

Forklift Work Platform

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 before task starts. 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 Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure of PCBUs and officers to understand and discharge primary duties under the WHS Act 2011 in relation to forklift work platforms Lack of formal WHS governance structure overseeing high-risk plant and work at height activities Inadequate consultation with workers and Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) about the introduction and ongoing use of forklift work platforms No clear allocation of roles, responsibilities and accountabilities between PCBUs in multi-PCBU workplaces (e.g. host employer, labour hire provider, contractor) Poor change management when introducing, modifying or expanding the use of forklift work platforms No process for reviewing WHS performance indicators specific to forklift work platform use 	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and document a WHS governance framework that explicitly covers plant and work at height risks, including forklift work platforms, aligned with the WHS Act 2011 and WHS Regulation Define and document officer due diligence activities (e.g. scheduled WHS reports to the Board or executive, site tours, WHS performance reviews) with explicit reference to forklift and work platform risks Implement a formal consultation procedure requiring engagement with workers and HSRs before procurement, major changes, or new tasks involving forklift work platforms Develop written agreements or WHS interface documents between PCBUs (host employers, labour hire, contractors) that clearly responsibilities for plant provision, maintenance, training, supervision and incident management relating to work platforms Introduce a structured management change (MOC) procedure requiring risk assessment, consultation and approval before changing equipment, operating environment or work methods involving forklift work platforms Set WHS objectives and key performance indicators (KPIs) specific to high-risk plant (e.g. completion of competency assessments, audit scores, incident trends) and review them at management meetings Ensure WHS policies explicitly reference high-risk work, plant safety and working at height, and are communicated to all managers, supervisors and workers Conduct periodic independent or internal WHS system audits focused on forklift operations and use of work platforms, with documented corrective actions and follow-up 	Medium
2. Design, Procurement and Suitability of Forklift and Work Platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement of forklifts that are not designed or rated for safely elevating persons Use of non-compliant, homemade modified work platforms without engineering certification Incompatibility between specific forklift models and specific work platforms (e.g. capacity, attachment method, load centre) Absence of manufacturer's instructions, design registration details or engineering verification for the work platform Failure to consider site-specific conditions (ground conditions, gradients, overhead obstructions, traffic volumes) when selecting equipment 	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a documented plant procurement procedure that mandates assessment of suitability of forklifts and work platforms for elevating persons, with reference to manufacturer's instructions, Australian Standards and WHS Regulation requirements for plant Specify in procurement documents that only purpose-designed, commercially manufactured forklift work platforms with appropriate engineering certification and rated capacities are acceptable Require written confirmation from suppliers that nominated forklift models are compatible with the selected work platforms, including maximum rated capacities, load centres and attachment methods Obtain and retain manufacturer's instructions, engineering certificates, design registration details (where applicable) and compliance statements for all work platforms and associated fittings Include pre-hire and pre-purchase technical reviews by a competent person (e.g. engineer, plant specialist) for all forklifts and work platforms intended for elevating persons Ensure procurement specifications consider environmental and operational factors such as maximum working height, floor load ratings, indoor/outdoor use, ventilation, and interaction with other mobile plant Implement a verification checklist for new or hired units before site acceptance, including confirmation of rated capacity plates, safety features (e.g. guard rails, locking pins, anchor points), and documentation Prohibit procurement or use of modified, fabricated or welded-on work platforms unless supported by formal engineering assessment, documentation and an approved change process 	Medium

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of second-hand or hired equipment without adequate verification of compliance and maintenance history 			
3. Risk Management, Planning and Work Authorisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of a formal risk management process specific to using work platforms on forklifts Ad hoc or informal planning of tasks at height, leading to use of work platforms in unsuitable conditions No documented criteria for when forklift work platforms are permitted versus when other access methods (e.g. EWP, fixed scaffolds) must be used Inadequate pre-task review of adjacent activities, traffic flows, and overhead hazards (e.g. powerlines, services, racking) Lack of formal work authorisation or permit process for high-risk tasks using forklift work platforms Failure to review risk controls after incidents, near misses or significant changes to operations 	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a documented risk management procedure requiring identification, assessment and control of risks associated with forklift work platforms, consistent with the hierarchy of control and WHS Regulation Part 3.1 Develop a standard risk assessment template or register specifically addressing forklift work platform use, including typical hazards (e.g. falling objects, pivot collisions and falls from height) Establish clear criteria and a decision-making flowchart that defines when forklift work platforms are allowed and when higher levels of control (e.g. fixed platforms, elevated work platforms) are required Introduce a formal work authorisation or permit-to-work system for tasks where persons are elevated in forklift work platforms, with checks for pre-suitability, exclusion zones, traffic isolation and weather conditions Require planning meetings or pre-start coordination for any work at height involving mobile plant, with participation from supervisors, operators and affected work groups Integrate consideration of forklift work platform activities into broader traffic management and production planning processes to avoid incompatible or simultaneous high-risk tasks Mandate incident and near-miss investigations for any event involving forklift work platforms, with documented findings and updates to risk controls and procedures Schedule periodic reviews of the forklift work platform risk assessment (e.g. annually or after significant change) with evidence of worker consultation 	Medium
4. Training, Licensing, Competency and Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forklift operators holding no licence or an inappropriate High Risk Work Licence for the class of forklift being used Operators and workers with the form not trained in safe use, emergency procedures or site-specific rules Supervisors lacking competency to monitor, correct and enforce safe systems of work involving forklift work platforms No system to verify and record ongoing competency, refresher training and licence currency Inconsistent induction for labour hire workers, contractors and short-term staff 	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"> Reliance on informal, on-the-job instruction without structured competency assessment 		[REDACTED]	
5. Procedures, Safe Systems of Work and Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of documented procedures governing planning, set-up and use of forklift work platforms Procedures that are overly generic, outdated or not aligned with actual site conditions and equipment Workers unaware of or not following documented safe systems of work Inadequate instructions for abnormal or non-routine situations (e.g. breakdowns, restricted spaces, after-work) Reliance on verbal directions or custom and practice rather than controlled documents No formal system for version control and communication of updates to procedures 		[REDACTED]	Medium
6. Plant Maintenance, Inspection and Pre-Use Verification Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to maintain forklifts and work platforms to manufacturer's specifications and WHS Regulation requirements Absence of scheduled inspections for lifting attachments, locking mechanisms, safety chains and guard rails 	High	[REDACTED]	Medium

SAMPLE

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No systematic pre-use verification that plant is fit for purpose and correctly configured for elevating persons Inadequate management of defects, leading to operation with compromised safety features Incomplete records of maintenance, inspection and repairs, making it difficult to verify plant safety Use of damaged or modified equipment without engineering review 		[REDACTED]	
7. Site Layout, Traffic Management and Segregation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate separation between forklifts using work platforms and pedestrians or other mobile plant Poorly planned travel routes requiring forklifts with elevated platforms to move through congested or shared areas Insufficient signage or marking and physical barriers to control the movement of plant and people Blind spots, tight turning and racking layouts that increase collision risks when persons are elevated Lack of coordination between different work groups and contractors using mobile plant in the same area Operating forklift work platforms in unsuitable ground or surface conditions (e.g. uneven, soft, contaminated surfaces) 	High	[REDACTED]	Medium

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			[REDACTED]	
8. Contractor, Labour Hire and Supplier Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractors and labour hire workers operating forklifts or using work platforms without equivalent training and competency to direct employees Assumptions between PCBU's that another party is managing key risks such as maintenance, training or supervision Suppliers delivering or installing plant without appropriate induction to site-specific controls Inconsistent application of site rules and procedures to external parties Limited oversight of third-party maintenance providers performing critical work on forklifts or work platforms 	High	[REDACTED]	Medium
9. Emergency Preparedness and Incident Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of specific emergency procedures for incidents involving persons in elevated forklift work platforms Workers and supervisors not trained in how to respond to plant failures, medical events or falls from the platform Absence of appropriate rescue equipment or arrangements, leading to delayed response Ineffective communication systems between platform occupants, operators and emergency responders 	High	[REDACTED]	Medium

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate incident reporting and investigation processes for events involving high-risk plant No coordination of emergency plans with neighbouring PCBUs or emergency services where shared sites exist 		[REDACTED]	
10. Monitoring, Review, Consultation and Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Static WHS systems that do not adapt to operational changes, new equipment or emerging risks Limited worker input into the effectiveness of controls for forklift work platforms Inadequate monitoring leading and lagging indicators for plant and work at height risks Failure to learn from incidents in the same or similar industries using forklift work platforms Audit and inspection programs not targeting high-risk activities such as elevating persons on forklifts 	Medium	[REDACTED]	Low

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.