

**Mini Loader**

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			<b>Elimination</b> Remove the hazard.	
LIKELY	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	4A ACUTE	DO NOT PROCEED	<b>Substitution</b> 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.	<b>Engineering</b> 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:	
<b>4A</b>	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.
<b>3H</b>	Review and approve additional controls before task starts. Senior supervisor sign-off needed.
<b>2M</b>	Ensure all nominated controls are in place and effective. Proceed with caution; monitor conditions.
<b>1L</b>	Proceed, following standard operating procedures. Monitor and keep records.

  

Consequence Scale:			
Consequence	People (injury/illness)	Project / Assets	Compliance / Reputation
<b>Catastrophic</b>	Fatality or permanent total disability	project shutdown	Significant regulator intervention; criminal prosecution
<b>Major</b>	Serious injury/illness (hospital > 5 days)	critical delay	Improvement notice; major media coverage
<b>Moderate</b>	Medical-treatment injury; lost-time > 1 day	moderate delay	Minor breach; adverse client comment
<b>Minor</b>	First-aid only, no lost time	negligible delay	Isolated non-conformance
<b>Insignificant</b>	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 Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failure of PCBU and Officers to understand and discharge primary duty of care under WHS Act 2011 for mini loader operations</li> <li>Lack of clear WHS roles, responsibilities and accountability for ownership and control of mini loader risks</li> <li>Inadequate consultation with workers and health and safety representatives (HSRs) about mini loader use, changes to plant, or new work methods</li> <li>Poor integration of mini loader risks into the organisation's WHS management system and risk register</li> <li>Multiple PCBUs on shared sites (e.g. farms, construction paddocks, contractors) not coordinating mini loader safety responsibilities</li> </ul>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish and document a WHS governance framework that explicitly includes compact loaders, dingo diggers and paddock tracked mini loaders within the organisation's plant risk profile and risk register</li> <li>Define and communicate clear WHS responsibilities for Officers, managers, supervisors, operators and maintenance personnel in relation to mini loader procurement, operation, maintenance and decommissioning</li> <li>Ensure Officers exercise due diligence as required by WHS Act 2011, including regular review of mini loader risk controls, safety performance data, audit outcomes and incident trends</li> <li>Implement formal consultation mechanisms (HSR meetings, toolbox talks, farm or site meetings) that specifically address mini loader hazards, proposed changes to work methods, attachments and work locations</li> <li>Develop written procedures for coordination of WHS duties where multiple PCBUs share a site, setting out how mini loader access, exclusion zones, traffic management and emergency response will be jointly managed</li> <li>Include mini loader related responsibilities and expectations in position descriptions, contractor agreements and service provider contracts</li> <li>Periodically review the WHS management system to ensure mini loader risks remain current, particularly when new models, attachments or work environments (e.g. uneven paddocks, confined yards) are introduced</li> </ul>	Medium
2. Procurement, Design and Suitability of Mini Loader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procurement of mini loaders or attachments that are not fit for purpose for Australian conditions or site-specific tasks (e.g. steep paddocks, soft ground, tight access)</li> <li>Lack of documented confirmation that new or second-hand mini loaders comply with relevant Australian Standards and WHS legislation</li> <li>Inadequate operator protection features (e.g. ROPS, FOPS, seat restraints, interlocks) on compact or older mini loader models</li> <li>Purchasing non-genuine or poorly designed attachments (e.g. augers, buckets, trenchers) that compromise stability or visibility</li> <li>Failure to consider noise, vibration, emissions, and ergonomic factors during selection, contributing to long-term health issues</li> </ul>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a formal plant procurement procedure requiring WHS risk assessment and sign-off before purchase or hire of any mini loader, dingo digger or attachment</li> <li>Specify compliance with relevant Australian Standards and WHS legislation in procurement documents, including requirements for ROPS/FOPS, guards, warning devices, emergency stops, and operator presence systems</li> <li>Require suppliers to provide evidence of conformity (e.g. declarations of conformity, compliance certificates, design registrations where applicable) and full operator and maintenance manuals in English</li> <li>Assess site conditions (paddock gradients, soil type, surface conditions, access widths, overhead services) and typical loads to ensure selected mini loader type (wheeled vs tracked, power rating, lift capacity) is suitable</li> <li>Standardise brands and models where practicable to simplify training, maintenance and spare parts, and reduce configuration complexity</li> <li>Include safety performance, visibility, stability aids, camera systems, lighting and ergonomics as evaluation criteria in tender and purchasing decisions</li> <li>Ensure all attachments are engineered, rated and compatible with the specific mini loader model, and that maximum load charts and de-rating for slopes or uneven ground are documented</li> <li>For hired or loaned mini loaders, require WHS documentation from the hire company, including inspection records, pre-delivery checks and operator instructions</li> </ul>	Medium

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Imported plant with incomplete or non-English manuals, limiting effective risk control and safe use</li> </ul>			
3. Plant Registration, Documentation and Recordkeeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incomplete or missing plant risk assessments for mini loaders in use on sites or rural properties</li> <li>Lack of up-to-date operator manuals, service manuals and load charts readily available to workers and supervisors</li> <li>Inadequate records of inspections, maintenance, modifications and repairs to mini loaders and attachments</li> <li>Unauthorised alterations to rollover protection, guarding or control systems not documented or assessed</li> <li>Failure to maintain registration or other regulatory requirements where applicable (e.g. on-road use, high-risk attachments)</li> <li>Poor version control of procedures and checklists leading to use of outdated information</li> </ul>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and maintain a documented plant risk assessment for each mini loader and key attachment, reviewed at defined intervals and whenever significant changes occur</li> <li>Establish a centralised digital or hard-copy plant file for each mini loader including manuals, risk assessments, inspection and maintenance records, modification approvals, training records and incident history</li> <li>Implement recordkeeping procedures that specifies retention periods, responsibilities and storage locations for mini loader related documents</li> <li>Require documented engineering review and written authorisation for any modifications to safety systems, ROPS/seats structures, controls or attachments, and update risk assessments accordingly</li> <li>Ensure up-to-date safe operating procedures (SOPs) and pre-use inspection checklists are controlled documents with revision history and approval signatures</li> <li>For mini loaders to ever be used on public roads or easements, verify and document compliance with vehicle registration, road rules and insurance requirements</li> <li>Conduct periodic internal audits of plant documentation to verify completeness, accuracy and currency</li> </ul>	Low
4. Training, Competency and Supervision Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operators using mini loader, without formal competency assessment or documented training</li> <li>Over-reliance on informal, on-the-job instruction leading to inconsistent safety practices across workers and sites</li> <li>Inadequate training in site-specific hazards such as steep paddocks, soft or boggy ground, underground services and interaction with livestock or the public</li> <li>Lack of competency verification for high-risk tasks involving attachments (e.g. trenching near services, fencing work, post hole digging on slopes)</li> <li>Inadequate supervision of new or young workers, seasonal workers and contractors using mini loaders</li> </ul>	High	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	Medium

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No process to verify external or hired operators' licences, tickets or experience</li> <li>Training not refreshed or updated when new plant, control systems or procedures are introduced</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
5. Safe Systems of Work and Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Absence of documented safe systems of work guiding mini loader use in different environments (yards, sheds, construction sites, open paddocks)</li> <li>Inconsistent application of controls for slopes, soft ground, confined areas and work near edges (drains, dams, retaining walls)</li> <li>Lack of procedures for selection, inspection and safe use of attachments, including load limits and stability considerations</li> <li>No standardised process for planning and authorising high-risk activities such as working near underground services, roads or occupied buildings</li> <li>Poor integration of mini loader work into broader site WMS procedures (traffic management, confined space, electrical safety, working around livestock)</li> <li>Failure to consider fatigue, work scheduling and environmental conditions (e.g. wet, dusty or low-light conditions) in task planning</li> </ul>	High	[REDACTED]	Medium
6. Site Planning and Traffic Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mini loaders operating in close proximity to pedestrians, other vehicles, livestock or members of the public in paddocks, sheds or construction areas</li> <li>Restricted visibility from compact and tracked mini loaders increasing risk of collision, run-over or crushing incidents</li> <li>Lack of defined traffic routes, parking areas and loading zones for mini loaders</li> </ul>	High	[REDACTED]	Medium

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	<p>and support vehicles (trailers, utes, trucks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncontrolled interaction between mini loaders and other mobile plant such as tractors, telehandlers and trucks on farms or sites</li> <li>• Inadequate planning for vehicle access to remote or uneven paddock areas, including risk of bogging, rollovers or loss of control</li> <li>• No controls to manage public access or children entering areas where mini loaders are operating</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
7. Maintenance, Inspection and Repair Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mini loaders and attachments operating with worn, damaged or malfunctioning components due to inadequate preventive maintenance</li> <li>• Lack of systematic pre-use and scheduled inspections leading to undetected issues affecting brakes, hydraulics, steering tracks, tyres or safety devices</li> <li>• Repairs or servicing undertaken by unqualified personnel or without reference to manufacturer instructions</li> <li>• Failure to apply effective isolation and lock-out/tag-out during maintenance, creating risk of inadvertent start-up or movement</li> <li>• Use of non-genuine or incompatible parts that compromise integrity of critical systems, particularly ROPS/FOPS, hydraulics and quick-hitch mechanisms</li> <li>• Inadequate management of breakdowns and temporary repairs, leading to continued use of unsafe equipment</li> </ul>	High	[REDACTED]	Low

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8. Contractor, Labour Hire and Hire Equipment Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contractors or labour hire workers operating mini loaders without alignment to the PCBU's WHS standards and procedures</li> <li>Assumption that hire companies have fully managed all plant risks, resulting in limited on-site verification of condition and suitability</li> <li>Inconsistent communication of site-specific hazards, traffic management rules and mini loader restrictions to external parties</li> <li>No clear agreement on who controls and supervises mini loader operations when multiple PCBUs share plant or work areas</li> <li>Lack of monitoring or performance review of contractors' and hire companies' safety practices relating to plant</li> </ul>	Medium	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	Low
9. Emergency Preparedness, Incident Management and First Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate planning for mini loader rollovers, crush injuries, entanglement with attachments or contact with services</li> <li>Workers and supervisors unsure how to respond to mini loader emergencies, including stabilising plant, contacting emergency services and performing first aid</li> <li>Lack of suitable rescue equipment or access for emergency vehicles in remote paddocks or confined work areas</li> <li>Under-reporting of near misses and minor incidents involving mini loaders, limiting organisational learning</li> <li>Poor post-incident review processes, leading to repeated or systemic failures not being addressed</li> </ul>	High	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	Medium

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			[REDACTED]	
10. Monitoring, Review and Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk controls for mini loaders becoming outdated due to changes in plant models, technology, attachments or work practices</li> <li>• Lack of systematic monitoring to verify that procedures, training and traffic management controls are being followed in the field</li> <li>• Failure to analyse data from inspections, incidents, maintenance and observations to identify emerging trends or systemic issues</li> <li>• Limited worker engagement in reviewing and improving mini loader safety systems</li> <li>• Complacency over time leading to erosion of safety culture around routine mini loader tasks</li> </ul>	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>[REDACTED]</li> <li>[REDACTED]</li> <li>[REDACTED]</li> <li>[REDACTED]</li> <li>[REDACTED]</li> <li>[REDACTED]</li> <li>[REDACTED]</li> <li>[REDACTED]</li> </ul>	Low

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.