Office Ergonomics and Workstation Safety

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:

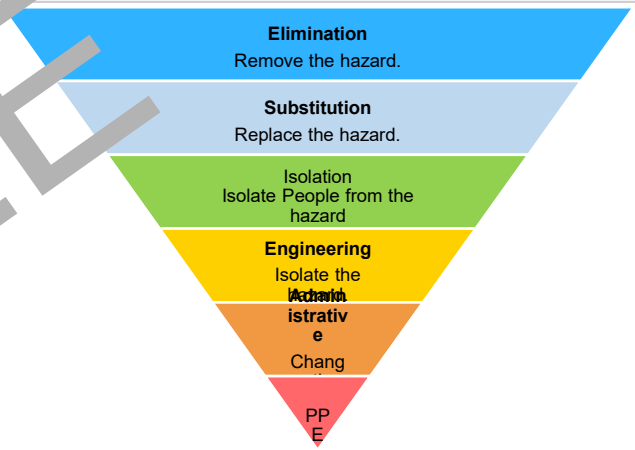
CLIENT OR PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR DETAILS

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, Duties and Consultation	• Lack of clear allocation of WHS duties under WHS Act 2011 and WHS Regulation for office ergonomics • Inadequate consultation with workers and health and safety representatives about workstation design and ergonomic risks • No formal process to capture, review and act on worker feedback about discomfort, incorrect posture or repetitive strain injury symptoms • Failure to integrate ergonomic risk management into the overall WHS management system and risk register • Inadequate consideration of office ergonomics in safety committee agendas and WHS performance reviews	4A	• Define and document PCBU, officer and worker duties for office ergonomics in the WHS policy, referencing WHS Act 2011 and applicable Codes of Practice • Establish a formal consultation process (e.g. WHS committee, HSR forums, toolbox talks for office staff) that routinely addresses workstation ergonomics, posture and computer use risks • Include office ergonomics and workstation safety as a standing item on WHS committee meetings and safety performance reports • Maintain an ergonomic risk register that records systemic hazards such as poor workstation design, CAD-intensive roles and high computer use, with treatment actions and due dates • Develop a documented procedure for workers to report early signs of discomfort, musculoskeletal pain or repetitive strain injury from computer use, with escalation and follow-up responsibilities • Ensure officers receive due diligence training that explicitly covers ergonomics obligations, reasonably practicable controls and resource allocation for workstation safety	3H
2. Office Layout, Workstation Design and Furniture Specification	• Workstations and furniture purchased without ergonomic performance criteria leading to unsuitable desks, chairs and monitor setups • Lack of sit–stand or adjustable desks for roles with prolonged seated CAD or computer work • Inconsistent workstation layout causing awkward reach distances, poor monitor height and incorrect posture during work • Inadequate space underneath and around desks, leading to constrained legroom and forced static postures • Ergonomic issues with furniture such as non-adjustable chairs, fixed-height desks and poor lumbar support	4A	• Implement a procurement standard for office furniture and equipment requiring compliance with relevant Australian Standards (e.g. AS/NZS 4442 for office desks, AS/NZS 4438 for office chairs) and ergonomic adjustability criteria • Standardise adjustable ergonomic chairs with seat height, backrest angle, lumbar support and armrest adjustments across all workstations • Specify height-adjustable or sit–stand desks for high computer-use roles (e.g. CAD operators, electrical schematic designers) and document the minimum technical requirements • Develop a corporate workstation design guideline covering desk dimensions, monitor positioning, keyboard/mouse placement and cable management to minimise awkward postures • Require workstation layout plans to be reviewed by a competent ergonomist or WHS advisor before office fit-outs and refurbishments are approved • Ensure space planning rules provide adequate legroom, clearance for movement and flexible placement of equipment to support neutral postures	2M
3. Seating, Posture and Adjustment Systems	• Workers unable or unaware of how to adjust seating mechanisms to achieve neutral posture • Incorrect posture during work, including slouched sitting, unsupported lower back and forward head posture while using screens	4A	• Implement a workstation assessment procedure requiring an ergonomic set-up review for all new starters, role changes and relocations, with particular focus on seating mechanisms and posture • Provide step-by-step written and visual guidance (posters, intranet videos) on adjusting chairs, lumbar support and armrests to maintain neutral posture and reduce spinal load • Schedule periodic workstation self-assessment checklists prompting workers to review posture, adjust chairs and reconfigure their workstation at least annually or when discomfort is reported	2M

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	• No formal process to assess seating suitability for different body sizes, leading to mismatched chair–user combinations • Failure to identify and correct workers who habitually sit in static positions for prolonged periods • Inadequate management of ergonomic issues with furniture such as worn chair mechanisms or failed gas lifts		• Establish a chair inspection and replacement program to identify and remove damaged, non-functional or non-compliant seating from service • Ensure supervisors are trained to recognise signs of poor posture and escalate ergonomic assessment requests to WHS or an ergonomist • Maintain a small pool of specialist chairs or accessories (e.g. footrests, alternative seating arrangements) for workers with specific ergonomic needs or documented musculoskeletal conditions	
4. Screen, Keyboard, Mouse and Peripheral Configuration	• Poor monitor placement leading to neck strain, glare and visual fatigue for workers using CAD software and other design tools • Inappropriate keyboard and mouse positioning causing wrist deviation, contact stress and risk of repetitive strain injury from computer use • Use of non-ergonomic pointing devices or trackpads for high-intensity CAD operations and electrical schematic preparation • Multiple screens configured at awkward angles or heights, increasing torso and neck rotation during design work • Lack of standardised guidance for configuring peripheral equipment and docking stations	4A	[redacted]	2M
5. Work Organisation, Task Design and Break Management	• Prolonged uninterrupted computer use without micro-breaks, leading to fatigue and increased risk of repetitive strain injury • High work demands and deadlines for CAD design and documentation tasks, discouraging workers from taking regular posture breaks • Task allocation practices that concentrate intensive keyboard and mouse use to a small number of workers	4A	[redacted]	2M

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	• Inadequate scheduling of varied tasks, resulting in extended periods of static sitting or standing • Lack of a formal policy on workload management for high-precision screen work such as designing using CAD systems and preparing electrical schematics		[redacted]	
6. Ergonomics Training, Competency and Awareness	• Lack of training in office and workstation ergonomics leading to incorrect posture and poor use of adjustable furniture • Workers unaware of early warning signs of musculoskeletal disorders or repetitive strain injury from computer use • Supervisors not competent to identify and address ergonomic risks in their teams • No structured induction covering practical workplace ergonomics and workstation ergonomics expectations • Inadequate refresher training on new equipment, such as sit-[illegible]desks or portable electronics [illegible]ed for design work	3H	[redacted]	2M
7. Use of CAD and Design Software Systems	• AutoCAD operati[illegible] systems requiring sustained precisio[illegible] mouse use and fine motor control, increasing strain on hands and fo[illegible]arms • Designing in CAD software with complex commands leading to repetitive finger movements and static shoulder postures • Poorly configured CAD templates and workflows resulting in inefficient work processes and extended screen time • Insufficient training in software shortcuts and productivity tools causing excessive manual operations and clicks • Inadequate coordination between IT and WHS in assessing ergonomic	4A	[redacted]	2M

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	impacts of new design tools or software updates			
8. Portable Electronics and Mobile Work Practices	• Use of laptops, tablets and other portable electronics for extended periods without docking stations or external peripherals, resulting in poor neck and wrist posture • Workers performing design and documentation tasks on small screens when away from primary workstations • Ad-hoc hot-desking without appropriate ergonomic set-up checks and adjustments • Inadequate policy on remote work ergonomics leading to makeshift home workstations with unsafe furniture and posture • Lack of system to ensure portable devices used for CAD or schematic preparation can be set up ergonomica	3H	[redacted]	2M
9. Sit–Stand and Lifting Desk Systems	• Service and maintenance failures of lifting desks causing malfunction, sudden drops or incon eight adjustment • Workers using si stand des out training on appropr e, heig settings and rotation between sitting d standing • Over-reliance on standi tions causing lower limb and back fatigue when not managed correctly • Electrical faults or pinch points associated with powered lifting desks due to inadequate inspection regimes • No documented process for reporting and tagging out faulty lifting desks	3H	[redacted]	1L
10. Environmental Conditions (Lighting, Noise, Thermal Comfort)	• Inadequate lighting levels or glare on screens contributing to awkward head positions and eye strain • Poor placement of workstations relative to windows causing workers to adopt	3H	[redacted]	2M

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	incorrect posture to avoid glare or reflections • Ambient noise levels leading to increased muscle tension and reduced concentration during complex design tasks • Inappropriate temperature or drafts causing discomfort and stiff muscles, exacerbating ergonomic risks • Lack of systematic review of environmental conditions for workers performing intensive computer and CAD work		[redacted]	
11. Incident Reporting, Early Intervention and Health Surveillance	• Under-reporting of early discomfort, pain or symptoms of repetitive strain injury from computer use due to lack of awareness or fear of stigma • No structured process for triage and early intervention when ergonomic-related symptoms are reported • Delayed access to occupational healt physiotherapy or ergono sessmen for workers with eme ng musculoskeletal co plaints • Poor trend analys of ergonomic-related inc ents, near misses or workers compensation cl s • Inadequate coordinatio HR, WHS and managers in managing return-to-work and reasonable adjustments for affected workers	4A	[redacted]	2M
12. Procurement, Maintenance and Asset Management of Office Equipment	• Procurement decisions based primarily on cost without ergonomic criteria, resulting in sub-standard equipment • Lack of asset management for chairs, desks, monitors and peripherals leading to extended use beyond safe service life • No routine inspection or servicing of adjustable furniture and lifting desks	3H	[redacted]	2M

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	• Inconsistent replacement policies resulting in mixed quality of ergonomic equipment across the workplace • Failure to engage WHS and end-users in specification of furniture and technology for design-intensive roles		[redacted]	
13. Policies, Procedures and Documentation for Workplace Ergonomics	• Absence of a formal workplace ergonomics policy aligned with WHS Act 2011 requirements • Fragmented or outdated procedures for workstation ergonomics and office safety • Lack of documented roles, responsibilities and workflows for managing ergonomic assessments and corrective actions • Inconsistent application of ergonomics procedures across sites or departments • Poor document control leading to use of superseded guidance on workstation set-up and practices	3H	[redacted]	1L
14. Supervision, Leadership and Safety Culture for Ergonomics	• Supervisors prioritising output over safe work practices, discouraging breaks and ergonomic adjustments • Limited leadership visibility and commitment to office ergonomics and workstation safety • Negative attitudes or scepticism among staff regarding the value of ergonomics, leading to poor uptake of controls • Failure to recognise and reward positive ergonomic behaviours and reporting • Inconsistent enforcement of ergonomics requirements across teams	3H	[redacted]	2M

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15. Change Management, Projects and Office Reconfigurations	• Office moves, refurbishments or technology changes implemented without ergonomic risk assessment • Introduction of new CAD systems, software tools or hardware that alter task demands without considering ergonomic implications • Compressed project timelines during relocations leading to rushed set-ups and poorly adjusted workstations • Lack of stakeholder engagement (including WHS and workers) in planning ergonomics for new or redesigned work areas • Inadequate post-implementation review of ergonomic outcomes following change projects	3H	[redacted]	2M

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