

Scaffolding

| | | | |
|-------------------|--------|--------|--|
| 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 before 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. Governance, WHS Duties and Contractor Management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of clear allocation of PCBU duties between client, principal contractor, scaffolding company and labour hire providers leading to gaps in scaffold safety management Inadequate WHS policy framework for scaffolding activities, including bird's nest (tube-and-coupler) systems, resulting in inconsistent standards on different projects Poor prequalification and selection of scaffolding contractors, including no verification of high risk work (HRW) licences, insurances, and WHS management systems Insufficient oversight of scaffolding subcontractors, leading to uncontrolled variations to scaffold design, loading, or access arrangements No formal process for consultation, cooperation and coordination as required under the WHS Act 2011 between PCBUs sharing a workplace Failure to monitor legal and standards updates (e.g. WHS Regulations AS/NZS 1576, Safe Work Australia Codes of Practice for construction work and managing the risk of falls) Inadequate incident reporting and investigation processes, leading to repeat systemic failures in scaffold planning, design and inspection | High | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and implement a documented WHS governance framework that specifically addresses scaffolding activities, including bird's nest scaffolding, and clearly references obligations under the WHS Act 2011 and WHS Regulations Define and document roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for scaffolding safety across all PCBUs (client, principal contractor, scaffolding contractor, engineering designer and labour hire) in project WHS management plans and contracts Implement a formal contractor prequalification process requiring scaffolding contractors to demonstrate a compliant WHS management system, evidence of HRW scaffolding licences, training records, insurance, and history of regulatory action Include scaffold-specific WHS requirements in contract documents, such as design certification, inspection regime, training system, engineering sign-off for bird's nest scaffolds and change management expectations Establish structured consultation, cooperation and coordination arrangements (e.g. WHS coordination meetings, pre-start coordination, design review workshops) so all PCBUs understand and manage scaffold interfaces with other trades and plant Implement a governance schedule for periodic audits of scaffolding contractors, including review of SWMS, risk assessments, inspection reports, handover certificates, design variations and close-out of corrective actions Develop and enforce an incident and near miss reporting procedure for scaffold-related events, with root cause analysis, lessons-learned communication and verification that corrective actions are implemented across all projects Assign a competent person (e.g. WHS advisor or construction manager) to monitor updates to legislation, standards and codes relevant to scaffolding and integrate changes into organisational procedures and training Require senior management review of scaffolding performance data (incident trends, non-conformances, audit findings) and ensure decisions and resourcing for improvement are documented in management review minutes | Medium |
| 2. Design, Engineering and Configuration of Bird's Nest Scaffolding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of non-engineered or generic 'one-size-fits-all' designs for complex bird's nest scaffolding where loads, spans and tie patterns vary significantly Inadequate structural assessment of loads from trades, materials, wind, debris netting, shade cloth and hoists leading to scaffold overloading or instability Insufficient allowance in the design for complex geometry, changes in level, | High | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a formal scaffolding design and verification procedure requiring bird's nest scaffolding to be designed by a competent person and, where outside standard configurations, checked or certified by a suitably qualified engineer Mandate the use of detailed scaffold design documentation for bird's nest scaffolds, including plans, elevations, load classes, maximum bay loads, tie patterns, bracing details, access and egress points, and no-go or restricted modification zones Integrate scaffold design into the overall project design management process, ensuring early involvement of the scaffolding designer in constructability reviews and clash detection with other structures and temporary works | Medium |

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| | <p>obstacles and interfaces with existing structures that are characteristic of bird's nest scaffolds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No formal design verification or sign-off by a suitably qualified engineer for bird's nest scaffolds that exceed prescriptive limits or standard configurations Poor documentation and communication of design intent (e.g. missing design drawings, load ratings, tie layouts, bracing requirements and restricted use zones) Uncontrolled design changes on site (e.g. removals of standards, ledgers, ties or braces to create access for trades) without engineering review or updated documentation Absence of clear engineering criteria for foundation and support conditions, including bearing capacity, settlement surcharge loads and proximity to excavations or services Inadequate consideration of interaction with other temporary works (scaffolding, shoring, cranes, hoists) causing unanticipated loads or strikes on the scaffold | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define clear engineering criteria and minimum requirements for support conditions in design procedures (e.g. ground bearing pressures, soleboard and baseplate arrangements, verification of existing structures used to support or tie the scaffold) Establish a controlled design change management process that requires any modification to the bird's nest scaffold outside the original design (removal of components, change in height, additional loads) to be assessed and approved by the designer or engineer, with revised drawings issued Include wind loading, sheeting or containment systems, and potential impact loads (e.g. from vehicles or plant) as mandatory considerations in design checklists and engineering calculations Require formal design handover from the scaffolding designer/engineer to the scaffolding contractor and principal contractor, including briefing sessions to explain design assumptions, constraints and prohibited changes Maintain a central, version controlled repository (electronic document management system) for all scaffold design certifications, calculations and change approvals, with site access via tablets or printed controlled copies Ensure organisational standards reference relevant Australian Standards and codes, such as AS/NZS 1576 series and the Safe Work Australia Code of Practice for Managing the Risk of Falls at Workplaces, and that any variations are subject to documented engineering justification | |
| 3. Procurement of Scaffold Components and Plant | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement of incompatible or substandard bird's nest scaffold components (e.g. mixed couplers, standards, ledgers) that have not been assessed for compatibility and load ratings Use of damaged, corroded or modified scaffold equipment due to inadequate inspection and rejection processes in the supply chain Reliance on hire companies without clear specifications for bird's nest scaffold requirements, design loads and compliance with relevant Australian Standards Insufficient control over the procurement of ancillary items critical to | High | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a scaffold procurement standard that specifies minimum technical requirements for bird's nest scaffolding components, including compliance with AS/NZS 1576 and documented load ratings and compatibility Establish approved supplier lists for scaffolding and hire companies, based on prequalification that includes product certification, quality assurance processes, and evidence of compliance with Australian Standards Introduce a formal goods-receiving inspection process, including checklists for scaffold components, to identify and quarantine damaged, corroded, mismatched or altered equipment before it enters the usable stock Implement an asset management and tracking system (e.g. barcoding or RFID) for scaffold components and associated plant, recording inspections, maintenance actions and retirement dates Specify in procurement contracts that only compatible systems may be used together, and prohibit unauthorised modification, welding, drilling or on-site fabrication of structural scaffolding components | Medium |

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| | <p>scaffold safety (e.g. access ladders, stair modules, edge protection, mesh, ties and anchors)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate systems to track the age, inspection history and maintenance status of scaffold components and associated lifting equipment Procurement based solely on lowest cost rather than verified compliance, leading to counterfeit or non-conforming components in the system | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that procurement arrangements for access systems, edge protection, containment sheeting and lifting devices are integrated with the scaffold design so that all items meet the required loads and interfaces Include WHS and compliance performance criteria in supplier evaluation and ongoing performance reviews, with the ability to suspend or remove suppliers who provide non-conforming scaffold equipment Provide purchasing and project staff with guidance documents and training on recognising compliant scaffold systems, documentation requirements and typical indicators of counterfeit or substandard components | |
| 4. Competency, Licensing and Training Systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scaffold erection, alteration and dismantling work being supervised or undertaken by persons without the required high risk work scaffolding licence or relevant level of licence (basic, intermediate, advanced) for bird's nest work Supervisors and engineers not adequately trained in the specific risks and design principles associated with bird's nest scaffolding configurations Lack of structured induction and refresher training covering specific scaffold procedures including change control, tagging, exclusion zones and reporting of defects Inadequate assessment of competence for workers who claim prior experience, leading to unsafe work practices being imported from other worksites or countries No formal program to maintain currency of competence, resulting in out-of-date knowledge of regulations, standards and organisational scaffold procedures Insufficient training for other trades and site personnel who use or work beneath/adjacent to bird's nest scaffolds on safe use rules, load limits and reporting processes | High | <p>[REDACTED]</p> | Medium |
| 5. Planning, Sequencing and | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient planning of where and when bird's nest scaffolding is required, | High | | Medium |

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| Interfaces with Other Work | <p>leading to rushed installation or changes under time pressure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor coordination of scaffold erection with other high risk construction activities (e.g. crane lifts, formwork, demolition) resulting in congestion, clashes and increased risk of falls or impacts • No systematic assessment of load demands from multiple trades using the scaffold simultaneously, leading to unplanned overloading of platforms and standards • Inadequate planning of access and egress routes, emergency escape and rescue arrangements within complex bird's nest scaffold structures • Failure to consider changes in building geometry or construction sequence that require progressive adjustments to scaffold design and ties • Lack of documented interface management between scaffold activities and temporary works, vehicle isolation, vehicle movement and public protection systems | | [REDACTED] | |
| 6. Inspection, Handover, Tagging and Ongoing Verification | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of formalised pre-handover inspections and handover certificates for newly erected or significantly altered bird's nest scaffolds • Inadequate systems for periodic scaffold inspections, including missed weekly or post-event checks, leading to undetected deterioration or unauthorised alterations • No standardised scaffold tagging or status identification system, causing confusion over whether specific sections are safe and authorised for use • Poor documentation of inspection findings, corrective actions and re-inspections, making it difficult to | High | [REDACTED] | Low |

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| | <p>demonstrate due diligence under the WHS Act 2011</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to implement additional inspections after adverse weather, impact, structural changes or reported defects • Insufficient verification that defects identified in inspections are rectified in a timely manner and by competent scaffolders | | [REDACTED] | |
| 7. Change Management, Variations and Unauthorised Alterations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncontrolled removal of standards, ledgers, braces, ties or platforms by trades to facilitate their work, compromising structural integrity of bird's nest scaffolds • Informal on-site variations to scaffold layout or height that are not checked against the original design or re-engineered where required • Introduction of additional loads (e.g. cantilevered platforms, aerial hoists, chutes or plant) without reassessment of structural capacity • Lack of clear procedure for requesting and approving scaffold alterations, resulting in verbal instructions and undocumented changes • Poor communication of design changes or restricted use conditions to those who use or work near the scaffold • No mechanism for stopping work or locking out access when unapproved alterations are detected | High | [REDACTED] | Medium |
| 8. Load Management, Materials Handling and Overloading Controls | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systemic overloading of bird's nest scaffolds due to inadequate controls on the quantity and distribution of materials stored on platforms | High | [REDACTED] | Medium |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of clear communication of scaffold load classes and maximum allowable bay loads to supervisors, trades and delivery personnel Incompatible materials handling methods (e.g. cranes, telehandlers, hoists) imposing dynamic or point loads not considered in design Uncoordinated deliveries leading to stockpiling of materials on scaffold decks as a default storage area No monitoring system for compliance with load limits or for detection of progressive overloading across multiple levels Inadequate controls for handling debris and waste on or through bird's nest scaffolds, contributing to slips, trips, falling objects and unplanned loads | | [REDACTED] | |
| 9. Environmental, Site Conditions and External Impacts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate assessment of ground conditions or supporting structure capacity prior to erecting bird's nest scaffolds, leading to settlement, subsidence or structural failure Exposure of scaffolds to high wind storms or coastal environments without appropriate design or operational controls Proximity of scaffolds to traffic routes, mobile plant, forklifts or cranes without physical protection, increasing impact or strike risks Erection of scaffolds near overhead powerlines, live services or public thoroughfares without suitable separation, isolation or protection measures built into planning and design Insufficient management of water run-off, erosion or undermining of foundations around scaffold footings | High | [REDACTED] | Medium |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited lighting, poor housekeeping and debris accumulation around the base and access points of bird's nest scaffolds, creating slip, trip and impact risks | | [REDACTED] | |
| 10. Emergency Planning, Rescue and Incident Management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of a scaffold-specific emergency and rescue plan for falls, collapses or medical events occurring on or within bird's nest scaffolds Over-reliance on public emergency services without considering realistic response times or access constraints within complex scaffold structures Poor communication systems for raising alarms from remote or enclosed scaffold locations, particularly on large or multi-level bird's nest configurations Lack of training and drills for workers and supervisors on scaffold emergency procedures and the use of rescue equipment No process for temporarily closing or restricting scaffold use following an incident, near miss or adverse weather until it has been inspected and verified as safe Inadequate post-incident investigation and learning processes, leading to recurrence of systemic weaknesses in scaffold management | High | [REDACTED] | Medium |
| | | | | |

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/laws-and-compliance/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.