

Playground Installation

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 for the task parts. 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. WHS Governance, Roles & Legal Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of clear WHS accountability for playground installation and maintenance across client, principal contractor and subcontractors Inadequate understanding of WHS Act 2011 and WHS Regulation requirements for construction and play environments Failure to consider relevant Australian Standards (e.g. AS 4685 series, AS/NZS 4422 soft fall, AS/NZS 3000 electrical, AS 1926 pool barriers, AS 3533 amusement devices for aquatic play) No documented WHS management plan for playground and aquatic play projects Poor coordination of WHS duties between designer, installer, maintenance provider and asset owner Inadequate consultation with workers and health and safety representatives regarding playground-specific risks Failure to define responsibilities for safety of children and public during construction, commissioning and operational use 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a documented WHS governance structure for playground projects, defining PCBUs, officers and workers' duties in line with the WHS Act 2011 Develop and implement a project-specific WHS Management Plan addressing playground, aquatic play and elevated structures aligned with AS 4685 and local council requirements Maintain a legislative and standards register that includes relevant playground, aquatic play, construction and electrical standards, with scheduled review dates Formalise WHS roles and responsibilities in contracts, scopes of work and position descriptions, including responsibilities for ongoing safety inspections and maintenance Implement a WHS legal compliance audit process for new playground projects, including verification of building approvals, permits and environmental requirements Ensure structured consultation arrangements (toolbox talks, WHS committees, design review workshops) explicitly address playground and child-safety risks Require officers to demonstrate due diligence through periodic WHS governance reviews, including sample audits of playground projects and maintenance records 	3H
2. Design Governance & Standards Compliance (Including Aquatic Play & Treehouses)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playground or aquatic play equipment not designed with reference to current Australian Standards for impact, entrapment, fall heights and consultation Treehouses and elevated play structures designed without adequate structural engineering verification Insufficient consideration of supervision zones and sight lines for carers and lifeguards Use of non-compliant materials or finishes that degrade rapidly in aquatic or coastal environments Inadequate separation between age groups, high-risk elements and hard hazards (roads, car parks, water bodies) 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mandate that all playground, aquatic play and treehouse designs are prepared or reviewed by competent designers familiar with AS 4685 series, AS/NZS 4422, AS 1926, AS 3533 and relevant local planning rules Implement a formal design risk assessment and Safety in Design (SiD) process for all new and refurbished play areas, with documented hazard registers and elimination or minimisation strategies Require structural engineering certification for elevated structures, treehouses, platforms and anchoring systems, including wind and load calculations Adopt standard design templates and detail libraries that incorporate compliant fall zones, soft fall depths, barriers, guardrails and entrapment controls Implement a multi-disciplinary design review (designer, WHS advisor, maintenance, operations, insurer, aquatic specialist where relevant) before finalising drawings Specify materials, coatings and fixtures suitable for high-moisture, UV and corrosive environments, with documented product technical data and warranties 	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, leading to anti-social behaviour and vandalism Designs that prevent effective inspection, cleaning and maintenance (e.g. inaccessible structural fixings or concealed voids) Lack of specific design controls for aquatic slip hazards, water quality and drowning risk 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design for maintainability by providing access to critical components, drainage lines, filters, pumps and structural fixings without working at height where reasonably practicable Document operational limitations, supervision requirements and age-appropriateness for each play element within the design package and client handover documentation 	
3. Site Selection, Layout Planning & External Interfaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selection of sites with inherent environmental hazards (roads, car parks, open water, steep slopes, cliffs, contaminated land) Play areas located in flood-prone, tidal or stormwater flow paths, particularly for aquatic play installations Inadequate separation between playgrounds and vehicle movements, service roads or loading zones Poor layout leading to blind spots, poor supervision and congestion points for unsafe behaviours Insufficient shade and UV protection increasing risk of frost, stains and burns on equipment surfaces Inadequate lighting and wayfinding impacting evening safety and emergency access Conflicts between sports activities and playground zones (ball strike, player collisions with children) 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and apply formal playground site selection and feasibility assessment checklist, including environmental, traffic and crime risk factors Incorporate traffic management and pedestrian flow assessments into site planning, ensuring safe access routes, push and wheelchair accessibility and vehicle separation Design and document minimum separation distances and physical barriers between play areas, car parks, roads, water bodies and sports fields Undertake flood and drainage assessments for aquatic play and soft fall zones to prevent pooling, erosion and contamination of surfaces Specify shade structures, tree planting and material selections to manage UV exposure and surface temperatures, considering local climate data Include lighting and CPTED considerations in the layout plan, ensuring safe sight lines, clear entry points and emergency vehicle access Integrate play equipment with adjacent sports or recreation infrastructure through buffer zones, fencing or netting to manage ball-strike and collision risks 	2M
4. Contractor Management & Procurement Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement of installers, maintenance contractors or designers without appropriate competence or licences Inadequate pre-qualification of contractors for high-risk construction work, aquatic systems or work at height Poor coordination of multiple contractors on shared playground sites leading to interface risks 	4A	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracts that fail to define WHS expectations, standards and reporting requirements • Subcontracting chains that dilute WHS control and oversight • Cost-driven procurement decisions that compromise quality of materials, anchoring systems or soft fall installation 		[REDACTED]	
5. Competency, Training & Supervision Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient technical competency in installation of compliant play and aquatic equipment • Supervisors lacking understanding of playground-specific WHS and child-safety requirements • Inadequate training in working at height, confined spaces (tanks, plant rooms), plant operation and electrical isolation • Workers and maintenance staff unaware of inspection criteria set out in Australian Standards for playground safety • Lack of training in infection control and water hygiene management for aquatic play systems • No system for ongoing competency verification or refresher training 	3H	[REDACTED]	2M
6. Design & Construction Change Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncontrolled design changes during construction leading to non-compliant equipment or layouts • Substitution of specified components, fixings or materials with cheaper alternatives without engineering review • Alterations to soft fall depths, boundaries or materials not reflected in as-built documentation • Client-driven late changes that affect supervision zones, access/egress or separation from hazards 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to assess cumulative impact of minor changes on overall playground safety 		[REDACTED]	
7. Plant, Equipment & Materials Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of non-certified or poorly maintained cranes, EWP's, forklifts or other lifting equipment during installation or dismantling Inadequate systems for inspection, testing and tagging of electrical plant and aquatic pumps Incorrect storage or handling of chemicals for aquatic play water treatment or surface cleaning Use of unsuitable fasteners, fixings or anchors for structural and soft fall components Material defects or counterfeit products not identified before installation Improper management of hazardous substances in timber treatments, paints and coatings 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M
8. Construction Phase WHS Management (Including Dismantling)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate site-specific WHS planning for installation, refurbishment or dismantling activities Uncontrolled public access to active construction zones in parks, schools or aquatic centres Poor coordination of high-risk construction work such as excavations, work at height and electrical tasks Insufficient management of environmental hazards such as noise, dust, runoff and waste from demolition of old equipment Failure to manage utilities and underground services near play and soft fall areas 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M
9. Soft Fall Systems, Surfaces & Sport-Playground Interfaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorrect design or installation of impact-attenuating surfaces resulting in inadequate fall protection 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degradation of soft fall materials due to UV, water saturation, tree root movement or heavy use Poor drainage causing pooling, slipperiness and microbial growth on soft fall and aquatic surfaces Interfaces between soft fall and hardscape creating trip hazards or abrupt level changes Inappropriate surface selection for sports-playground combination areas leading to joint injuries or slips 		[REDACTED]	
10. Public & Child Safety Management (Operational Phase)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate control of public access during maintenance, inspections or partial shutdowns Lack of clear user information about intended age range, supervision requirements and behavioural rules Insufficient supervision of high-risk elements such as aquatic play structures, high platforms and moving components Inadequate emergency access routes for ambulance or fire services Failure to consider children with disability or reduced mobility in design and signage 		[REDACTED]	2M
11. Inspection, Safety Checks & Preventive Maintenance Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of a structured inspection and maintenance regime for playground and aquatic equipment Failure to detect wear, vandalism, corrosion, structural fatigue or loose fixings before they cause injury Reactive-only maintenance leading to prolonged exposure to known defects Poor recordkeeping preventing demonstration of due diligence after incidents 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate maintenance of aquatic systems resulting in poor water quality, biofilm, or Legionella risk 		[REDACTED]	
12. Water Quality, Hygiene & Infection Control (Aquatic Play)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Microbial contamination of aquatic play systems leading to skin, respiratory or gastrointestinal illness Legionella growth in warm, stagnant water or poorly maintained pipework, tanks and spray features Inadequate water turnover, filtration and disinfection capacity for peak load conditions Chemical dosing errors (over- or under-dosing) causing burns, respiratory irritation or ineffective disinfection Cross-contamination between aquatic play, surrounding soft fall and nearby amenities 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M
13. Treehouse, Elevated & Complex Structure Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structural failure of elevated structures due to overloading, decay, corrosion or poor construction Falls from height due to inadequate guardrails, barriers or non-compliant openings Movement or failure of supporting trees or foundations over time Limited access for inspection of critical structural elements Improper adaptation of natural features (trees, rocks, slopes) into play elements without engineering verification 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M
14. Environmental Conditions, Weather & Site Stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extreme weather events (storms, high winds, heatwaves, heavy rain) damaging play equipment and structures 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L

SAMPLE

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erosion, subsidence or undermining of foundations and soft fall due to poor drainage or ground movement Falling branches or tree failure impacting play zones or aquatic infrastructure Exposure of buried services or hazardous materials over time Inadequate response to post-event hazards after storms or flooding 		[REDACTED]	
15. Incident Reporting, Investigation & Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under-reporting of incidents, near misses or public complaints related to playground and aquatic play safety Inadequate incident investigation failing to identify root causes and system weaknesses Lack of feedback loops from incidents into design, procurement, training and maintenance systems Failure to meet notifiable incident requirements under the WHS Act and Regulation Repetition of similar incidents across different sites due to poor organisational learning 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L
16. Documentation, Handover & Lifecycle Asset Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incomplete or inaccurate as-built information and manuals provided to asset owners Loss of critical safety information over the life of the playground due to poor document control Poor alignment between design intent, installed equipment, and maintenance programs Failure to plan for end-of-life replacement, refurbishment or safe dismantling of play equipment 	3H	[REDACTED]	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate communication of residual risks and operating limitations to facility operators 		<div style="background-color: black; height: 15px; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; height: 15px; width: 100%;"></div>	

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/factsheets-and-resources/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.