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

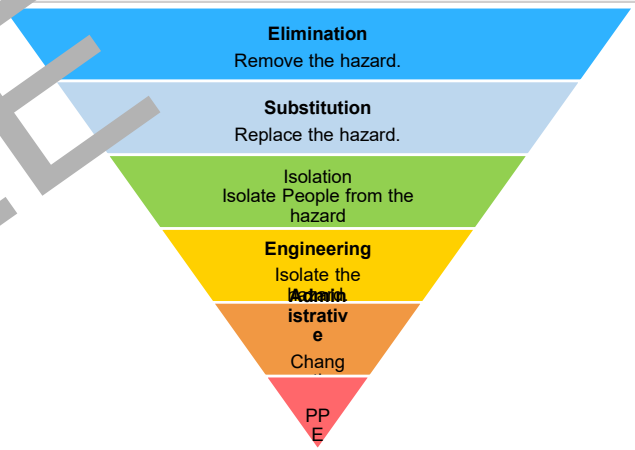
THIS RISK ASSESSMENT IS APPROVED BY THE PCBU OF THE PROJECT		
Under the Work Health and Safety Regulation (WHS Regulation), a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) is required to ensure that a RISK ASSESSMENT is prepared before the proposed work starts.		
Full Name:		
Signature:	Title:	Date:

CLIENT OR PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR DETAILS	SCOPE OF WORKS
Client:	
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. WHS Governance, Roles and Accountability for Freezer Operations	• Lack of clearly defined WHS responsibilities for managing freezer areas and plant • Inadequate consultation with Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) and workers who perform freezer work • Absence of a documented WHS management plan specific to cold-storage operations • Poor integration of freezer-related risks into the organisation's overall WHS risk register • Inadequate review of incidents, near misses and audit findings related to freezer environments	High	• Establish and document a WHS governance structure that nominates a senior manager as the person with overall accountability for freezer-related risks, aligned with WHS Act 2011 officer due diligence duties • Define and communicate clear WHS roles and responsibilities for managers, supervisors, maintenance personnel, contractors and workers who access freezer areas • Develop a freezer-specific WHS management plan that sets objectives, performance indicators, responsibilities and review timeframes • Consult with workers and HSRs on freezer safety issues through toolbox meetings, WHS committees and formal consultation processes as required by WHS legislation • Include freezer work as a distinct risk category in the corporate WHS risk register with defined risk owners and review dates • Implement a formal process to review incident reports, near-miss data, audit findings and corrective actions specific to freezer operations at regular WHS leadership meetings • Require officers to periodically verify, through documented due diligence activities, that freezer controls, resources, and monitoring systems are in place and effective	Medium
2. Freezer Facility Design, Layout and Engineering Controls	• Freezer rooms designed without adequate allowance for safe pedestrian and plant interaction • Insufficient separation of forklift or pallet jack traffic from pedestrian walkways in and around freezer areas • Inadequate door design, emergency exits or egress routes from freezers and ante-rooms • Poor ventilation or defrost systems contributing to excessive ice build-up on floors, racking and equipment • Insufficient lighting levels and emergency lighting in low-temperature and low-visibility environments • Inadequate space allocation for staging, de-palletising and temporary storage leading to congestion and crush hazards	High	• Ensure freezer facilities are designed and reviewed by competent persons (e.g. engineers, WHS specialists) to meet relevant Australian Standards and WHS regulations • Provide physical separation of pedestrians and vehicles via barriers, dedicated walkways, one-way traffic flows and clearly marked crossing points in and around freezer areas • Design freezer entries with suitable door systems (e.g. rapid-rise doors, vision panels, interlocks) that minimise collision, entrapment and thermal shock risks • Install compliant emergency exits and illuminated exit signage from freezers, ante-rooms and airlocks, ensuring doors can be opened from the inside without keys or specialised knowledge • Incorporate adequate ventilation, drainage and defrost systems to control ice build-up on floors, plant and structures and reduce slip and structural load hazards • Provide lighting systems suitable for low-temperature environments, including emergency and back-up lighting, and maintain them according to a documented schedule • Conduct periodic engineering reviews of racking design, load ratings, and clearances to ensure they are compatible with freezer conditions and materials-handling equipment • Apply change-management processes (MOC) for any alterations to layout, entry systems or racking that may affect freezer safety	Medium
3. Cold Exposure, Thermal Stress and Health Management System	• Prolonged exposure to sub-zero temperatures leading to cold stress, hypothermia and reduced dexterity	High	• Develop and implement a cold-stress management procedure that sets limits on exposure time, rest breaks, rotation patterns and warm-up arrangements for freezer workers • Provide medically informed guidelines around fitness for work in cold environments, including pre-placement and periodic health assessments where reasonably practicable	Medium

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	• Insufficient organisational controls around work/rest schedules and rotation in freezer conditions • Inadequate health screening for workers with medical conditions that may be aggravated by cold exposure • Lack of policy for pregnancy, cardiovascular issues or other vulnerable worker groups in relation to freezer work • Inadequate reporting pathways for early symptoms of cold stress and related health issues		• Establish a confidential health disclosure process so workers can report health conditions that may be exacerbated by freezer work, with appropriate adjustments and restrictions put in place • Create specific guidance for managing higher-risk groups (e.g. pregnant workers, those with circulatory or respiratory conditions) and ensure managers know how to implement adjustments • Install and maintain warm rest areas close to freezer entries, with seating and facilities that allow workers to safely re-warm during scheduled breaks • Include cold-stress awareness, early symptom recognition and reporting obligations in the induction and refresher training programs • Integrate freezer-specific health issues into the organisation's Fitness for Work and Return to Work programs, ensuring communication between WHS, HR and treating practitioners as appropriate	
4. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Clothing Management	• Inadequate provision, selection or maintenance of thermal PPE for work in freezer conditions • No formal system to ensure PPE is appropriate for the level of cold exposure and task duration • Poor management of PPE hygiene, storage and replacement leading to ineffective protection • Lack of documented PPE requirements for contractors and visitors entering freezer areas	High	[redacted]	Low
5. Plant, Refrigeration Systems and Maintenance Management	• Inadequate maintenance systems for refrigeration plant leading to breakdowns, temperature excursions and potential product spoilage • Uncontrolled release of refrigerants (e.g. ammonia, CO2) due to poor inspection and servicing regimes • Failure of defrost systems causing excessive ice build-up on floors, coils and structures	High	[redacted]	Medium

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	• Unplanned outages of alarms, monitoring systems or emergency shut-offs • Contractors performing maintenance in freezer and plant-room areas without appropriate controls		[redacted]	
6. Access Control, Traffic Management and Pedestrian Safety	• Uncontrolled access to freezers by untrained workers, visitors, contractors • Poorly managed interaction between forklifts, pallet jacks and pedestrians inside and near freezers • Doors and entries that create blind spots or sudden transitions between temperature zones • Inadequate procedures for working alone in freezer areas	High	[redacted]	Medium
7. Emergency Preparedness, Rescue and Communication Systems	• Entrapment in freezer rooms due to door malfunctions, power failures or lock-in • Delayed response to medical emergencies or cold-stress incidents inside freezers	High	[redacted]	Low

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	• Poor communication capability from within freezers, particularly for lone workers • Inadequate testing and maintenance of emergency alarm and monitoring systems		[redacted]	
8. Training, Competency and Information for Freezer Work	• Workers and supervisors not adequately trained in freezer-specific WHS risks and controls • Lack of competency assessment for high-risk activities linked to freezer work (e.g. operation of materials-handling equipment in cold conditions) • Inadequate refresher training leading to drift from safe systems of work • Insufficient communication of procedures, signage and instructions for non-English speaking workers	High	[redacted]	Medium
9. Safe Systems of Work, Procedures and Documentation	• Absence of documented safe operating procedures (SOPs) for key freezer-related activities at a system level	High	[redacted]	Medium

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	• Procedures that are outdated, overly complex or not aligned with current plant and layout • Inconsistent application of procedures across shifts, contractors and different sites • Lack of integration between freezer procedures and other WHS systems (e.g. permit-to-work, confined spaces, hazardous chemicals)		[redacted]	
10. Housekeeping, Ice Management and Slip/Trip Control Systems	• Systemic accumulation of ice and water on floors, ramps and loading docks increasing slip and trip risk • Ineffective cleaning sch[redacted] for freezer and ante-roo[redacted] areas • Insufficient mana[redacted]ement of pall[redacted] debris, packaging [redacted] damag[redacted] racking components • Lack of formal defect reporting fo[redacted] damaged flooring, drains [redacted]-slip surfaces	High	[redacted]	Medium
11. Contractor and Supplier Management for Freezer-Related Work	• Contractors performing work in freezers or on refrigeration plant without understanding site-specific risks and procedures • Suppliers delivering goods into freezer docks without alignment to site traffic and access controls	High	[redacted]	Medium

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	• Inadequate verification of contractor competency, licences and insurances for high-risk freezer-related tasks • Poor coordination between internal maintenance teams and external contractors leading to overlapping or conflicting work		[redacted]	
12. Monitoring, Measurement, Auditing and Continuous Improvement	• Failure to detect emerging freezer-related risks due to lack of monitoring systems • Insufficient analysis of incident and near-miss data specific to freezer work • Audit findings and corrective actions not implemented or tracked to completion • No systematic review of [redacted] controls following organisational or legislative changes	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

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