

Snow and Ice Removal Cold Weather Safety

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, Roles and Legal Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of clearly defined WHS roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for snow and ice removal activities Inadequate understanding of duties under the WHS Act 2011 and WHS Regulations, including due diligence obligations of officers No formal system for consultation with workers about cold weather and snow / ice risks Failure to monitor changes in legislation, codes of practice and relevant Australian / industry standards Inadequate integration of snow and ice risks into the overall WHS management system Insufficient arrangements for managing contractors and labour-hire workers under overlapping duty holder requirements 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and document a WHS governance framework that explicitly includes snow and ice removal cold weather safety, endorsed by senior management or the PCBU Define and communicate specific WHS roles, responsibilities and delegations (officers, managers, supervisors, workers, contractors) for planning and overseeing snow and ice operations Incorporate snow and ice cold weather hazards into the organisation's WHS policy, risk management procedure and WHS objectives Implement a process to routinely review WHS legislation, relevant codes of practice (e.g. Managing the Work Environment and Facilities, Managing the Risk of Falls at Workplaces) and applicable Australian Standards, and update procedures accordingly Develop and implement documented process for consultation, cooperation and coordination between PCBU where multiple parties share snow and ice removal duties (e.g. landlord, facility manager, contractor) Ensure officers exercise due diligence by receiving periodic WHS reports on cold weather risk controls, incidents and trends, and by verifying that adequate resources are provided Include WHS performance measures for snow and ice operations in management review processes and KPI frameworks 	3H
2. Strategic Planning for Snow and Ice Seasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of a documented seasonal snow and ice management plan including trigger points for activation Reactive rather than planned response to forecast snow, but not to extreme cold conditions Inadequate forecasting and monitoring of Bureau of Meteorology data and local micro-climate effects Failure to consider peak usage times for pathways, car parks and access routes when planning clearance priorities No clear contingency arrangements for prolonged or severe events (e.g. multi-day snowfall, power or access disruption) Insufficient budgeting and resourcing for equipment, de-icing product, PPE and labour during peak periods 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a documented Snow and Ice Management Plan that outlines objectives, responsibilities, priority areas, resource requirements and escalation processes for cold weather events Establish predefined trigger levels for activating snow and ice operations based on BoM forecasts, local conditions, road authority warnings and on-site observations Create a priority route map and schedule covering pathways, external stairways, building entries, loading docks and car parks, including special consideration for emergency egress paths and accessible routes Integrate snow and ice planning into broader business continuity and emergency management planning, including arrangements for staff access and essential services Undertake pre-season planning meetings with stakeholders (WHS, facilities, property management, contractors, HSRs) to confirm roles, expectations and communication methods Allocate specific budget lines for cold weather operations including plant hire, materials, training and overtime, and review adequacy annually Implement a process for post-season review of the Snow and Ice Management Plan to capture lessons learned and update priorities 	2M

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
3. Contractor and Labour-Hire Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement of contractors without verifying competency, licences and experience in snow and ice removal Lack of clear contract WHS expectations and performance standards related to cold weather safety Poor coordination between in-house teams and contractors, leading to gaps or duplication in pathway clearance No system to verify contractors' plant maintenance, de-icing product handling and fatigue management practices Inadequate induction of contractor personnel to site-specific hazards, restricted zones and emergency procedures Insufficient monitoring of contractor WHS performance, incident reporting and corrective actions 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a formal contractor prequalification process that includes assessment of snow and ice removal experience, WHS management system and relevant insurances Include specific WHS requirements for cold weather and snow / ice operations in contracts, service level agreements and scopes of work (e.g. response times, priority areas, equipment standards) Require contractors to provide documented risk assessments and procedures consistent with the PCBU's Snow and Ice Management Plan and WHS policies Ensure all contractor and labour-hire workers receive site-specific WHS induction addressing cold exposure, slips and traffic management and emergency arrangements Establish agreed communication, reporting and supervision arrangements between contractor supervisors and the PCBU representative including daily or event-based coordination meetings when conditions are severe Undertake periodic audits and field inspections of contractor activities, plant and documentation (e.g. pre-start checks, training records) with clear close-out of corrective actions Require contractors to provide regular WHS performance reports including incidents, near misses, exposure hours and improvement initiatives related to snow and ice work 	2M
4. Worker Competency, Training and Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers undertaking snow and ice removal without adequate competency in operating plant, handling de-icing products and recognizing cold stress Insufficient training on risk controls for slips, trips, falls and vehicle operation in icy conditions Inadequate supervision of new or young workers in cold weather environments No formal verification of high-risk skills such as operation of powered mobile plant, spreaders or attachments Lack of refresher training on seasonal procedures leading to drift from safe work practices Limited awareness of emergency protocols for cold injury, first aid and incident reporting 	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

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
5. Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Change Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to systematically identify snow and ice hazards on pathways, stairs, ramps, roofs, loading docks and vehicle routes • No formal risk assessment process specific to cold weather and snow clearance activities • Changes to site layout, construction works or traffic patterns not adequately assessed for winter impacts • Lack of worker participation in identifying localised icy spots or recurring hazards such as roof run-off and shaded areas • Poorly managed introduction of new plant, chemicals or de-icing products without assessment of health and safety implications • Inadequate review of risk assessments following incidents, near misses or significant weather events 	4A	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M
6. Plant, Equipment and Maintenance Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of unsuitable or poorly maintained plant for snow and ice removal (e.g. unguarded snow blowers, defective lights, worn tyres) • Lack of pre-start inspection system for cold weather equipment such as spreaders, ploughs and snow blowers • Failure of critical equipment during severe weather due to inadequate preventative maintenance • Insufficient availability of back-up plant or attachments, leading to pressure to use unsafe equipment • Inadequate storage and protection of equipment from freezing, corrosion and damage • No verification that hired or contractor plant meets safety specifications and is fit for purpose in icy conditions 	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>	2M

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
7. Surface Treatment, Pathway Design and Engineering Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pathways, stairs, ramps and car parks not designed or upgraded to minimise snow and ice accumulation and refreezing • Insufficient or poorly planned use of de-icing materials, gritting agents and snow barriers • Lack of drainage or fall-to-drain design leading to water pooling and black ice formation • Inadequate handrails, edge protection or non-slip surfacing on stairs, ramps and external landings • Over-reliance on manual snow shovelling rather than engineered or mechanical solutions where practicable • Use of inappropriate surface treatments that damage infrastructure or create secondary hazards (e.g. corrosion, environmental contamination) 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M
8. Traffic and Pedestrian Interface Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncontrolled interaction between snow removal vehicles and pedestrians on pathways and in car parks • Poor visibility due to snow and reduced daylight hours and reduced windows leading to collisions • Lack of clear routes and segregation for vehicles and pedestrians during snow clearance operations • Inadequate signage, lighting and barriers when pathways are temporarily closed for snow and ice removal • No system for controlling delivery vehicles, visitors and public access in active work zones • Failure to adjust speed limits and parking arrangements to suit icy conditions 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M

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]	
9. Cold Exposure, Fatigue and Health Management Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prolonged exposure to low temperatures, wind chill and wet conditions resulting in cold stress, hypothermia or frostbite • Inadequate scheduling of work and rest breaks leading to fatigue, reduced concentration and increased incident likelihood • Failure to consider individual health factors, medications or pre-existing conditions that may increase cold vulnerability • Lack of access to warm shelters, hot drinks and drying facilities for wet clothing and PPE • Insufficient procedures to identify and respond to early signs of cold injury or fatigue in workers • Use of overtime or extended shifts during storms without appropriate fatigue risk management 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M
10. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliance on PPE as a primary control instead of higher-order controls for snow and ice risks • Provision of inadequate or suitable cold weather PPE (e.g. non-insulated gloves, non-slip footwear not rated for icy surfaces) • Inconsistent use of PPE due to discomfort, poor fit or lack of replacement items • No formal PPE issue, maintenance and replacement system • Insufficient consideration of high-visibility requirements for low-light and snowy conditions 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L

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
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of training on correct selection, use, limitations and care of cold weather PPE 		[REDACTED]	
11. Communication, Coordination and Information Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of timely communication regarding weather warnings, pathway closures and high-risk areas Inadequate systems for coordinating multiple teams or contractors working concurrently on snow and ice removal No clear process for notifying building occupants, tenants and the public about snow clearance activities and residual hazards Poor record-keeping of decisions, resource deployment and changes to planned operations during events Limited access to reliable communication devices for workers operating in remote or external areas Misunderstandings due to inconsistent terminology, language barriers or unclear instructions 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L
12. Emergency Preparedness and Incident Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient planning for emergencies occurring during snow and ice conditions, including slip/falls, vehicle incidents and cold injury Emergency egress routes and assembly areas not maintained free of snow and ice Delayed response times from emergency services due to weather and access limitations Lack of appropriate first aid equipment and trained first aiders familiar with cold-related conditions No specific procedures for rescue or recovery of persons injured or stranded in cold conditions on site 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M

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
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate post-incident investigation and learning processes for snow and ice-related events 		[REDACTED]	
13. Chemical, Environmental and Storage Management (De-Icing and Gritting Materials)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improper storage or handling of de-icing chemicals leading to spills, skin or eye contact and environmental harm Lack of Safety Data Sheets (SDS) or inadequate understanding of health hazards associated with de-icing products Over-application or misapplication of chemicals causing corrosion, damage to surfaces or contamination of drainage systems Manual handling risks from repeated lifting and carrying of heavy bags or containers of grit and de-icer Inadequate segregation of incompatible chemicals or storage near ignition sources, drains or sensitive vegetation Failure to consider environmental approvals or local restrictions on certain de-icing products 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L
14. Information for Building Occupants, Tenants and the Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occupants and visitors not being aware of residual snow and ice risks leading to slips, trips and falls Inconsistent messaging about which pathways are cleared, partially cleared or closed Over-reliance on informal word-of-mouth communication rather than structured notification systems Failure to consider accessibility requirements for people with mobility impairments during snow conditions 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L

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
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of feedback mechanisms for occupants to report hazardous conditions or near misses Signage not designed for visibility in snow, low light or high wind conditions 		[REDACTED]	
15. Monitoring, Inspection, Audit and Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to verify that snow and ice control measures are implemented and effective across all relevant areas Infrequent or informal inspections leading to missed deterioration in surfaces, signage or lighting Lack of structured performance indicators to assess cold weather safety outcomes Poor analysis of incident, near miss and hazard data specific to snow and ice conditions No formal mechanism to capture worker suggestions or lessons learned from each season Complacency developing after extended periods with few incidents leading to reduced vigilance 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L

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.