

Office Equipment Filing and Archive Safety

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. Governance, WHS Duties and Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of clear WHS accountability for office equipment and filing/archiving systems Inadequate consultation with workers and health and safety representatives about storage and equipment risks Insufficient integration of WHS Act 2011 duties into information management and facilities policies Poor communication of expectations regarding safe use of filing systems, server rooms, guillotines and photocopiers Inadequate process for workers to raise concerns about congested archives and storage areas 	3H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and document WHS governance arrangements that assign responsibilities for office equipment, filing systems, archives and plans under the WHS Act 2011 Integrate office equipment and archiving safety into the organisation's WHS policy, risk management framework and due diligence processes for office equipment Implement formal consultation mechanisms (HSC meetings, toolbox talks, digital feedback channels) that specifically include office equipment and archive storage risks Ensure induction and ongoing updates specifically reference responsibilities for maintaining safe access ways, storage systems and office equipment Maintain a central register of decisions and actions related to office equipment, storage design and archiving management for audit and review 	2M
2. Office Layout, Access and Egress around Storage Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Congested archives or storage areas obstructing access and emergency egress Poorly designed office layout leading to narrow passageways, trip hazards and manual handling issues with filing units Inadequate separation between pedestrian routes and areas with trolleys or mobile shelving units Insufficient space allocation for the safe operation of paper guillotines, photocopiers and server rooms Blocked access to fire exits or firefighting equipment due to overfilled storage 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt office and archive layout standards that define minimum aisle widths, turning circles and clearance distances in accordance with applicable building and fire codes Implement a space management procedure that prohibits storing files or boxes in designated walkways, doorways and access to electrical or fire equipment Conduct periodic inspections of aisles, exits and service corridors in archive rooms, photocopy areas and server rooms, with corrective actions tracked to closure Require design review and WHS sign-off for new or modified storage layouts, including mobile shelving, compactus units and high-density filing systems Implement a 'no storage on floors' rule in access ways, supported by visual cues (floor markings, signage) and supervisor monitoring 	2M
3. Archive and File Storage System Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overloaded shelving and compactus units increasing risk of collapse or falling objects Inadequate specification of shelving height and weight limits, leading to unsafe stacking and access to high shelves Uncontrolled use of ad hoc storage solutions (e.g. cardboard boxes on top of cabinets) in congested archive areas 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specify and procure commercially rated shelving systems with clearly documented load ratings and installation requirements Develop an archive storage standard that defines shelf loading limits, maximum stacking heights and storage hierarchy (heavy items at lower levels) Ensure all shelving, compactus and filing units are installed, anchored and maintained in line with manufacturer instructions and engineering recommendations Implement a formal archive lifecycle process (creation, active use, semi-active, archive, disposal) to prevent long-term accumulation in working areas 	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inappropriate storage of heavy or bulky items above shoulder height Lack of separation between inactive archives and active working files causing system congestion 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Label storage systems clearly with weight limits, content categories and access restrictions, and review compliance via scheduled inspections 	
4. Archive Congestion, Housekeeping and Retention Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Congested files and archives leading to uncontrolled piling of documents and boxes on floors and worktops Failure to apply document retention and disposal schedules, resulting in chronic overcrowding Inadequate housekeeping standards in archive rooms (dust, vermin, clutter) contributing to slips, trips and respiratory concerns Uncontrolled storage of combustible paper materials, increasing fire load Staff accessing overfilled shelves or unstable piles of files to retrieve records 	4A	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M
5. Manual Handling and Ergonomics of Filing and Archiving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repetitive bending, twisting and reaching for files in congested or poorly designed storage Manual handling of heavy archive boxes and portable file containers without appropriate aids Inadequate system for assigning physically demanding archive tasks to suitably capable workers Lack of design consideration for ergonomic access heights to filing cabinets and archive shelving Insufficient training on safe handling of files, archive boxes and equipment trolleys 	4A	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M
6. Mobile Shelving, Compactus and High-Density Storage Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crush or pinch hazards from poorly maintained or incorrectly used compactus units Inadequate safeguarding and signage for powered or mechanically assisted mobile shelving 	4A	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of systems to control access to mobile shelving areas and prevent use by untrained personnel Inadequate emergency release mechanisms or procedures in case of entrapment Uncontrolled storage of items protruding from shelves, creating snag and impact risks when units are moved 		[REDACTED]	
7. Photocopiers, Multi-Function Devices and Printing Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exposure to ozone, toner dust and paper dust in poorly ventilated copier rooms Electrical and fire hazards from overloaded power outlets, damaged cords or inadequate maintenance Manual handling risks from lifting reams of paper, toner cartridges and paper trays without suitable design controls Entanglement or pinch hazards from moving parts if covers or guards are bypassed Slips and trips due to paper, packaging or waste accumulating around print areas 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L
8. Paper Guillotines and Cutting Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Severe lacerations or amputations from contact with guillotine blades Inadequate guarding conditions or user behaviour rather than engineered safety features Unsupervised access to guillotines by untrained or unauthorised personnel Poor maintenance leading to blunt blades, increased force, and loss of control Improper positioning of guillotines on unstable or cluttered work surfaces 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M
9. Server Rooms and IT Equipment Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restricted or uncontrolled access to server rooms leading to unauthorised entry and exposure to electrical and trip hazards 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High heat loads and inadequate ventilation or cooling, affecting both equipment reliability and worker comfort Trip hazards from cabling, floor penetrations and raised floor panels in server areas Fire risks associated with high-density electrical installations and combustible materials stored in server rooms Inadequate emergency procedures for working in confined or noisy server environments 		[REDACTED]	
10. Electrical Safety and Plant Maintenance for Office Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of untested or non-compliant electrical equipment (photocopiers, shredders, guillotines with powered components, server hardware) Deterioration of cords, plugs and power boards due to inadequate test and tag or replacement systems Overloading of circuits and power boards, increasing fire and shock risks Lack of clear responsibilities for arranging preventative maintenance and repairs Workers attempting unauthorised repairs or modifications to office equipment 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M
11. Information Management, Digitalisation and Off-Site Archiving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over-reliance on physical records due to lack of digitalisation strategy, leading to chronic archive growth and congestion Fragmented information management responsibilities causing inconsistent filing and retrieval practices Uncontrolled transfer of archives to off-site storage providers without adequate WHS due diligence Security and privacy breaches associated with ad hoc disposal or off-site archive handling 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business continuity risks if critical records are stored in high-risk physical locations 			
12. Training, Competency and Supervision for Office Equipment and Archives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate training on safe use of filing systems, compactus units, guillotines, photocopiers and server room access requirements Assumption that office tasks are 'low risk', resulting in minimal supervision and informal practices Lack of competency assessment for staff tasked with archive management or equipment oversight Inconsistent induction of new staff and contractors in archive and server room rules Knowledge loss when experienced staff leave without structured handover of archive procedures 	3H	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M
13. Incident Reporting, Inspections and Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under-reporting of near misses and minor incidents involving office equipment and archives Lack of targeted inspection programs for congested storage areas, compactus units and server rooms Failure to analyse incident trends related to storage and equipment, limiting systemic improvements Ineffective corrective action management leading to repeated hazards (e.g. recurring congestion in archives) No formal review of risk controls following organisational or technological changes 	3H	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	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>

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/lis>

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.