General Painting Surface Prep Decorating

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:

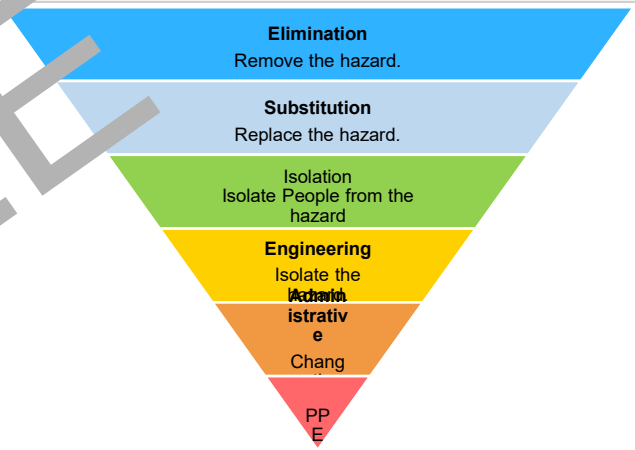
CLIENT OR PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR DETAILS

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
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, Planning and Legislative Compliance	• Lack of documented WHS management plan for painting and decorating operations • Failure to align procedures with WHS Act 2011 and WHS Regulations • Inadequate consultation with workers and health and safety representatives on WHS issues • Poor integration of subcontractor and labour-hire workers into principal contractor WHS systems • Absence of clear responsibilities for officers, PCBUs, supervisors and workers regarding painting activities • Inadequate due diligence by officers in monitoring WHS performance related to painting and surface preparation • Failure to manage overlapping duties with other PCBUs on multi-contractor sites • Insufficient planning for high-risk construction work components (e.g. working at heights, use of powered plant, confined spaces)	4A	• Develop and implement a documented WHS management plan specific to painting, surface preparation and decorating activities, aligned with the WHS Act 2011 and relevant WHS Regulations, Codes of Practice and Australian Standards • Define and document WHS roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for officers, managers, supervisors, leading hands and workers involved in painting operations • Establish a formal WHS consultation procedure, including toolbox talks, safety committee meetings and mechanisms to capture worker feedback on painting-related risks and controls • Implement a pre-start project WHS planning process for painting works, including risk assessment, resource allocation, sequencing with other trades, and site-specific conditions (internal, external, heights, solvent) • Develop and maintain procedures for managing overlapping duties with other PCBUs, including documented coordination meetings, shared risk registers and clear communication protocols • Ensure officers undertake due diligence activities such as periodic WHS audits of painting projects, review of incident data, and verification of implementation of critical controls • Integrate subcontractor and labour-hire personnel into the organisation's WHS management system through pre-qualification, contract clauses, and mandatory adherence to site WHS rules • Establish a management-of-change process for significant alterations to paint systems, work methods, products (e.g. new flame retardants, anti-graffiti coatings) or plant, ensuring WHS risks are reassessed before implementation	3H
2. Competency, Licensing, Supervision and Training	• Workers undertaking advanced painting tasks without appropriate trade qualification or verified competency • Insufficient training in handling and applying solvent-based paints, volatile coatings, flame retardants, undercoats and anti-graffiti products • Lack of competency in use of access equipment for painting in high places (scaffolds, EWP, ladders, trestles) • Poor understanding of health risks from isocyanates, solvents and silica or dust generated from sanding and surface preparation • Inadequate supervision of apprentices, inexperienced painters and labourers	4A	• Implement a competency-based training and verification system for all painters, decorators and surface preparation workers, including evidence of trade qualification or recognised prior learning • Develop and deliver task-specific training modules on solvent-based coatings, flame retardants, volatile substances, anti-graffiti products, two-pack systems and specialised decorative finishes • Ensure workers who operate elevated work platforms, scaffolds or other high-risk plant hold relevant high-risk work licences or formal training certificates as required by WHS legislation • Provide health risk awareness training covering chemical exposure (solvents, isocyanates, heavy metals), dusts from sanding, noise, manual handling and psychosocial risks • Mandate documented supervision plans for apprentices and inexperienced workers, with clearly identified supervisors and frequency of on-the-job competency checks • Use a structured site-specific WHS induction checklist for painting projects that addresses internal and external painting, high places, public interface, vehicles, and weather impacts • Maintain a training matrix that records expiry dates for licences, VOCs (verification of competency) and refresher training for key risk areas such as working at height and hazardous chemicals	2M

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	performing surface preparation, caulking and filling • No structured induction covering site-specific hazards such as exterior work at heights, weather exposure and nearby public interfaces • Failure to maintain current high-risk work licences (e.g. EWP) where applicable • Gaps in training for emergency response, spill management and fire response during painting and surface treatment tasks		• Conduct periodic competency assessments and observation-based verifications of safe work practices for surface preparation, spray application, hand painting and clean-up activities	
3. Hazardous Chemicals and Coatings Management	• Inadequate chemical inventory and register for paints, primers, sealants, caulks, solvents, flame retardants and anti-graffiti coatings • Missing or outdated Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for paints and surface treatment products • Uncontrolled use of products containing isocyanates, flammable solvents, corrosives or r[illegible]ory sensitisers • Use of incompati[illegible]e products that can generate hazardou[illegible]eacti[illegible], off-gassing or poor bondi[illegible] • Poor decanting and mixing practi[illegible]s leading to spills, exposur[illegible]d v[illegible]pour build-up • Lack of formal approval process before introducing new paints, fillers or treatment systems • Insufficient information for workers on safe handling, storage, PPE and first aid for specific coatings and thinners • Failure to manage residual lead-based or other legacy coatings during sanding, stripping or surface preparation	4A	• M[illegible]ntai[illegible]a curr[illegible]e hazardous chemicals register that lists all paints, solvents, fillers, flame retardants, anti-g[illegible]fi[illegible]roducts and surface preparation chemicals used across projects • [illegible]nsure up-to-date SDS (within 5 years, Australian-compliant) are readily accessible on site in both digital a[illegible]hard copy formats for all products • Implement a chemical approval process that requires WHS review of SDS and risk assessment before any new product or coating system is introduced onto site • Standardise preferred product lists prioritising low-VOC, water-based and less hazardous alternatives where reasonably practicable, including safer options for undercoats, sealants and decorative finishes • Develop and enforce documented procedures for mixing, decanting and thinning paints and coatings, including use of designated mixing areas with adequate ventilation and spill controls • Provide clear labelling systems for all decanted containers and ensure no unlabelled containers are used or stored • Implement specific controls and procedures for disturbance of lead-based or other hazardous legacy coatings, including engagement of competent persons, specific PPE and containment measures • Provide documented worker instruction on chemical hazards, correct PPE selection, safe storage, segregation of incompatibles and emergency response for exposures and spills	2M
4. Storage, Transport and Handling of Paints and Solvents	• Improper storage of flammable or combustible paints, thinners and solvents leading to fire or explosion risk	3H		2M

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	• Inadequate segregation between incompatible substances (oxidisers, acids, flammables) • Use of non-compliant storage cabinets or makeshift storage areas in site sheds or vehicles • Unsecured loads of paint tins, gas cylinders or equipment during transport to and from sites • Lack of spill containment for bulk or multiple small containers of coatings and volatile substances • Poor manual handling systems for repetitive lifting and carrying of paint drums, ladders, tools and surface preparation equipment • Inadequate ventilation in storage areas leading to build-up of vapours • No documented system for disposing of out-of-date or deteriorated products		[redacted]	
5. Ventilation, Exposure Control and Indoor Air Quality	• Inadequate ventil[redacted]on during interior painting, priming, s[redacted]aling an[redacted] with solvent-based [redacted]e produc • Accumulation of flammable vapou[redacted] from primers, thinners, topcoats[redacted] flame retardants • Prolonged inhalation exposure to solvent vapours, mists and sanding dusts in enclosed or poorly ventilated areas • Insufficient management of recirculated air in HVAC systems during interior painting and decorating • Failure to consider vulnerable building occupants (children, elderly, health-compromised persons) when scheduling interior painting works • Odour complaints and potential health impacts on other workers or building	4A	[redacted]	2M

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	occupants due to inadequate exposure control		[redacted]	
6. Working at Heights and Access Systems for Painting	• Systemic failure to identify and control height-related risks for exterior painting, painting in high places, blinds and awnings, and high interior walls or ceilings • Inadequate selection and design of access systems (ladders, trestles, scaffolds, EWP) for surface preparation, priming and finishing • Lack of inspection and maintenance systems for scaffolding, trestle platforms, mobile towers and EWPs • Poor planning for edge protection and fall prevention when painting roofs, facades and elevated trim • Inadequate controls for working adjacent to unprotected edges, fragile roofing, and penetrations while carrying painting tools and materials • Insufficient exclusion zones and traffic management under elevated work platforms or scaffolds where painting is being undertaken	4A	[redacted]	2M
7. Plant, Tools and Equipment Management	• Inadequate maintenance and inspection of powered sanders, grinders, spray equipment and pressure pots • Use of defective or non-compliant hand tools, extension leads and portable RCD protection • Lack of standardisation and guarding for mechanical equipment used in surface preparation (e.g. dust extraction sanders)	3H	[redacted]	2M

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	• Improper setup and maintenance of spray booths, extraction fans and filtration units where used • Use of makeshift equipment for feathering, surface preparation or access that does not meet design standards • Failure to control electrical risks associated with portable equipment in damp exterior conditions or on conductive surfaces		[redacted]	
8. Hazardous Dusts, Surface Preparation and Legacy Materials	• Uncontrolled generation of sanding dusts during surface preparation of walls, ceilings, trims, doors, fences and exterior surfaces • Disturbance of legacy coatings such as lead-based paint or asbestos-containing materials during scraping, sanding or surface treatments • Lack of systems for dust containment when feathering paint on blinds, awnings, exterior walls and surfaces • Inadequate assessment of substrates before surface preparation, leading to exposure to unknown hazardous materials • Inadequate cleaning systems post-sanding leading to residual dust affecting other trades and building occupants • Failure to manage waste streams associated with hazardous dusts and spent abrasives	4A	[redacted]	2M
9. Fire, Explosion and Hot Work Interface	• Use of flammable and combustible paints, primers, thinners and volatile substances near ignition sources	4A		2M

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	• Inadequate separation between painting activities and hot work (welding, grinding, cutting) carried out by other trades • Static build-up or poor earthing during spray application of solvent-based coatings • Improper storage of rags, brushes and materials saturated with flammable coatings and solvents, creating self-heating and spontaneous combustion risk • Failure to consider fire load increase associated with bulk storage of coatings and packaging on site • Insufficient fire extinguishers and lack of worker training in their use in painting work areas		[redacted]	
10. Environmental and Weather Management for Exterior Works	• Failure to consid[redacted] weather impacts on exterior painting o[redacted] unsafe surfaces (wet[redacted]ppery) and degraded coating performance • Uncontrolled overspray[redacted]runoff of paints, primers and anti-graffiti coatings to neighbouring properties, vehicles, gardens and waterways • Work scheduling during extreme heat, cold or high winds contributing to heat stress, cold stress or loss of control of materials and equipment • Inadequate stormwater protection for wash water, paint residues and cleaning chemicals • Lack of planning for safe work during sudden weather changes while on ladders, scaffolds or roofs	3H	[redacted]	2M

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	• Environmental non-compliance affecting reputation and potential regulatory enforcement		[redacted]	
11. Public, Occupant and Third-Party Safety	• Inadequate separation between painting activities and members of the public in residential, commercial or public spaces • Lack of traffic and pedestrian management around exterior painting of façades, fences, awnings and exterior walls • Uncontrolled access to areas where wet paint, decorative finishes or anti-graffiti coatings are curing, causing slip, contact or inhalation risks • Insufficient communication with building occupants regarding temporary loss of access, odours and re-entry times after internal painting • Potential exposure of children and vulnerable persons to [redacted] dusts, solvent vapours or [redacted] residual coatings • Inadequate signa[redacted] and ba[redacted] for work areas during c[redacted] after pai[redacted] jobs, including use of wet chemicals	3H	[redacted]	2M
12. Manual Handling, Ergonomics and Fatigue Management	• Repetitive and sustained awkward postures associated with overhead painting, cutting-in edges, and sanding walls and ceilings • Manual handling risks from lifting, carrying and manoeuvring paint containers, extension poles, ladders and surface preparation equipment • Poor planning of work sequencing leading to extended periods of high-intensity work without adequate breaks	3H	[redacted]	2M

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	• Lack of systems for managing fatigue, especially during long shifts, weekend work or tight project deadlines • Insufficient ergonomic design of tools and equipment affecting long-term musculoskeletal health of painters • No formal process to identify and manage workers with pre-existing musculoskeletal conditions		[redacted]	
13. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Program Management	• Over-reliance on PPE as a primary control for chemical exposure, dusts and noise rather than as part of a hierarchy of control • Inconsistent provision, selection and fit of respiratory protective equipment for solvent vapours, isocyanates and sanding dusts • No formal PPE issue, maintenance and replacement system for gloves, eye protection, coveralls and footwear • Failure to manage facial hair and fit-testing requirements for tight-fitting respirators • Lack of cleaning and storage systems for reusable PPE, leading to contamination and reduced effectiveness • Workers not trained in the limitations and correct use of PPE for specialised coatings and surface treatments	3H	[redacted]	1L
14. Incident Reporting, Health Monitoring and Continuous Improvement	• Under-reporting of near misses, minor incidents and exposure events related to painting and surface preparation • Lack of structured investigation of incidents involving chemicals, falls from height, equipment failures or public exposure • No targeted health monitoring for workers exposed to particular hazardous	3H	[redacted]	1L

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	chemicals (e.g. isocyanates, certain solvents or heavy metals) • Poor data capture, trend analysis and feedback of lessons learned into procedures and training • Inadequate liaison with occupational health providers regarding painting-specific health risks • Failure to review and update risk assessments and control measures following incidents or significant changes in work practices		[redacted]	
15. Contractor, Labour-Hire and Supply Chain Management	• Inconsistent WHS standards betwee principal contractor, painting subcontractors and labour-hire workers • Use of unvetted subc rs for specialised tasks su as flame retardant applicati , anti-graffiti coatings or decora e faux fi • Poor coordination of work sequenc with other trades leading to congest n, overlapping tasks and increased k of incidents • Inadequate communication of WHS expectations to suppliers delivering paints, scaffolding or plant to site • Failure to verify that subcontractor SWMS and procedures address key system risks in painting and surface preparation • Lack of monitoring and enforcement of contractual WHS requirements for painting-related services	3H	[redacted]	2M

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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 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