Load Restraint Light Vehicles Trailers and Utes

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:

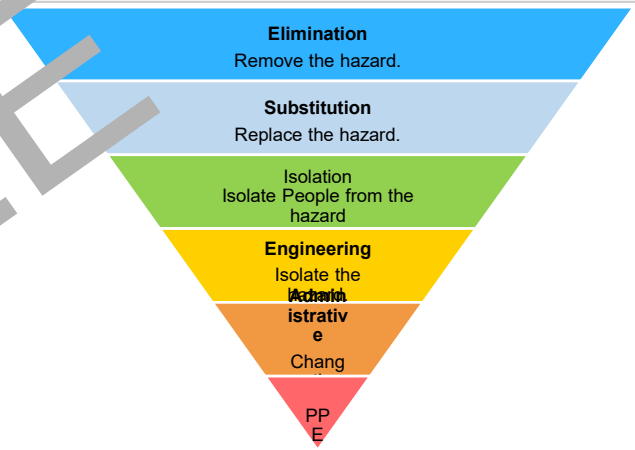
CLIENT OR PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR DETAILS

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. Governance, WHS Duties and Chain of Responsibility	• Lack of clear assignment of PCBU, officer and worker duties under WHS Act 2011 and Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL) Chain of Responsibility for load restraint on light vehicles, trailers and utes • Board and senior management not actively monitoring compliance with load restraint standards (e.g. Load Restraint Guide, relevant Australian Standards) • Inadequate integration of load restraint obligations into corporate WHS management system and policies • Failure to consult with workers and health and safety representatives (HSRs) on safe systems for securing loads, including rope use • No documented due diligence processes for officers to verify that load restraint risks are being effectively controlled	4A	• Develop and endorse a corporate Load Restraint Policy covering all light vehicles, utes and trailers, explicitly referencing WHS Act 2011 duties and Chain of Responsibility requirements • Assign clear accountability for load restraint (including rope-based systems) to specific roles within the organisation (e.g. Fleet Manager, Operations Manager, Supervisors) • Integrate load restraint requirements into the WHS management system, including risk registers, consultation arrangements, audit schedules and incident reporting processes • Establish an officer due diligence framework requiring regular reporting on load restraint compliance, training completion, inspections and incident trends • Consult with workers and HSRs on the development and review of load restraint procedures, including limitations and safe use of ropes for securing loads • Include load restraint and vehicle safety as standing agenda items at WHS committee meetings, with documented actions and follow-up	3H
2. Vehicle, Trailer and Equipment Procurement	• Procurement of utes, vans and light trailers without considering suitability for intended load types, weights and restraint methods • Lack of engineered anchor points, tie-down rails, load-rated lashing points and headboards to facilitate safe restraint • Use of non-rated tow bars, hitches or trailer components leading to structural failure under load • Inadequate provision for securing loads when ropes are used (e.g. no rope rails, sharp edges that can cut rope, lack of friction surfaces) • Selection of vehicles without appropriate safety features (e.g. stability control, trailer sway control, ABS, reversing cameras) increasing risk when carrying loads	4A	• Implement a procurement standard for all light vehicles, utes and trailers requiring confirmation of maximum payload, tow rating and compatibility with typical load types • Specify load-rated anchor points, tie rails and lashing points at appropriate locations and spacing as a mandatory requirement in procurement documents • Require all towing equipment (tow bars, couplings, safety chains) to comply with relevant Australian Design Rules (ADRs) and Australian Standards, with supplier certification retained • Ensure vehicle tray and trailer designs include appropriate features for rope use, such as continuous rails, protected edges and non-abrasive contact surfaces • Mandate minimum vehicle safety features (e.g. ANCAP 5-star where practicable, electronic stability control, trailer sway mitigation) for all new fleet acquisitions • Involve fleet and WHS specialists in pre-purchase assessments to verify that proposed vehicles and trailers are fit-for-purpose for the range of loads and restraint methods used	2M

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3. Load Restraint System Design and Standards	• Absence of a documented load restraint standard specific to light vehicles, utes and trailers • Reliance on ad-hoc practices and operator judgement rather than defined engineering principles and Load Restraint Guide requirements • Improper use of rope as the primary restraint where higher-strength, rated load restraint equipment is required • Inadequate guidance on friction, containment and tie-down methods leading to under-restraint of loads • Inconsistent practices between depots or teams, causing confusion and non-compliance	4A	• Develop a company Load Restraint Standard aligned with the National Transport Commission Load Restraint Guide, clearly addressing light vehicles, utes and trailers • Define when rope may be used (e.g. for light, non-critical, non-shift-prone items) and when only rated lashings, nets or other engineered restraints must be used • Specify minimum restraint capacities (e.g. lashing capacity, WLL) and restraint methods for common load types, including tables or matrices for quick reference • Provide standard load configuration diagrams for typical tasks, showing correct use of tie-down, direct restraint, containment and blocking methods • Mandate the use of rated ratchet straps, load binders, nets or bars for loads above defined mass or hazard thresholds, with rope limited to supplemental or secondary restraint roles • Regularly review and update the Load Restraint Standard based on incident learnings, legislative changes and technology improvements	2M
4. Selection, Rating and Condition of Restraint Equipment (Including Rope)	• Use of non-rated, damaged or inappropriate ropes, straps or chains resulting in restraint failure • Ropes selected without regard to material properties (e.g. stretch, UV degradation, water absorption and suitability for load type • Lack of system for inspection, replacement and removal of worn restraint equipment • Use of hardware (hooks, shackles, ratchets) that is incompatible with rope or lashing systems • No differentiation between recreational rope (e.g. general hardware store rope) and industrial, load-rated rope fit for purpose	4A	[redacted]	2M
5. Load Planning, Compatibility and Vehicle Capacity Management	• Loads exceeding vehicle or trailer gross vehicle mass (GVM), gross combination mass (GCM) or axle load limits • Poor load distribution causing instability, loss of steering control or trailer sway	4A	[redacted]	2M

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	• Combination of multiple small items that are individually stable but collectively difficult to restrain, especially when only rope is used • Transporting loads that are unsuitable for open trays or trailers (e.g. loose materials without containment) • No formal system to verify that load height does not compromise centre of gravity or aerodynamic stability		[redacted]	
6. Policies on Rope Use and Prohibition of Unsafe Practices	• Over-reliance on rope for loads that require higher restraint capacity or more secure methods • Improper knot-tying or inappropriate knots reducing rope strength or loosening during transit • Use of makeshift rope arrangements (e.g. joining short offcuts, tying to non structural parts of vehicle or trailer) • Cultural norms or legacy practices ("we've always just tied with rope") overriding formal procedures • Use of elastic or stretchy rope products (e.g. occasional primary restraints	4A	[redacted]	2M
7. Driver and Worker Competency, Licensing and Training	• Drivers and loaders not trained in the principles of load restraint and dynamic forces acting on loads during braking, cornering and evasive manoeuvres • Lack of competency in using ropes, ratchet straps and other restraint equipment correctly • Inadequate understanding of legal responsibilities under the WHS Act 2011 and road transport legislation • No verification of competency for new staff, contractors or labour hire workers involved in loading and securing loads	4A	[redacted]	2M

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	• Failure to provide refresher training leading to skill fade and normalisation of deviation from procedures		[redacted]	
8. Procedures, Work Instructions and Documentation Control	• Lack of clear, accessible procedures for load restraint on light vehicles, trailers and utes • Outdated or conflicting documents leading to inconsistent application across sites • Procedures written in technical language that is not easily understood by front-line workers • Failure to incorporate rope-specific guidance and limitations into formal documentation • Workers relying on informal verbal instructions rather than controlled documents	3H	[redacted]	2M
9. Pre-Departure Inspection and Verification Systems	• No systematic pre-departure checks to verify load restraint adequacy for utes and trailers • Inability to detect incorrect or insufficient use of ropes, under-tensioned lashings or insecure anchor points before travel • Supervisors and dispatchers relying solely on verbal assurance rather than documented verification • Time pressure causing workers to skip or rush pre-departure inspections • Lack of a feedback loop when deficiencies are repeatedly identified	3H	[redacted]	2M
10. Journey Management, Driving Behaviour and Fatigue	• Inadequate journey planning leading to high-speed routes or poor road conditions that increase dynamic forces on restrained loads	3H	[redacted]	2M

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	• Drivers not adjusting driving style (speed, braking distances, cornering) for the presence of trailer or heavy roof/ute tray loads • Fatigue impairing driver judgement, increasing the likelihood of sudden manoeuvres that challenge the load restraint system • No system to reassess or re-tension loads after long journeys, rough roads or weather events • Lack of procedures for stopping safely if a rope or restraint is observed to be loose or failing		[redacted]	
11. Incident, Near Miss and Defect Reporting and Investigation	• Under-reporting of near misses, such as minor load shifts, loose ropes or partial restraint failures • Defective ropes, straps or anchor points not being tagged out or removed from service after incidents • Failure to identify system causes (training gaps, equipment design, procedures) when investigating load restraint events • Lack of learning dissemination across the organisation following an incident or enforcement action • Repeat occurrences of similar load restraint incidents due to weak corrective actions	3H	[redacted]	2M
12. Supervision, Enforcement and Safety Culture	• Insufficient field supervision to detect unsafe load restraint practices, particularly informal use of rope • Supervisors tolerating or modelling non-compliance with load restraint procedures to save time or effort • Workers perceiving load restraint as a low-priority task compared with delivery schedules	3H	[redacted]	2M

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	• Lack of positive reinforcement for good load restraint behaviours • Inconsistent disciplinary response to repeated non-compliance		[redacted]	
13. Maintenance, Inspection and Modification Control for Vehicles and Trailers	• Inadequate preventative maintenance on utes, trailers and restraint fixtures leading to structural failures under load • Unapproved modifications to trays, racks or anchor points compromising their strength or suitability for rope attachment • Corrosion, wear or damage to tie rails and lashing points going undetected • No system for verifying that repairs or modifications meet engineering and legislative requirements • Poor housekeeping leading to accumulated debris or sh[illegible]dges that can damage ropes o[illegible]ther restraints	3H	[redacted]	2M
14. Contractor and Third-Party Management	• Contractors using [illegible]ight vehicles and trailers that do not meet organisational load restraint standards • Inconsistent requirements communicated to subcontractors regarding safe use of ropes and other restraint equipment • Limited oversight of contractor loading and securing practices at client or remote locations • Assumption that contractors manage their own WHS compliance without verification • Contractual arrangements that create time or cost pressures leading to shortcuts in load restraint	3H	[redacted]	2M

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			[redacted]	
15. Emergency Response and Load Recovery Planning	• No plan for safely managing load shifts or partial load losses on public roads involving light vehicles and trailers • Workers attempting to re-secure loads with rope in unsafe locations (e.g. roadside on high-speed roads) without appropriate controls • Lack of equipment and procedures for safely unloading or reloading unstable loads after an incident • Insufficient coordination with emergency services when loads present secondary hazards (e.g. chemicals, sharp materials) • No debrief or learning capture after emergency load recovery events	2M	[redacted]	1L

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