Safety Harnesses			
Business Name:		ABN:	
Business Address:			
Contact Person:	Phone:	Email:	

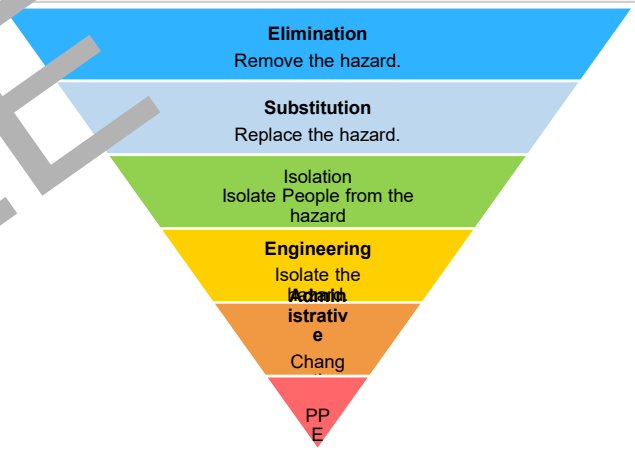
THIS RISK ASSESSMENT IS APPROVED BY THE PCBU OF THE PROJECT		
Under the Work Health and Safety Regulation (WHS Regulation), a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) is required to ensure that a RISK ASSESSMENT is prepared before the proposed work starts.		
Full Name:		
Signature:	Title:	Date:

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. Governance, Legal Compliance and PCBU Duties	• Lack of formal WHS governance framework for fall-prevention and harness systems leading to unclear roles, resources and priorities • Failure to identify and comply with WHS Act 2011, WHS Regulation 2011 and relevant Codes of Practice and Australian Standards (e.g. AS/NZS 1891 series for industrial fall-arrest systems and devices) • No documented harness-specific policy or procedure, resulting in inconsistent decisions about selection, use, inspection and disposal • Inadequate consultation with workers and Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) regarding harness use, risks and controls • Failure to ensure that Persons Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBUs) with shared duties (e.g. host PCBU, principal contractor, labour hire) coordinate harness-related risk controls • Insufficient resourcing (time, budget, competent personnel) allocated to establish and maintain safe ... for harness management	High	• Develop, approve and implement a fall-prev...n ...d safety harness governance framework aligned with the WHS Act 2011, WHS Regulation 2011 ... current Safe Work Australia and state/territory guidance • Create a documented organis...nal policy for wo...ght and harness systems that clearly outlines principles of hierarc...ntrol, ...cision-making responsibilities and minimum requirements before harnesses are c...sidered • Undertake a...rmal legal ...d standa... ...pliance review (e.g. AS/NZS 1891 series, AS/NZS 1891.4 for sel...tion, us...and m...tenance) at least every two years or when regulations or guidance change • Esta...s a WHS ...mittee or designated WHS governance group with clear terms of reference to overse...ha...ess sy...m risks and performance indicators • Imple...nt a...cumen...d process for consultation, cooperation and coordination between PCBUs on all ...ojects ...here ...rnesses may be used, with written agreements describing who controls what • Ens...e PCBU allocates sufficient budget, staffing and time for competent WHS advice, training, ...spectio...rograms, record-keeping systems and periodic audits relating to harnesses • ...tegrate harness governance requirements into the organisation's WHS management system, including policy, planning, implementation, verification and management review cycles	Medium
2. Risk Management, Planning and System Design	• Failure to apply the hierarchy of control, resulting in over-...liance ...n harnesses instead of higher-order controls such as elimination, substitution, or engineered fall-prevention systems • Inconsistent or informal risk assessments for tasks where harnesses are proposed, leading to uncontrolled exposure to fall-from-height risks • Harness systems not integrated into design and planning stages of projects, resulting in ad hoc or unsuitable anchor locations and access arrangements • Lack of documented criteria for when harnesses are permitted, restricted or	High	• Adopt a formal organisational standard that harnesses are a last resort control within the hierarchy, to be used only after practicable higher-order controls have been considered and documented as not reasonably practicable • Implement a structured risk management procedure requiring documented task-specific risk assessments before harness use, including identification of fall distances, clearance, pendulum risk and rescue options • Require inclusion of fall-prevention and harness system considerations in project design, procurement and planning phases (e.g. design reviews, constructability reviews, safe access and anchor point layout design) • Develop written criteria and decision trees for when harness-based fall-arrest, restraint or work positioning systems are allowed, including defined approval levels and documentation requirements • Mandate review and sign-off of harness-related risk assessments by a competent person (e.g. WHS advisor, engineer, or height safety specialist) for high-risk construction or complex tasks	Medium

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	prohibited, causing arbitrary decisions across worksites • Inadequate assessment of environmental and site-specific factors (weather, corrosive atmospheres, sharps, chemical exposure, confined spaces) during planning of harness use • No process to reassess risks when tasks change, new equipment is introduced or incident learnings identify new hazards		• Establish triggers for formal risk review (e.g. significant change in task scope, introduction of new harness types, change in anchor systems, incidents, near misses or regulatory updates) • Ensure all risk assessments explicitly consider environmental conditions, interaction with other plant, safe access/egress, and rescue feasibility before approving harness use	
3. Procurement, Selection and Specification of Harness Systems	• Procurement of non-compliant or poor-quality harnesses, lanyards and connectors that do not meet AS/NZS 1891 requirements • Purchase decisions based purely on cost without considering suitability for the task, user ergonomics, compatibility with existing anchor and rescue systems, and likely environmental exposure • Lack of standardisation across sites leading to multiple incompatible harness types and components increasing potential for misuse or incorrect assembly • Failure to obtain manufacturer instructions, inspection criteria, and traceability information at the time of purchase • Inadequate specifications for harness accessories (lanyards, energy absorbers, connectors, rope lines, self-retracting lifelines) leading to mismatched or unsafe combinations • Purchasing by staff without competency in height safety, resulting in equipment that is not fit for purpose	High	• Develop a corporate procurement standard for harness systems requiring compliance with relevant Australian Standards (AS/NZS 1891 series) and any additional company-specific performance criteria • Standardise approved harness models and associated components (lanyards, connectors, fall-arrest devices) where practicable, limiting the range of equipment in use and simplifying training and inspection • Require pre-purchase technical review by a competent height safety specialist to confirm suitability and compatibility with existing anchors, lifelines and rescue equipment • Specify that suppliers must provide certificates of conformity, manufacturer instructions, inspection and retirement criteria, and serialised labelling for each harness and component • Include environmental, ergonomic and user needs (size range, comfort, adjustability, specialised tasks such as rope access or confined space) in procurement specifications • Establish preferred supplier arrangements with quality-assured providers who can demonstrate ongoing technical support, recall processes and compliance with regulatory changes • Ensure purchasing procedures clearly prohibit the acquisition of second-hand harness equipment and control any online or ad hoc purchasing outside approved channels	Medium
4. Inventory Management, Registration and Traceability	• No centralised register of harnesses and associated components, resulting in unknown age, usage history and inspection status	High	[redacted]	Low

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	• Inability to trace specific harnesses during recalls, incidents or defect notifications • Multiple workers sharing untracked harnesses with no allocation responsibility, increasing the risk of damage going unreported • Uncontrolled introduction of personal or contractor-owned harnesses that do not meet organisational standards or inspection regimes • Loss or theft of harnesses leading to continued use of uninspected or expired equipment • Failure to monitor service life and cumulative exposure (e.g. to UV, chemicals, abrasive environments) across the harness fleet		[redacted]	
5. Inspection, Maintenance and Retirement Systems	• Irregular or undocumented inspections resulting in damaged, worn or out-of-date harnesses remaining in service • Reliance solely on informal pre-use checks with no schedule[redacted]iled inspections by a com[redacted]tent person • Inspection criteri[redacted]ot aligned with manufacturer instru[redacted]ons[redacted]/NZ 1891.4, leading to inc[redacted]sistent judgements on defects and retireme[redacted] • Inadequate processes f[redacted]ng defective harnesses from service and ensuring they are not inadvertently reused • No documented service life or retirement policy, creating confusion about when harnesses must be discarded even if they appear visually sound • Lack of records to demonstrate compliance during regulator inspections or incident investigations	High	[redacted]	Medium

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SPECIFIC WORK STEPS	HAZARDS THAT MAY ARISE	INITIAL RISK	SPECIFIC MEASURES TO BE PUT IN PLACE TO ELIMINATE OR CONTROL THE RISKS	RESIDUAL RISK
6. Training, Competency and Authorisation	• Workers using harnesses without adequate theoretical understanding of fall dynamics, clearance requirements, rescue implications and equipment limitations • Training focused only on basic fitting with limited coverage of organisational procedures, hierarchy of control and when harnesses must not be used • No formal assessment of competency, leading to assumptions that training attendance equals skill and understanding • Supervisors and managers not adequately trained to verify harness use, approve systems of work or challenge unsafe practices • Infrequent or ad hoc refresher training resulting in skill fade, particularly for infrequent harness users • Contractors operating under different training standards or jurisdictions with r verification by the PCBU	High	[redacted]	Medium
7. Procedures, Documentation and Information Management	• Absence of clear, accessible procedures for sele[redacted] adjustment, connection, inspection a storage of harness systems at an organisational level • Procedures that are overly generic or copied from other contexts and not tailored to the organisation's specific plant, structures and tasks • Workers unable to readily access current harness procedures, manufacturer instructions or risk assessments at the point of use • Outdated or conflicting documentation between sites, contractors and internal departments • Poor document control resulting in continued use of superseded	Medium	[redacted]	Low

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	instructions that do not reflect current legal or technical requirements		[redacted]	
8. Supervision, Monitoring and Enforcement	• Inadequate supervisory oversight of harness system use resulting in non-compliance with organisational procedures and risk controls • Supervisors prioritising production targets over safe use of harnesses and fall-prevention systems • Failure to detect unsafe practices such as incorrect connection points, unsuitable anchor use or bypassing of higher-order controls • Inconsistent enforcement of harness rules across worksites leading to a culture of non-compliance or mixed expectations • Limited field verification of inspection status, equipment condition and corre configuration by competent persons	High	[redacted]	Medium
9. Emergency Planning, Rescue and Incident Management	• Harness use autho d without a feasible and docu nted rescue plan for a suspended work following r incapacitation • Rescue equipment not compatible th the harness and anchor systems use, or not readily available a vant locations • Workers and supervisors not competent in implementing rescue procedures, leading to delayed or unsafe rescue attempts • Failure to consider suspension intolerance, medical conditions and communication limitations in emergency planning • Inadequate post-incident processes for harness quarantine, investigation and system improvement	High	[redacted]	Medium

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
			[redacted]	
10. Contractor, Labour Hire and Third-Party Management	• Contractors and labour hire workers using harness systems that do not align with the PCBU's standards, inspection regimes or rescue arrangements • Assumptions that another PCBU is managing harness risks, leading to gaps in control where responsibilities overlap • Inconsistent induction, training verification and supervision requirements between the host PCBU and contractors • Limited visibility of contractor harness inspection records, competency evidence and incident history • Third-party maintenance providers or installers of harness and anchor systems not being properly vetted for competence and compliance	High	[redacted]	Medium
11. Storage, Handling and Environmental Management of Harnesses	• Improper storage of harnesses (e.g. in direct sunlight, damp locations, or near chemicals) leading to degradation and reduced strength • Harnesses transported loosely with tools and sharp objects causing cuts, abrasion or contamination may go unnoticed • No system for managing exposure to chemicals, contaminants or extreme temperatures that may compromise harness integrity • Temporary site storage areas not secured, allowing unauthorised access, misuse or theft of harnesses	Medium	[redacted]	Low
12. Consultation, Worker Engagement and Safety Culture	• Lack of meaningful worker and HSR involvement in decisions about harness systems, leading to impractical procedures and low buy-in	Medium	[redacted]	Low

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SPECIFIC WORK STEPS	HAZARDS THAT MAY ARISE	INITIAL RISK	SPECIFIC MEASURES TO BE PUT IN PLACE TO ELIMINATE OR CONTROL THE RISKS	RESIDUAL RISK
	• Workers reluctant to report harness defects, near misses or procedural issues due to fear of blame or disciplinary action • Poor safety culture where shortcuts involving harness use (or non-use) are normalised and unchallenged • Insufficient mechanisms for workers to provide feedback on harness comfort, usability and suitability, leading to non-compliance or unofficial modifications		[redacted]	
13. Performance Monitoring, Audit and Continuous Improvement	• No systematic monitoring of harness-related leading and lagging indicators, resulting in slow identification of deteriorating controls • Incident, near miss and inspection da not analysed to identify recurring harness system issue • Audit findings no cted upon or tracked to comple , leadi at non-conformances • Failure to keep harness policies a systems aligned with evolving in try practice, technology and re atory expectations	Medium	[redacted]	Low

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