

General Carpentry Work

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. WHS Management, Supervision & Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of a documented WHS management plan for carpentry activities across projects Inadequate consultation with carpenters and apprentices about WHS issues and changes in work methods Responsibilities for WHS (PCBU, officers, supervisors, workers) not clearly defined or communicated Supervisors not competent or not given sufficient time to actively supervise carpentry work No formal process to involve HSRs in carpentry-related risk assessments and issue resolution Ineffective communication of WHS expectations to subcontract carpenters and labour hire workers Failure to review incidents and near misses to improve carpentry systems of work 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and maintain a WHS management plan that specifically addresses general carpentry work, in line with WHS Act 2011 duties for PCBUs and officers Define, document and communicate WHS roles and responsibilities for company officers, project managers, site supervisors, carpenters and apprentices Establish regular toolbox talks and consultation meetings focused on carpentry activities, including chiselling, joining timber and operation of woodworking tools Formally recognise and support Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs), ensuring they are consulted on new carpentry equipment, procedures and work methods Implement a structured site supervision framework including minimum supervisor-to-worker ratios for carpentry crews and expectations for field safety leadership Introduce a standardised issue-resolution procedure, including escalation pathways for unresolved carpentry WHS concerns Establish a lessons-learned process where carpentry incidents, near misses and audit findings are reviewed and control measures updated and communicated 	3H
2. Competency, Tickets, Licensing & Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carpenters and apprentices performing complex carpentry tasks without formal competency (e.g. cope-and-stick joints on high-speed machinery) Inadequate training in safe set-up and use of multi-use woodworking tools and metal chiselling equipment Lack of verification of trade qualifications and high-risk work licences where required (e.g. working at heights, dogging, forklift use to move timber packs) Poor understanding of WHS obligations under WHS Act 2011 and relevant Regulations and Codes of Practice No structured onboarding or site-specific induction covering carpentry hazards and emergency procedures 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a competency framework for all carpentry roles, detailing required qualifications, units of competency, licences and demonstrated experience Verify carpentry trade qualifications, high-risk work licences and any plant operation tickets before engagement and at defined intervals Develop and deliver task-specific training modules on safe operation of multi-use woodworking tools, chisels for wood and metal, and joinery techniques such as cope-and-stick joints Ensure all workers receive a documented WHS and site induction that includes carpentry-specific hazards, PPE requirements and emergency arrangements Maintain a central training and competency register with expiry tracking, refresher dates and evidence of practical assessments Require supervisors to conduct on-the-job competency assessments for apprentices and new carpenters before allowing unsupervised work with power tools or complex joinery equipment Review and update carpentry training content at least annually, incorporating changes to legislation, standards, incident learnings and equipment 	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outdated training content not reflecting current Australian Standards or manufacturer instructions 			
3. Design, Planning & Work Method Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor design or sequencing of carpentry works leading to high-risk improvisation on site Failure to consider constructability, access and stability when designing timber structures and joinery details Inadequate planning for the safe use of chisels, routers and multi-use woodworking machines on confined or elevated work areas Lack of documented standard operating procedures (SOPs) and safe work guidelines for carpentry systems (separate from SWMS task steps) Cope-and-stick joint designs not compatible with available guards, jigs and clamping arrangements on machinery Insufficient planning for material handling of long or heavy timber members, sheets and prefabricated joinery 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate WHS considerations into design and planning stages for carpentry work, ensuring early review of constructability and temporary support requirements Develop and maintain carpentry-specific SOPs and method guidelines that address system-level controls for chiselling, timber joints and machine-based joinery Require engineering review or competent person sign-off for non-standard timber designs and complex joinery arrangements, including load-bearing cope-and-stick joints Incorporate safety, egress and work positioning requirements into carpentry work plans (e.g. scaffolds, work platforms, benches and jigs) Plan for the use of mechanical aids, team lifts, pre-fabrication and modular construction to reduce manual handling and awkward postures Ensure design specifications for joints and profiles align with the capabilities and guarding of available woodworking machinery, avoiding forced modifications in the field Include carpentry input (from tradespersons and supervisors) in pre-start planning meetings and risk workshops when determining work methods 	2M
4. Plant, Tools & Equipment Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate procedure standard for multi-use woodworking tools, portable power tools and metalworking chisels Lack of guarding, interlocking features on saws, routers and combination woodworking machines used to prepare joints No formal inspection, maintenance or tagging program for electrical tools, compressors and dust extraction units Use of improvised or home-made jigs and fixtures for joinery work that are not fit for purpose Faulty or damaged chisels, blades and cutters leading to kickback, ejection of workpieces or lacerations 	4A	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incompatible tool bits or blades used for specific materials (e.g. metal chisels on timber or vice versa) due to poor control of inventory and labelling 		[REDACTED]	
5. Workshop & Site Layout, Housekeeping and Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor workshop or site layout leading to congested workspaces around benches, saws and joinery equipment Inadequate separation of pedestrian walkways from moving plant and material delivery areas Trip hazards from offcuts, cords, hoses, clamps and jigs in carpentry work zones Unstable work surfaces, benches or trestles used for chiselling or assembling timber joints Insufficient storage systems for timber, sheet materials, clamps and tooling leading to unplanned movement or collapse Obstructed access to emergency exits, fire equipment and first aid facilities in carpentry areas 	3H	[REDACTED]	2M
6. Hazardous Substances, Dust, Noise & Fume Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inhalation of hazardous softwood dust from cutting, routing, sanding and cope-and-stick joint forming Exposure to metal dust when chiselling or grinding metal components used in carpentry assemblies Use of adhesives, sealants, fillers and coatings that contain hazardous chemicals without adequate controls High noise levels from woodworking machinery and powered tools leading to hearing loss Inadequate ventilation or dust extraction systems in enclosed carpentry workshops Lack of Safety Data Sheet (SDS) management and chemical risk 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M

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	assessments for products used in carpentry work		[REDACTED]	
7. Electrical Safety, Isolation & Lockout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defective or overloaded electrical outlets, leads and power boards used with carpentry tools and dust extraction systems Unauthorized modifications or repairs to electrical tools and multi-use machines Failure to isolate and lock out machinery during maintenance, blade changes or jig adjustments Use of generators and temporary power systems on construction sites without appropriate protection and earthing Lack of RCD (Residual Current Device) protection for portable woodworking tools Inadequate systems for reporting and tagging out defective electrical equipment 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M
8. Manual Handling, Ergonomics & Material Handling Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular lifting, carrying and positioning of heavy or awkward timber sections, sheet materials and joinery assemblies Poor ergonomic design of benches, vices, clamps and jigs used for chiselling and joining tasks Repetitive motions and sustained postures during detailed joinery and cope-and-stick operations Inadequate systems for mechanical lifting and movement of packs of timber, doors, windows and prefabricated components Lack of planning for team lifts and coordination when handling long or flexible timber members 	3H	[REDACTED]	2M

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9. Guarding, Jigs, Fixtures & Workpiece Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate guarding and workpiece restraint on saws, routers and other woodworking machinery used for joints and profiles Unsecured timber or metal pieces during chiselling leading to slips, kickback or loss of control Improvised clamping or inadequate jigs for cope-and-stick joint production Failure to adjust guards, fences and stops when changing setups on multi-use woodworking tools Insufficient system checks to ensure guards are in place and functioning before operation 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M
10. Working Environment, Lighting & Outdoor Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate lighting levels in carpentry work areas, particularly when performing precision joinery or chiselling Exposure to weather (heat, cold, rain, wind) affecting grip, stability and tool control for outdoor carpentry Slips on wet or uneven surfaces around external carpentry zones Glare or shadow impacting visibility when using cutting and marking tools Inadequate control of environmental conditions in temporary or remote work locations 		[REDACTED]	1L
11. Contractor, Subcontractor & Labour Hire Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistent WHS standards across subcontract carpentry crews and labour hire workers Lack of clarity about PCBU responsibilities and consultation arrangements where multiple duty holders are involved Subcontractors using plant, tools and methods that are not assessed or aligned with principal contractor WHS systems 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate verification of subcontractors' competencies, insurances and safety performance records Poor communication of site-specific hazards and carpentry requirements to short-term or rotating crews 		[REDACTED]	
12. Incident Management, Emergency Preparedness & First Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of specific emergency response planning for carpentry-related injuries (e.g. amputations, eye injuries, impalements, severe lacerations) Insufficient first aid resources and trained first aiders available during carpentry operations Delayed response to serious plant or tool incidents due to unclear notification and escalation procedures Failure to report notifiable incidents to the regulator as required under WHS 2011 Inadequate post-incident investigation processes, leading to repeated carpentry-related incidents 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L
13. Fatigue, Work Scheduling & Psychosocial Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended hours, shift work, high workloads affecting concentration when using sharp tools and high-speed woodworking machinery Time pressure and unrealistic program schedules encouraging shortcuts in carpentry safety systems Inadequate breaks and recovery time for workers performing repetitive or highly focused joinery tasks Poor communication, bullying or conflict within carpentry teams impacting mental health and decision making Limited systems for workers to raise psychosocial concerns related to carpentry work design and supervision 	3H	[REDACTED]	2M

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14. Documentation, Records, Audits & Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdated or missing WHS documentation for carpentry operations, including SOPs, risk assessments and equipment manuals • Inconsistent record keeping for inspections, maintenance, training and incident investigations related to carpentry • Lack of systematic audits or verification of compliance with carpentry WHS procedures • Poor integration of regulatory updates, Australian Standards changes and manufacturer bulletins into carpentry systems • Limited use of performance data to drive improvements in carpentry safety management 	3H	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	1L

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.