

Forklift (Electric)

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 for the task parts. 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. Governance, WHS Duties and Safety Management System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of clear allocation of WHS duties for Persons Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBUs), officers, managers and supervisors in relation to pedestrian operated electric forklifts</li> <li>Inadequate WHS policies or procedures specifically addressing powered mobile plant and forklift operations in accordance with WHS Act 2011 and WHS Regulations</li> <li>Poor integration of forklift risks into the overall Safety Management System (SMS), risk register and consultation processes</li> <li>Failure to provide adequate resources (time, budget, competent personnel) to manage forklift risks at a systemic level</li> <li>Absence of formal WHS objectives, KPIs and performance monitoring for forklift-related incidents, near misses and compliance activities</li> </ul>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define and document WHS governance arrangements that clearly allocate responsibilities for management of pedestrian operated electric forklifts (PCBU, officers, managers, HSRs, supervisors and workers) in line with WHS Act 2011 section on primary duty of care and due diligence</li> <li>Incorporate powered mobile plant (including pedestrian operated electric forklifts) as a specific risk category within the organisation's WHS policy, procedures and risk management framework</li> <li>Maintain a formal risk register entry for electric forklifts that captures hazards, assessed risk levels, control measures, accountability and review dates, and link this to the organisation's overall SMS</li> <li>Implement a documented plant management procedure that covers acquisition, commissioning, operation, maintenance, modification and decommissioning of electric forklifts</li> <li>Establish WHS performance indicators for forklift operations (e.g. number of forklift-pedestrian near misses, re-use, task completion rates, training currency, audit findings) and review these at management and safety committee meetings</li> <li>Ensure officers exercise due diligence by regularly reviewing forklift risk information, compliance status, and resourcing needs, and record due diligence activities in governance meeting minutes</li> <li>Integrate forklift risk management into consultation forums, including toolbox talks, WHS committee meetings and issue resolution procedures, ensuring workers and Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) raise forklift safety concerns</li> </ul>	Medium
2. Procurement, Design and Selection of Forklifts and Attachments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procurement of pedestrian operated electric forklifts that are not for purpose or not compliant with relevant Australian Standards and WHS Regulations</li> <li>Inadequate consideration of operating environment (e.g. gradients, floor surfaces, aisle widths, ramps, doorways, loading docks) when selecting equipment</li> <li>Lack of formal assessment of load types, dimensions and weights leading to inappropriate capacity selection or use of unsuitable attachments</li> <li>Failure to obtain and retain manufacturer's information, instructions, load charts and safe operating limits</li> <li>Purchase of forklifts with controls, visibility or safety features that are not compatible with the site's pedestrian traffic patterns and controls</li> </ul>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a documented plant procurement procedure requiring WHS review and approval before purchasing or leasing any pedestrian operated electric forklift or attachment</li> <li>Specify compliance with applicable Australian Standards and WHS Regulations for powered mobile plant in procurement documentation, including requirements for brakes, emergency stopping, guarding and stability</li> <li>Conduct a pre-purchase risk assessment (including site walk-through) considering load characteristics, operating gradients, travel distances, floor condition, aisle width, turning areas, pedestrian volumes and interaction with other vehicles</li> <li>Require supplier to provide written confirmation of rated capacity, stability, operating limitations, maintenance requirements and compatibility with proposed attachments</li> <li>Ensure all operator controls, displays and emergency stops are ergonomically suitable and accessible for the intended operator population and environment (e.g. visibility over loads in pedestrian areas, suitability for low-light areas if applicable)</li> <li>Establish a formal process to review and approve any new attachments or modifications (e.g. fork extensions, jibs) including engineering verification and update of load ratings and operating procedures</li> <li>Maintain a central register of all forklifts and attachments, including serial numbers, specifications, capacities, and any design variations or risk control features (e.g. speed limiters, warning beacons, proximity sensors)</li> </ul>	Medium

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3. Site Layout, Traffic Management and Pedestrian Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate traffic management planning for interaction between pedestrian operated electric forklifts and pedestrians or other vehicles</li> <li>Poorly designed or congested aisles, crossings, doorways and loading areas increasing the likelihood of collision, crushing or trapping incidents</li> <li>Lack of clear separation between forklift travel paths and pedestrian walkways in high foot-traffic areas</li> <li>Insufficient signage, floor markings and visual cues to indicate forklift operating zones, exclusion zones and speed-restricted areas</li> <li>Inadequate control of access to forklift operating areas by unauthorised personnel, visitors or contractors</li> </ul>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a formal traffic management plan for all areas where pedestrian operated electric forklifts operate, in consultation with workers and HSRs, and review it regularly or after any incident or workplace change</li> <li>Design or modify site layout to achieve physical separation between forklift routes and pedestrian walkways using barriers, guard rails, bollards, raised walkways or other engineering controls wherever reasonably practicable</li> <li>Establish and mark designated forklift operating zones, pedestrian exclusion zones and shared zones with durable floor markings, signs and, where appropriate, blind-spot mirrors</li> <li>Apply documented rules for right of way, speed limits, one-way systems, overtaking, parking and use of crossings, and communicate these rules through site inductions, signage and toolbox talks</li> <li>Restrict access to high-risk forklift zones using controlled entry points, key or access card systems, and procedural controls for visitors and contractors (e.g. escort requirements, high-visibility clothing, sign-in procedure)</li> <li>Assess and manage specific high-risk locations such as dock edges, ramps, lifts, cool rooms, doorways, blind corners and intersections using lighting, warning devices, vision panels, mirror placement and engineered edge protection</li> <li>Regularly inspect and review traffic management controls to verify they remain effective, are understood by workers and are updated where work practices or layouts change</li> </ul>	Low
4. Plant Registration, Documentation and Record Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failure to maintain required documentation for electric forklifts including manuals, inspection and maintenance history</li> <li>Lack of a central system to track plant status, availability, defects and repair-service notifications</li> <li>Inability to demonstrate compliance with WHS Act and WHS Regulation requirements in the event of an incident or regulator enquiry</li> <li>Use of forklifts without current inspection or maintenance records, increasing the likelihood of unrecognised mechanical faults</li> </ul>	Medium	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	Low

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5. Competency, Licensing, Induction and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient training and assessment of workers operating or working around pedestrian operated electric forklifts</li> <li>• Reliance on informal or on-the-job instruction without structured competency assessment or refresher training</li> <li>• Lack of site-specific induction covering local traffic rules, pedestrian interactions, emergency procedures and equipment-specific controls</li> <li>• Failure to verify competency of labour-hire workers, contractors or temporary staff who may operate or work near forklifts</li> <li>• Inadequate training for supervisors and managers responsible for enforcing forklift safety procedures</li> </ul>	High	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	Medium
6. Operating Rules, Procedures and Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absence of clear, documented operating rules for pedestrian operated electric forklifts, leading to inconsistent and unsafe practices</li> <li>• Inadequate supervision or enforcement of safe operating procedures, particularly in high-demand or time-pressured periods</li> <li>• Informal shortcuts becoming normalised, such as operating outside designated areas or handling loads beyond rated capacity</li> <li>• Lack of clear rules for interaction with pedestrians, including communication, right-of-way and exclusion zones</li> </ul>	High	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	Medium

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			[REDACTED]	
7. Inspection, Pre-Use Checks and Maintenance Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to detect mechanical or electrical faults due to lack of systematic inspections and servicing</li> <li>• Inadequate process for reporting, recording and rectifying defects identified during pre-use checks</li> <li>• Use of forklifts beyond their service intervals or contrary to manufacturer's maintenance requirements</li> <li>• Reliance on unqualified personnel for critical maintenance tasks increasing likelihood of latent failure</li> </ul>	High	[REDACTED]	Medium
8. Battery Charging, Electrical Safety and Fire Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate controls around battery charging areas leading to exposure to electrical hazards, fire risk or hazardous atmospheres (e.g. gassing from certain battery types)</li> <li>• Poor housekeeping or storage practices around charging stations increasing the risk of fire spread or trip hazards</li> <li>• Insufficient procedures for managing damaged batteries, power cords, charging equipment or emergency response for electrical incidents</li> </ul>	High	[REDACTED]	Medium

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of unsuitable power outlets, extension leads or adaptors creating overload or shock risks</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
9. Ergonomics, Fatigue and Workload Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor ergonomic design of controls, handles or operating postures leading to musculoskeletal disorders for pedestrian operators</li> <li>High work pace, extended shifts or repetitive movements associated with frequent forklift use contributing to fatigue and reduced attention</li> <li>Insufficient planning of staffing levels and task rotation resulting in over-reliance on a small number of operators</li> <li>Lack of consideration for environmental factors such as noise, temperature, lighting that may affect operator alertness and posture</li> </ul>	Medium	[REDACTED]	Low
10. Contractor, Labour-Hire and Visitor Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contractors or labour-hire staff operating or working near forklifts without adequate induction, supervision or competency verification</li> <li>Inconsistent safety standards and procedures between the host PCBU and contracting organisations</li> <li>Visitors entering forklift operating areas without awareness of local hazards, traffic rules and emergency procedures</li> </ul>	High	[REDACTED]	Medium

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			[REDACTED]	
11. Incident Reporting, Investigation and Corrective Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Under-reporting of forklift near misses, property damage or minor injuries, resulting in missed opportunities to identify systemic issues</li> <li>Inadequate incident investigation processes leading to focus on operator error rather than root causes such as system, design or management failure</li> <li>Failure to track completion and effectiveness of corrective actions, allowing repeat incidents to occur</li> </ul>	High	[REDACTED]	Medium
12. Emergency Preparedness and Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of planning for emergencies involving pedestrian operated electric forklifts, such as collisions, overturns, electrical faults or battery fires</li> <li>Workers and supervisors unsure of their roles and actions in the event of an emergency involving a forklift</li> <li>Inadequate emergency equipment or inaccessible emergency stops and isolation points in forklift operating and charging areas</li> </ul>	High	[REDACTED]	Medium

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			[REDACTED]	
			[REDACTED]	
13. Change Management and Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of new forklifts, attachments, layouts, products or work methods without reassessing risks or updating controls</li> <li>• Modifications to forklifts, racking, traffic routes or operating hours leading to unintended consequences for safety</li> <li>• Failure to incorporate worker feedback, incident learnings or technological advances into ongoing forklift risk management</li> </ul>	Med	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	Low

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.