and reliable performance across sites Include rescue and emergency access requirements in the original system design, such as dedicated rescue anchor points, access pathways and anchor capacity for multiple persons where required Conduct formal design reviews involving WHS, engineering, operations and end-user representatives to test practicality, usability and residual risk of the proposed system Maintain centralised records of all system designs, layout drawings, design calculations and approvals in a controlled document management system Ensure that any modifications or additions to existing fall arrest systems follow a documented change management and re-certification process before use | Medium |
| 4. Training, Competency and Supervision for Use of Fall Arrest Systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers using fall arrest systems without adequate theoretical and practical training Supervisors lacking competence to verify correct use of systems and enforce procedures Inconsistent training content across sites, leading to differing understandings of system limitations and requirements No formal assessment of competency or refresher training, leading to skill fade and unsafe shortcuts Insufficient training on emergency response, including suspension intolerance, self-rescue limitations and communication protocols | High | <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> | Medium |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assumption that generic working at heights tickets are sufficient for site-specific fall arrest systems | | [REDACTED] | |
| 5. Inspection, Maintenance, Recertification and Asset Management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure of anchors, lifelines, harnesses or connectors due to lack of inspection, maintenance or timely replacement Use of damaged, contaminated or out-of-date equipment because inspection intervals are not defined or monitored Inadequate technical inspection competency leading to missed defects or incorrect tagging Fall arrest systems not recertified after structural modifications, impact loads or environmental events Lack of traceability of equipment history, inspection findings and corrective actions Storage conditions that degrade harnesses, lanyards and webbing without detection | High | [REDACTED] | Low |
| 6. Documentation, Information, Labelling and Communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of accessible, current documentation on system design, limitations of use and emergency procedures Inadequate labelling or signage at access points, anchors and system interfaces leading to misuse | Medium | [REDACTED] | Low |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers and contractors unaware of system limitations, unauthorised anchor points or exclusion zones Complex or overly technical documentation that discourages review or understanding by frontline workers Outdated drawings and manuals that do not reflect modifications or decommissioned components | | [REDACTED] | |
| 7. Planning, Authorisation and Work Coordination for Height Work Using Fall Arrest | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unplanned or ad-hoc work at height where fall arrest systems are used without adequate risk assessment Multiple contractors working in proximity on separate systems without coordination, creating entanglement or overloading risks Work at height occurring without confirmation that fall arrest systems are in inspection or certification date Inadequate planning for weather, restricted access, plant interfaces or other site conditions affecting safe use of fall arrest systems Failure to integrate fall arrest requirements into broader permit to work, isolation and traffic management systems | High | [REDACTED] | Medium |

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| | | | [REDACTED] | |
| 8. Emergency Preparedness, Rescue Capability and First Aid | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers remaining suspended in harness after a fall due to lack of effective rescue capability, resulting in suspension intolerance and potential serious injury or fatality Emergency plans that rely solely on external emergency services with long response times or limited height rescue capability Rescue equipment not available, not maintained or not compatible with installed fall arrest systems Insufficient training or drills for designated rescuers leading to delayed or unsafe rescue attempts Poor communication systems at height, delaying activation of emergency response Lack of first aid capability and protocols tailored to post-fall and suspension-related conditions | High | [REDACTED] | Medium |
| 9. Monitoring, Inspection of Practice, Consultation and Continuous Improvement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complacency over time leading to degraded adherence to fall arrest procedures and system limitations Lack of structured monitoring of how fall arrest systems are actually used in the field Under-reporting of near misses or unsafe conditions involving fall arrest equipment and systems Insufficient consultation with workers and HSRs, resulting in impractical procedures that encourage work-arounds | Medium | [REDACTED] | Low |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No systematic review of incident data, audit findings or technological developments to improve fall protection systems | | <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 15px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 15px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 15px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 15px;"></div> | |
| | | | | |

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.