Real Estate 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

	SCOPE OF WORKS
Client:	
Project Name:	
Project Address:	
Project Manager:	
Contact Phone:	
Date Risk Assessment supplied to Project Manager:	

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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			
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	Review before work start	
UNLIKELY	1 LOW	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	2M MODERATE	Ensure control measures in place.	
RARE	1 LOW	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	1L LOW	Monitor and keep records.	

Hierarchy of Controls (pyramid):
- **Elimination** — Remove the hazard.
- **Substitution** — Replace the hazard.
- Isolation — Isolate People from the hazard
- **Engineering** — Isolate the hazard
- **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 the 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. WHS Governance, Duties and Consultation	• Lack of clear allocation of WHS duties between officers, PCBU, property managers and sales staff • Inadequate consultation with workers, contractors and agents on WHS issues in real estate activities • Failure to consider WHS obligations when entering unusual or high-risk sites (abandoned, cluttered, crime-prone or stigmatised properties) • No structured process to identify and control psychosocial and physical risks associated with client interactions, inspections and auctions • Inadequate integration of WHS Act 2011 requirements into business processes, franchise arrangements and agency agreements • Poor incident reporting culture leading to under-reporting of threats, near misses, aggressive behaviour and property-related hazards	4A	• Establish and document a WHS governance framework that clearly describes PCBU, officer and worker duties in accordance with WHS Act 2011, including real estate-specific activities such as inspections, auctions and open houses • Implement a formal WHS consultation procedure requiring regular toolbox meetings and safety forums with sales agents, property managers, auctioneers and administrative staff • Embed WHS risk assessment requirements into listing, property management and auction set-up processes, including a pre-engagement risk screening of unusual, abandoned, cluttered or stigmatised properties • Develop a documented WHS policy that specifically addresses community-based work, lone work, client-facing risks, and work in private dwellings and public spaces • Implement a confidential reporting system (digital and phone-based) for incidents, near misses, threats, harassment, assault, dog incidents and property access issues, with clear escalation pathways • Ensure officers conduct and document due diligence activities (review of WHS performance data, audits, consultation records and risk registers) in line with WHS Act 2011 s27 • Include WHS performance and incident trends as standing agenda items in management meetings and board reports • Periodically review and update WHS policies and procedures to reflect legislative changes, regulator guidance and industry best practice for real estate activities	2M
2. Worker Competency, Induction and Training Systems	• Inadequate induction of new agents, property managers and auction staff into WHS expectations and field safety procedures • Lack of competency-based training in conflict de-escalation, dealing with aggressive owners, uncooperative tenants and distressed buyers or sellers • Insufficient training in hazard recognition for cluttered, abandoned, crime-prone or poorly lit properties and night-time inspections • No structured training in traffic and crowd interaction risks when directing vehicles or managing open house and auction crowds • Failure to train workers on legal duties, personal due diligence and reporting requirements under WHS Act 2011	4A	• Implement a formal WHS induction program for all workers and regular contractors that covers field work risks, lone work protocols, emergency communication systems and incident reporting processes • Introduce mandatory training modules in conflict resolution, managing aggressive or uncooperative persons, and safe disengagement techniques, delivered by qualified providers • Provide competency-based training on identifying and assessing property hazards such as structural damage, trip hazards, cluttered environments, aggressive animals, abandoned premises and crime-related risks • Deliver practical training on safe crowd management, basic traffic interaction and boundary setting during open homes and auctions (without attempting to act as traffic controllers beyond competency and legal limits) • Train staff on psychosocial risk management, including stress from disputes, harassment, threats and socially sensitive situations (e.g. haunted or stigmatised properties) • Ensure all workers receive training on their WHS roles and responsibilities under WHS Act 2011, including duty to cooperate with policies and procedures • Maintain a central training register with dates, content and competency outcomes, and link retraining requirements to incident investigations and performance reviews	2M

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	• Inadequate refresher training or failure to capture competency gaps identified after incidents or near misses		• Schedule periodic refresher training and toolbox talks to reinforce critical safety protocols, seasonal risks (early darkness, extreme heat) and lessons learned from recent incidents	
3. Trip, Fall and Structural Safety in Properties	• Unassessed access to cluttered properties with obstructed pathways, unstable furniture and concealed trip hazards • Entry to abandoned or poorly maintained properties with structural damage, unsecured openings, unsafe stairs, rotten floors or broken balustrades • Poor lighting in hallways, stairwells and external paths, particularly during night-time property viewings • Lack of a systematic process to collect and communicate information about known property hazards from owners or landlords prior to inspections • No formal requirement to restrict or prohibit access to unsafe areas within properties during tours and open homes • Failure to consider safe access needs for clients with mobility issues, increasing likelihood of falls and liability risk	4A	• Implement a pre-inspection property risk screening checklist to be completed by agents or property managers, addressing clutter, structural condition, lighting, utilities, and access routes • Require property owners or landlords to disclose known hazards in writing as part of listing and management agreements, with explicit questions about structural and maintenance issues • Develop a system to flag high-risk properties in the agency database and require higher-level approval or additional controls before inspection proceed • Establish procedures for restricting access to hazardous areas (e.g. locking doors, signage, barriers or clearly communicated verbal instructions to visitors) when hazards cannot be immediately rectified • Mandate daytime inspections as the default, with night-time inspections subject to additional risk assessment including lighting adequacy and safe parking/access arrangements • Provide site risk assessment templates to be completed on first entry to abandoned, repossessed or long vacant properties, with options to abort entry if minimum safety conditions are not met • Implement a communication process so that known property hazards are included in open home notices, internal inspection notes and briefing emails to attending staff • Ensure procedures require consideration of client mobility needs, and where properties are not suitable, arrange alternate viewing options (videos, virtual tours) rather than unsafe access	2M
4. Aggressive Persons, Conflict and Psychosocial Risk Management	• Verbal abuse, threats or physical assault from property owners approached unexpectedly, uncooperative tenants, disgruntled buyers or sellers or auction attendees • Escalation of disputes between buyers and sellers during negotiations, inspections or auctions, creating safety and psychological harm risks • Inadequate systems to identify clients with a history of threatening or violent behaviour and to manage future interactions • Lone attendance at properties or auctions where there is an elevated risk of conflict or criminal behaviour	4A		2M

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	• Psychological injury arising from repeated exposure to conflict, abuse, high-pressure negotiations and emotionally charged interactions (e.g. mortgagee sales, family disputes, stigmatised properties) • Lack of structured debriefing, EAP access and escalation pathways following serious incidents or threats				
5. Lone Work, Agent Assisted Tours and Remote Attendance	• Agents conducting private tours or inspections alone with unknown clients in isolated properties or at night • Lack of effective monitoring and check-in systems for staff working away from the office, including during agent assisted tours and after-hours inspections • Inadequate pre-screening of clients before arranging private showings, including verification of identity and contact details • Difficulty summoning assistance quickly in the event of medical emergencies, personal threats or entrapment (e.g. property lockout during remote visits • Failure to adequately brief staff about specific risks at remote, abandoned, or crime-prone properties before lone attendance	4A			2M
6. Access Control, Keys, Security and Property Lockouts	• Poor key management systems leading to lost keys, unauthorised access or staff being locked inside or outside properties • Inadequate communication with tenants and owners about inspection times causing confrontations, refusals of entry or lockouts	3H			1L

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	• Agents entering properties where intruders, squatters or unauthorised occupants are present, particularly in abandoned or repossessed premises • Failure to secure properties properly after inspections or auctions, increasing risk of crime and liability • Lack of procedure for safely handling property lockouts where staff may attempt risky access methods (climbing fences, windows, etc.)			
7. Animal Management and Dangerous Dogs	• Entry to properties housing aggressive dogs or other animals without prior warning or appropriate controls • Tenants or owners failing to secure animals during inspections, open homes or auctions despite prior agreement • Lack of reporting and flagging systems for previous dog incidents or animal-related near misses at a property • Agents and contractors not trained in recognising animal behaviour warning signs or safe withdrawal techniques	3H		1L
8. Crowd, Traffic Interface and Event Management (Open Houses & Auctions)	• Overcrowding at open houses or auctions leading to crushing, slips, trips and inability to evacuate in emergencies	4A		2M

I notice there's a watermark "SAMPLE" across the page and the control measures column is redacted/blacked out.

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	• Agents informally directing traffic or pedestrians near busy roads without adequate competence or controls • Inadequate planning for vehicle and pedestrian access at uncertain auction locations, including verges and shared driveways • Failure to monitor and control crowd behaviour, including disputes, aggressive bidders, or parties under the influence of alcohol or drugs • Insufficient control over entry numbers during periods requiring social distancing, leading to health risks and non-compliance with public health requirements			
9. Health, Infectious Disease and Social Distancing Controls	• Transmission of infectious diseases during open houses, auctions and inspections due to close contact, shared surfaces and poor ventilation • Inconsistent application of social distancing measures leading to worker and client exposure and reputational damage • Lack of systems to adjust property viewing processes during outbreaks or public health emergencies • Pressure on staff to proceed with in-person events despite illness or public health advice, due to sales or landlord expectations	3H		1L

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10. Environmental, Crime and Location-Based Risks	• Presenting properties in dodgy or crime-prone areas exposing workers and clients to assaults, theft, vandalism or car break-ins • Attending home auctions at uncertain or ad-hoc locations without adequate prior site scouting and risk assessment • Viewings at night with poor street lighting, isolated parking and limited passive surveillance increasing vulnerability to crime • Exposure to illicit activities, drug paraphernalia or unsafe by-products in certain properties, including abandoned or stigmatised premises	4A		2M
11. Property Condition, Stigmatised and Haunted Properties	• Entering stigmatised, haunted or previously crime-scene properties without assessing psychological effects on staff and clients • Potential for anti-social behaviour, trespassers or thrill-seekers at properties with reputations for paranormal or criminal events • Failure to communicate relevant non-physical risks and sensitivities to staff, leading to distress or moral injury • Reputational and legal risks if sensitive property histories are mismanaged, adding stress for agents and property managers	3H		1L
12. Traffic Interface and Parking for Staff and Clients	• Staff and clients crossing busy roads or manoeuvring vehicles in congested streets near open homes and auctions	3H		1L

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	• Use of informal parking areas such as nature strips, shared driveways or narrow laneways leading to collisions or conflicts with neighbours • Agents attempting to manage on-street parking and traffic flow without appropriate systems or authority • Inadequate guidance to clients about safe parking locations, increasing roadside risk and community complaints			
13. Remote Communication, Emergency Response and Duress Systems	• Inability of field staff to quickly summon help during threatening situations, medical emergencies or accidents at properties or auctions • Lack of standardised emergency response protocols for various incident types (assault, medical event, fire, structural collapse, crowd safety) • Poor reliability or coverage of communication systems in remote or underground car park locations • Inadequate recording and review of emergency and duress activations to improve future responses	4A		2M
14. Legal, Financial and Valuation-Related Stressors	• Legal implications of incorrect property valuations causing financial disputes and claims against agents, leading to stress and psychosocial harm • Pressure from vendors, developers or buyers to manipulate or rush valuations and marketing statements, increasing ethical strain on staff	3H		1L

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	• Inadequate systems for peer review and quality assurance of valuations, appraisals and marketing materials • Lack of clarity on professional indemnity coverage and incident management processes for valuation-related complaints and litigation				
15. Documentation, Information Management and Continuous Improvement	• Incomplete or inconsistent documentation of property risk assessments, incidents and control measures • Failure to share critical safety information about properties, clients or events between sales, property management and administration teams • Out-of-date procedures remaining in circulation, leading to inconsistent or unsafe practices • Limited analysis of incident data preventing identification of issues such as repeating attacks, crime hotspots or recurrent disputes				1L

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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/legislati
Codes of Practice NSW: https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/resource-library/list-of-codes-of-practi

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/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