

General Commercial and Office Cleaning

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 Governance, Duties and Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of clear WHS roles, responsibilities and due diligence by PCBUs and officers under the WHS Act 2011 Inadequate consultation with workers and health and safety representatives on cleaning-related risks No formal process for workers to raise WHS concerns about cleaning methods, products or sites Failure to monitor and review the WHS management system for commercial and office cleaning operations Poor integration of contractor and subcontractor WHS obligations on shared sites Insufficient leadership commitment to safety over productivity and contract deadlines 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and implement a WHS governance framework that defines PCBUs, officers and worker duties in line with the WHS Act 2011 and WHS Regulations Develop a WHS policy specifically addressing commercial office and public amenity cleaning, endorsed by senior management and communicated to all staff Implement formal consultation arrangements with workers and HSRs including toolbox talks, safety meetings and feedback channels focused on cleaning risks Include WHS performance, incident trends and audit outcomes for all cleaning contracts as standing items in management review meetings Implement documented WHS responsibilities and position descriptions for operations managers, supervisors and team leaders overseeing cleaning activities Establish a documented procedure for WHS issue resolution, including escalation pathways and timeframe for response Integrate WHS requirements into all cleaning contracts, service level agreements and subcontractor agreements Conduct periodic due diligence training for officers and senior managers specific to cleaning operations and facilitate service delivery 	2M
2. Risk Management and Change Management for Cleaning Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of systematic risk assessments for different cleaning environments (offices, strata, public parks, controlled environments, escalators, ventilation systems) Failure to review risk assessments when new tasks are introduced (e.g. aquarium glass cleaning, lime scale removal, wall washing at height) Introduction of new chemicals, equipment or methods without formal change management or consultation Inadequate consideration of cumulative risks from multiple concurrent tasks (e.g. mass dusting, overhead fan cleaning and floor washing at end of service) No documented process for evaluating risks associated with cleaning in hazardous areas or restricted environments 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a documented WHS risk management procedure aligned with WHS Regulations, requiring identification, assessment, control and review of cleaning-related risks Ensure task- and environment-specific risk assessments are completed for key categories such as controlled environment cleaning, restroom deep cleaning, ventilation cleaning, escalator deep cleaning and refuse chute cleaning Use a formal change management process for introducing new chemicals, cleaning equipment or specialised tasks (e.g. aquarium glass cleaning, wall washing in height), including consultation and risk reassessment Maintain a central risk register that captures system and management risks across all contracts and sites, with assigned control owners and review dates Require pre-commencement WHS risk reviews when mobilising new commercial, strata or office cleaning contracts or expanding services to public amenities and parks Integrate learnings from incidents, near misses and client feedback into periodic reviews of risk assessments and control measures 	2M

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5. Chemical Safety and Hazardous Substances Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate selection, labelling and storage of cleaning chemicals including disinfectants, sanitisers, descalers and lime scale removers Lack of up-to-date Safety Data Sheets (SDS) accessible where chemicals are used, including in mobile housekeeping carts and vehicles Improper decanting practices leading to unlabelled containers, incompatible mixing and chemical reactions, especially in restroom and controlled environment cleaning Use of highly hazardous chemicals in confined or poorly ventilated spaces such as restrooms, refuse chutes and public park amenities No formal chemical approval process, leading to introduction of high-risk or non-compliant products Insufficient worker training on health effects, correct dilution, emergency response and first aid related to chemical exposure 	4A	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M
6. Plant, Equipment and Maintenance Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of poorly maintained or unsuitable cleaning equipment such as floor machines, wall washers, vacuums and escalator cleaning tools Lack of inspection and maintenance for housekeeping carts, refuse chutes and manual handling aids Electrical hazards from damaged cords, portable appliances and wet environment use in restroom sanitation and washing floors at end of service Inadequate guarding, isolation or lockout procedures when interfacing with fixed plant (e.g. escalators, ventilation systems, refuse chutes) No system to verify equipment suitability for specialised tasks such as aquarium glass cleaning or controlled environment cleaning 	3H	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	1L

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of documented pre-use checks for high-use equipment resulting in unexpected failures and injuries 		[REDACTED]	
7. Manual Handling, Ergonomics and Work Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repetitive and sustained postures from general cleaning, mass dusting activities and ventilation cleaning Awkward and overhead postures for ceiling cleaning, cleaning overhead fans and wall washing in height Forceful exertions when moving housekeeping carts, handling full rubbish bags, refuse chute bins and used napkins/tissues collection Poor ergonomic design of tools and equipment leading to cumulative musculoskeletal disorders Inadequate task rotation and workload management, especially for heavily soiled areas and restroom deep cleaning No structured assessment of manual tasks when changing procedures or equipment 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M
8. Work at Height and Overhead Cleaning Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Falls from height or ladders during ceiling cleaning, cleaning overhead fans and wall washing in height Use of makeshift access (chairs, desks, unstable platforms) for high surfaces in offices and amenities Inadequate assessment of fall risks in staircases, ventilation shafts and escalator areas Lack of competency and supervision for staff using ladders or elevated platforms for overhead tasks Poor planning for dropped-object risks when working over public thoroughfares or in public park amenities 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M

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			[REDACTED]	
9. Infection Prevention, Biological and Public Health Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposure to biological contaminants during restroom deep cleaning, restroom sanitation, locker room sanitation and cleaning public park amenities • Contact with sharps, bodily fluids and sanitary waste during collection and disposal of used napkins and tissues and cleaning heavily soiled areas • Inadequate infection prevention practices in controlled environment cleaning and high-contact surfaces (e.g. escalator handrails, door handles) • Poor management of infectious disease outbreaks affecting staff working in public restrooms and commercial offices • Insufficient vaccination, hygiene facilities or PPE for workers regularly handling biohazardous waste 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M
10. Psychosocial Hazards, Lone Work and Public Interface	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workers performing cleaning tasks alone or in small teams after hours in offices, car parks and public buildings without adequate communication systems • Exposure to aggressive, intoxicated or antisocial members of the public in public park amenities, public restrooms and certain strata locations • High workload, time pressure and unrealistic cleaning schedules leading to stress and fatigue • Low role clarity and poor communication between supervisors and cleaners across multiple sites • Lack of systems for reporting and managing bullying, harassment or discrimination involving staff, clients or the public 	3H	[REDACTED]	2M

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			[REDACTED]	
11. Traffic Management, Site Access and Public Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interaction between cleaners, housekeeping carts and vehicles in car parks, loading docks and internal corridors Inadequate control of public access to areas where floors are wet during washing floors at end of service, staircase cleaning and escalator deep cleaning Poor coordination with building management regarding delivery, storage and movement of cleaning equipment and rubbish through public areas Insufficient planning for safe access to remote areas of large strata or commercial complexes (e.g. refuse chutes, plant rooms, rooftop ventilation equipment) Lack of emergency access routes for cleaners working in basement amenities or remote public park facilities 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L
12. Environmental, Waste and Decommissioning Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improper segregation and disposal of general waste, recyclables and contaminated waste from residential locker rooms and public amenities Release of chemicals or contaminated water to stormwater or environment during cleaning, refuse chute washing or decommissioning of equipment Lack of systems for safe decommissioning and disposal of obsolete cleaning equipment and chemical stock Environmental nuisance from dust and debris cleaning activities, mass dusting and ventilation cleaning without adequate containment Non-compliance with client or regulatory environmental requirements for controlled environment cleaning and commercial facilities 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L

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			[REDACTED]	
13. Documentation, Record Keeping and Information Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to demonstrate compliance with WHS Act and Regulation due to poor records of training, maintenance, risk assessments and incidents • Outdated or inconsistent procedures for different sites and tasks such as controlled environment cleaning or hazards areas cleaning • Workers not having access to current procedures, SDS and emergency information while working across multiple client sites • Loss of critical safety information due to inadequate data backup or document control 	2M	[REDACTED]	1L
14. Emergency Preparedness and Incident Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate planning for emergencies affecting cleaners working in offices, amenities, public parks and remote building areas • Lack of clear procedures for chemical spills, biohazard incidents, sharps injuries and equipment failures during cleaning activities • Poor coordination with building emergency procedures and warden systems, especially after-hours • Under-reporting of incidents and near misses by cleaners due to complex or unclear processes 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L
15. Performance Monitoring, Auditing and Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to detect emerging WHS issues across dispersed commercial, strata and public cleaning contracts • Reliance on lag indicators only, such as injury statistics, without proactive monitoring 	3H	[REDACTED]	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistent application of WHS standards by supervisors and contract managers across regions Lack of structured review of WHS performance with clients and workers, leading to stagnation of safety culture 		<div style="background-color: black; height: 15px; width: 100%;"></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.