Plastering Rendering and Wet Mix Application

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:

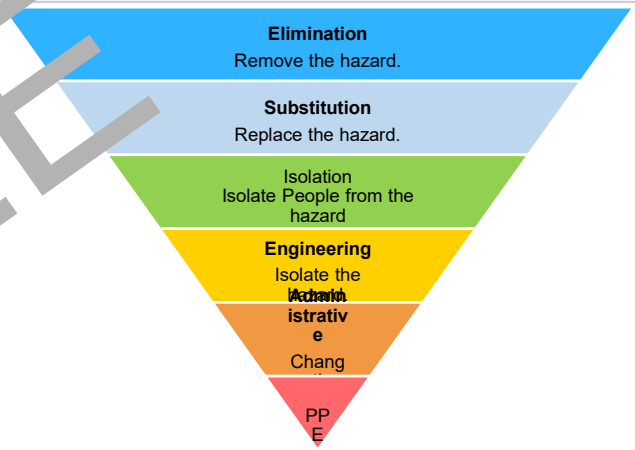
CLIENT OR PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR DETAILS

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, Roles and Consultation	• Lack of clear WHS responsibilities for plastering and rendering activities within the PCBU and subcontractor organisations • Inadequate WHS policies and procedures specific to plastering, rendering and wet mix application (including tape jointing and joint treatment) • Poor consultation with workers, health and safety representatives and subcontractors about plastering risks and controls • Failure to coordinate WHS duties between principal contractor, plastering subcontractors and other trades (e.g. painters, electricians) • Insufficient management oversight and supervision of high-risk activities such as work at height, powered mixer use and mechanical sanding • Inadequate incident and near-miss reporting culture leading to under-reporting of plastering-related hazards (dust, manual handling, falls) • No regular WHS review against WHS Act 2011 and WHS Regulations requirements for construction work	4A	• Establish and implement a WHS management system (WHSMS) aligned with WHS Act 2011, WHS Regulations and relevant Codes of Practice for construction work and hazardous manual tasks • Define and document WHS duties, responsibilities and accountabilities for directors, project managers, site supervisors, leading hands and plastering contractors in relation to plastering and rendering tasks • Develop specific WHS procedures for plastering, rendering, drywall finishing, joint treatment, sanding, patching and wet mix application activities, including interfaces with other trades • Implement formal consultation mechanisms (toolbox talks, pre-start meetings, safety committees) that include regular discussion of plastering-specific risks such as silica dust, musculoskeletal strain and access/egress issues • Ensure principal contractor and subcontractor agreements clearly define WHS duties, supervision arrangements and coordination requirements for overlapping plastering works • Implement a structured incident and near-miss reporting procedure with easy access for workers (paper or digital) and clear investigation and corrective action processes • Conduct periodic WHS system audits and management reviews focusing on high-risk plastering operations and ensure findings feed into continuous improvement plans • Ensure availability and communication of relevant Safe Work Australia and state regulator guidance material for plastering, rendering, drywall finishing and silica dust management	3H
2. Competency, Licensing and Training for Plastering Activities	• Workers performing plastering, rendering, tape jointing, gypsum handling or dry sanding without appropriate trade competency or supervision • Inadequate training on safe use of plaster mixers, sanding systems (hand and mechanical), hawks (bones), trowels and jointing tools • Lack of understanding of hazards associated with respirable crystalline silica (RCS) from sanding and cutting materials	4A	• Develop a competency framework for plasterers, renderers and drywall finishers that outlines required qualifications, skills and experience for various tasks (including finishing joints, patching, sanding and wet mix preparation) • Implement a formal induction program addressing site-specific plastering risks, RCS exposure, hazardous manual tasks, work at height and equipment use • Provide task-specific training on safe operation of plaster mixers, mechanical sanders, vacuum extraction systems, hawks, trowels and tape jointing tools, including manufacturer instructions • Deliver regular training and refresher sessions on silica hazard awareness, appropriate respiratory protection, dust control systems and health monitoring requirements where applicable • Provide manual handling training tailored to plastering (lifting gypsum bags, handling plasterboard, moving wet mix and handling hawk and trowels at shoulder height)	2M

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
	• Insufficient instruction on safe manual handling techniques for heavy plaster bags, wet mix and plasterboard sheets • No formal induction for new workers or labour-hire staff on site-specific plastering hazards and controls • Supervisors not trained in WHS due diligence, risk assessment and permit-to-work systems relevant to plastering • No verification of qualifications or licences where required (e.g. high-risk work licensing for associated tasks such as operating powered access equipment used for high-level plastering)		• Ensure supervisors and leading hands receive additional training in WHS leadership, risk assessment, incident management and monitoring of plastering works • Implement a competence verification process (tick[illegible], logbooks, on-the-job assessment) prior to allowing workers to carry out unsupervised plast[illegible]ng and rendering duties • Maintain up-to-date training records and e[illegible]blish renew[illegible]dates for key WHS training such as silica awareness, working at heights and plant ope[illegible]ion	
3. Planning, Design and Work Integration for Plastering and Rendering	• Inadequate planning of work sequence leading to congestion, clashes with other trades and unsafe work areas during plastering and joint treatment • No early consideration of access, ventilation and lighting requirements fo[illegible] plastering walls and ceilings, sanding joints and finishing between boards • Poor selection of m[illegible]erials or systems (e.g. high-silica co[illegible]ounds, heavy pre-mixed bags) in[illegible]easing h[illegible]d manual handling ris[illegible] • Lack of integration of plastering requirements into construction pr[illegible]gram causing rushed work, ove[illegible] and fatigue • Inadequate planning for weather-affected external rendering works including wind exposure, wet surfaces and heat stress • Failure to assess structural capacity and suitability of substrates prior to rendering or plastering, leading to potential failures or rework • No standardised procedures for patching holes and rectification works, resulting in ad-hoc unsafe practices	4A	[illegible]ntegrate plastering, rendering and drywall finishing activities into the project construction program with su[illegible]cient time allowances and sequencing to avoid congestion and rushed work • Conduct pre-construction planning meetings including principal contractor, designer, plastering subcontractor and WHS personnel to review design, materials and access arrangements • Specify and procure lower-hazard materials where practicable (e.g. low-dust joint compounds, pre-mixed wet products, low-silica materials) consistent with performance requirements • Plan work fronts to separate wet trades, dust-generating works and high-traffic areas to reduce interference and exposure to airborne contaminants • Incorporate requirements for adequate ventilation, lighting and temporary services in enclosed areas where plastering, joint finishing and sanding will occur • Include design reviews to verify substrate integrity and structural suitability before render or plaster application, with documented approval processes • Develop standard procedures and quality standards for patching, rectification and rework that include safety considerations and access requirements • Plan for environmental conditions in external rendering works, including limiting work during extreme heat or high winds and providing shade, hydration and rest breaks	2M

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
4. Plant, Tools and Equipment Management (Mixers, Sanders, Hawks and Trowels)	• Lack of plant selection criteria leading to use of unsafe or unsuitable plaster mixers, mechanical sanders or portable tools • Inadequate maintenance and inspection system for plaster mixers, power tools and dust extraction units • Use of non-compliant electrical equipment (e.g. no RCD protection, damaged cords) in wet or dusty environments • No system for safe storage, transport and handling of sharp tools (hawks, trowels, knives, jointing tools) • Inadequate guarding or emergency stop provisions on plaster mixers and other rotating equipment • Poorly controlled vibration and noise exposure from powered sanders and mixers • Uncontrolled modification or bypassi of safety features on plant • Lack of pre-use chec eading to breakdowns or failu s mid-task with potential for injury	4A	[redacted]	2M
5. Hazardous Substances and Silica Dust Management	• Exposure to respira rystalline s a and fine dust during drywall sandin sanding plaster joints and cuttin grinding cement-based c nds • Inhalation of gypsum dust, additives, jointing compound aerosols and other airborne contaminants during joint treatment and finishing • Inadequate chemical management for bonding agents, primers, sealers and additives used in plastering and rendering • No formal assessment of health risks from long-term dust exposure for plasterers and sanders	4A	[redacted]	2M

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
	• Failure to implement appropriate respiratory protection programs including fit testing and maintenance • Inadequate housekeeping leading to accumulation of settled dust and re-suspension into the breathing zone • Lack of emergency procedures for exposure incidents or chemical splashes		[redacted]	
6. Hazardous Manual Tasks and Ergonomic Management	• Repetitive and sustained postures while using hawks and trowels, particularly overhead plastering of ceilings and high walls • Lifting and handling heavy gypsum bags, plasterboard sheets, buckets of wet mix and plastering equipment • Awkward postures when finishing joints between boards, tape jointing near flo level or patching holes in difficult locations • Forceful exertions wh g plaste manually, operating n-mechanised mixers or sanding ge surfaces • Lack of systems t ant mulati fatigue and musculoskeletal disorder among plasterers and renderers • Insufficient planning for s or use of mechanical aids for heavy or awkward items	4A	[redacted]	2M
7. Working at Heights, Access and Falls Prevention	• Inadequate planning and control of work at height for plastering walls, ceilings and external rendering on multi-storey façades • Use of unsuitable access equipment (improvised platforms, unsafe ladders, makeshift trestles) for sanding joints and finishing between boards at height • Poor integration between scaffold suppliers and plastering teams leading	4A	[redacted]	2M

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
	to gaps, missing planks or inadequate working platforms • Lack of edge protection, fall arrest systems or safe means of access on high-level plastering work areas • No systematic inspection and tagging regime for scaffolds, mobile elevating work platforms and trestle systems • Inadequate training and supervision of workers performing at-height tape jointing, patching or sanding activities		[redacted]	
8. Site Environment, Housekeeping and Traffic Management	• Slips, trips and falls from spilled wet mix, plaster splatter, off-cuts and hoses left in circulation routes • Obstructed access and egress due to stored gypsum boards, bags, plaster mixers and sanding equipment in corridors or doorways • Uncontrolled interaction between mobile plant, delivery vehicles and plastering workers moving materials and equipment • Poor lighting and ventilation in rooms where plastering, rendering are carried out, increasing risk of errors and incidents • Inadequate waste management systems leading to accumulation of dust, off-cuts and used bags • Blocked or poorly signed emergency exits in areas heavily used for plastering activities	4A	[redacted]	2M
9. Contractor and Subcontractor Management for Plastering Works	• Selection of plastering subcontractors without adequate assessment of their WHS performance and systems • Inconsistent safety standards across multiple subcontractors performing plastering, rendering, tape jointing and sanding on the same site	4A	[redacted]	2M

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
	• Lack of clear communication of site-specific rules, PPE requirements and dust control expectations to subcontractor personnel • Inadequate monitoring of subcontractor compliance with WHS procedures and SWMS for plastering and rendering • Commercial pressures leading subcontractors to cut corners on safety (e.g. bypassing dust controls, rushing wet mix preparation or sanding) • Poor coordination between subcontractors and principal contractor on scheduling and access, increasing congestion and risk		[redacted]	
10. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Uniform Standards	• Reliance on PPE as the primary control for plastering hazards instead of higher-order controls • Inconsistent supply and use of appropriate respiratory protection duri sanding, joint finishing and gypsum handling • Lack of eye and fa protection when mixing plaster, op ting mixers or working overhead, ading t and debris injuries • Inadequate hand protection when handling sharp tools (trowels, kn s, jointing tools) and rough m ials • Insufficient management of PPE hygiene and maintenance, including respiratory filters, hearing protection and gloves • Workers not trained in correct selection, fitting and use of PE suitable for plastering and rendering tasks	3H	[redacted]	2M
11. Emergency Preparedness, Incident Response and First Aid	• Lack of specific emergency arrangements for plastering-related incidents such as eye injuries from splashes, dust inhalation or falls from height	3H	[redacted]	1L

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
	• Inadequate first aid resources or trained first aiders during periods of intensive plastering and rendering work • Poor communication methods for summoning assistance from enclosed rooms or upper levels where plasterers are working alone or in small teams • No structured process for investigating plastering incidents and near misses to identify systemic causes • Failure to update emergency procedures when site layout changes due to scaffolds, temporary walls or plastering works		[redacted]	
12. Health Monitoring, Fitness for Work and Wellbeing	• Undetected health effects from long-term exposure to silica and gypsum dust among plasterers and sanders • Workers with pre-existing musculoskeletal or respiratory conditions undertaking high-demand plastering tasks without appropriate controls • Fatigue and heat stress during extended hours, hot environments and physically demanding plastering and rendering work • Mental health impacts arising from high workload, tight deadlines and job insecurity common in subcontracted plastering roles • No system to assess fitness for work (including effects of drugs, alcohol or medications) for workers performing high-risk plastering activities	3H	[redacted]	2M
13. Documentation, Record Keeping and Continuous Improvement	• Inadequate documentation of risk assessments, SWMS and procedures related to plastering, rendering and wet mix application	3H	[redacted]	1L

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
	• Poor record keeping for training, plant maintenance, health monitoring and inspections, leading to uncontrolled deterioration in safety standards • Failure to systematically review incidents, inspection findings and audit results to improve plastering WHS controls • Out-of-date or inaccessible WHS documentation on site, resulting in inconsistent practices across crews and shifts • Non-compliance with legislative record retention requirements for health monitoring and hazardous chemicals		[redacted]	

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