

Seafood and Meat Processing and Manufacturing

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. WHS Governance, Leadership and Legal Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of clear WHS responsibilities across management and supervisors leading to unmanaged risks in seafood and meat processing Inadequate understanding of WHS Act 2011 and WHS Regulations, Food Standards Code and relevant Australian Standards Insufficient resourcing of WHS (time, budget, competent personnel) resulting in reactive rather than systematic risk management Poor consultation with health and safety representatives (HSRs) and workers, including culturally and linguistically diverse staff Failure to monitor changes in legislation, industry guidance and codes of practice relating to food and meat processing 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a documented WHS management system aligned with WHS Act 2011, WHS Regulations and AS/NZS ISO 45001, endorsed by senior management Define and document WHS roles, responsibilities and accountabilities in position descriptions and organisational charts, including PCBU, Officers and Workers Develop a WHS legal compliance register covering seafood and meat processing activities, plant, chemicals, refrigeration, knives, slice machines and vacuum sealers, and review at least annually Implement a WHS policy signed by the most senior officer, communicated to all workers and prominently displayed in the workplace and induction materials Set measurable WHS objectives and targets (e.g. manual handling injuries, laceration rates, notifiable incidents) and review performance at management review meetings Maintain a schedule for internal WHS audits and management reviews to verify implementation and effectiveness of WHS policies and procedures Establish formal WHS consultation arrangements (HSR elections, WHS committees, toolbox talks) with documented minutes and action tracking Ensure officers receive due diligence training to understand their WHS obligations specific to seafood and meat processing operations 	3H
2. Risk Management and Change Management Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No systematic process for identifying, assessing and controlling risks associated with knives, slicers, vacuum sealers and abalone processing equipment Reactive management of incidents instead of proactive hazard identification and risk control Poor management of change when new machinery, processes, chemicals or products are introduced (e.g. new vacuum sealer brand or blade types) Failure to consider cumulative risk (e.g. combination of cold environment, wet floors, sharp tools and high line speeds) Risk assessments not reviewed after incidents, near misses, plant modifications or regulatory changes 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a formal risk management procedure (hazard identification, risk assessment, control, review) consistent with WHS Regulations Part 3.1 Maintain a register of WHS risk assessments covering key risk categories: manual handling, knives, slicing machines, vacuum sealing, abalone processing, cold stores, maintenance and cleaning Introduce a documented Management of Change (MOC) process requiring WHS review before introducing or modifying plant, equipment, layout, process or work schedules Require pre-commissioning risk assessments for new or modified plant such as industrial slicers and vacuum sealers, involving operators, maintenance and HSRs Schedule periodic review of critical risk assessments (e.g. annually or after incidents) and ensure actions are recorded, prioritised and closed out Provide training for supervisors and key workers on basic risk management principles, including hierarchy of control and assessment of engineering versus administrative controls Integrate WHS risk assessment requirements into procurement, project planning and continuous improvement processes 	2M
3. Plant and Equipment Safety (Knives, Slicers and Vacuum Sealers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate guarding and interlocks on slicing machines leading to contact with moving blades 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and maintain plant risk assessments for all significant equipment including knives, meat and seafood slicers, vacuum sealers, conveyors, skinners and abalone shucking equipment, in accordance with WHS Regulations Chapter 5 (Plant) 	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exposure to live or raw aquatic organisms with zoonotic and marine pathogen risks Handling of shells and hard exoskeletons causing cuts, punctures and flying fragments Inadequate procedures for handling, storage and transport of live abalone and seafood leading to escapes, contamination or manual handling strain Lack of integration between aquaculture suppliers and processing plant WHS requirements 		[REDACTED]	
6. Cold Storage, Environmental Conditions and Slips Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prolonged exposure to cold and wet environments causing cold stress, reduced dexterity and increased error rates when using knives and slicers Condensation, wet floors, oil and product spills leading to slips, trips and falls Inadequate ventilation, contributing to condensation and fogging in processing and packing areas Poor control of noise from compressors, conveyors and high-speed processing lines Insufficient lighting in cold rooms and processing areas, affecting visual inspection and safe use of sharp equipment 	3H	[REDACTED]	2M

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7. Manual Handling, Ergonomics and Work Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repetitive cutting, lifting and packing tasks leading to musculoskeletal disorders • Poor workstation design for knife use, slicing operations and vacuum sealing (bench height, reach distances, product presentation) • Manual handling of heavy cartons, tubs, frozen blocks and bulk seafood and meat products • High line speeds and unrealistic production targets increasing unsafe body movements and short-cuts • Insufficient consideration of worker size, capability, and pre-existing injuries in task allocation 	4A	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M
8. Hazardous Chemicals, Cleaning and Disinfection Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of corrosive cleaning and sanitising agents in high-pressure washdown leading to chemical burns, inhalation or eye injuries • Inadequate chemical labelling, SDS availability and decanting • Poor segregation of chemicals from food products causing contamination risks • Incompatible chemical mixing (e.g. chlorinated detergents with acids) leading to toxic gas release • Lack of structured training and supervision for cleaning contractors and night shift cleaning crews 	3H	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	1L

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			[REDACTED]	
9. Food Safety, Contamination Control and Biosecurity Interface	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate integration of WHS risk controls with food safety programs (HACCP), leading to conflicting practices or gaps Cross-contamination between raw and cooked products, seafood and meat streams, or allergenic species Failure to manage biological hazards (bacteria, parasites, marine biotoxins) which also impact worker health Poor control of pests and vermin around processing and storage areas Insufficient traceability and recall systems impacting emergency response and worker communications 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L
10. Training, Competency and Supervision Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers operating knives and vacuum sealers without verified competency Over-reliance on informal buddy systems instead of structured training for high-risk tasks Insufficient literacy, language and numeracy consideration in training for a diverse workforce Lack of supervision, especially on night shift and during peak seasonal demand Training records not maintained, making it difficult to demonstrate compliance or identify retraining needs 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M

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11. Contractor, Visitor and Supplier Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractors performing maintenance on slicers, vacuum sealers, refrigeration and abalone equipment without adequate WHS oversight Cleaning contractors working after hours without effective supervision, emergency access or communication systems Visitors entering processing areas without understanding site-specific hazards and controls Suppliers delivering product or packaging in unsafe ways (e.g. blocking emergency exits, unsafe pallet stacking) Confusion over responsibilities between PCBUs in shared workplaces such as cold stores and transport hubs 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L
12. Incident Reporting, Investigation and Corrective Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under-reporting of lacerations, near misses with knives and slicers, and minor chemical exposures Inadequate investigation of incidents leading to repeat events and unaddressed root causes Failure to meet notifiable incident requirements under WHS legislation Corrective actions not implemented, verified or communicated to workers Lack of trend analysis to identify systemic issues in seafood and meat processing operations 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M
13. Fatigue, Rostering and Psychosocial Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended shifts, night work and seasonal peaks leading to fatigue-related errors when using knives, slicers and vacuum sealers 	3H	[REDACTED]	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High production pressure and tight deadlines causing stress, rushed work and corners being cut on safety • Poor management of bullying, harassment or cultural conflict in a diverse workforce • Insufficient breaks, rotation and recovery time from repetitive or high-strain tasks • Lack of confidential reporting or support pathways for psychosocial concerns 		[REDACTED]	
14. Emergency Preparedness, First Aid and Medical Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate preparedness for severe lacerations, amputations or crush injuries from slicing machines and knives • Poor response capability for chemical splashes, cold exposure incidents or respiratory issues from clean rooms • Emergency exits and routes obstructed by pallets, bins or equipment in processing and storage areas • Lack of scenario-specific emergency drills (e.g. ammonia leaks in refrigeration plant, fire in cold store, gas leak from vacuum equipment) • Insufficient first aid coverage across all shifts and areas 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L
15. Health Monitoring, PPE Programs and Exposure Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unmonitored exposure to cold, noise, wet work and repetitive strain leading to chronic health issues 	3H	[REDACTED]	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliance on personal protective equipment (PPE) without supporting engineering and administrative controls • Inappropriate selection, fit or maintenance of cut-resistant gloves, aprons, arm guards and thermal PPE • Allergic reactions or dermatitis from prolonged exposure to seafood proteins, cleaning chemicals and wet work • Failure to identify and manage workers with pre-existing conditions aggravated by processing tasks 		<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	

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/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.