

Wire Fencing

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. Procurement and Design of Wire Fencing Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of fencing materials and designs that are not fit for purpose, leading to structural failure or unsafe configurations • Failure to consider site-specific WHS and environmental conditions (terrain, livestock, public interface, utilities) in fence design • Procurement decisions based primarily on lowest cost rather than compliance with Australian Standards and WHS Act 2011 duties • Use of suppliers or contractors without appropriate WHS systems, licences, or demonstrated competence • Inadequate specification of guarding for high-tension wires, barbed wire, or electric fencing near public access areas 	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a documented procurement procedure that requires WHS risk criteria to be considered in all wire fencing design and purchasing decisions, consistent with the primary duty of care under the WHS Act 2011 • Require all fencing systems to be designed and specified in line with relevant Australian Standards, codes of practice, manufacturer guidance and local planning requirements • Implement a pre-qualification process for fencing designers, suppliers and contractors that includes verification of licences, insurances, WHS policies, incident history and references • Mandate a formal design risk assessment for new or significantly modified fencing systems, including assessment of public access, vehicle interfaces, livestock containment, electrical hazards and emergency access • Develop standard fencing specifications for typical site scenarios (rural boundary fencing, security fencing, livestock) that embed minimum WHS controls and performance criteria • Implement a governance requirement that higher-risk fence designs (e.g. electric, razor or high-tension systems) are reviewed and approved by a competent person or external specialist prior to installation • Ensure procurement contracts clearly allocate WHS duties, consultation requirements and responsibilities for design verification and handover documentation 	Medium
2. Governance, WHS Management System and Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of clear WHS governance for wire fencing responsibilities across the organisation • Inadequate integration of wire fencing risks into the overarching WHS management system • Poor consultation with workers, contractors and other duty holders (e.g. neighbouring landowners, utilities) about fencing risks • No formal process for reviewing legislative changes, Australian Standards updates or regulator guidance related to fencing • Failure to allocate adequate budget and resources to manage wire fencing risks across the asset lifecycle 	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define and document roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for wire fencing planning, approval, inspection, maintenance and removal within the WHS management system • Integrate wire fencing hazards into the organisation's WHS risk register, ensuring they are subject to regular review, monitoring and reporting to senior management • Establish consultation and communication procedures that require engagement with workers, Health and Safety Representatives, contractors and other relevant duty holders when planning or changing fencing systems • Create a compliance register identifying applicable WHS legislation, regulations, codes of practice and standards relevant to wire fencing and assign responsibility for monitoring updates • Ensure senior management periodically reviews wire fencing risks, performance indicators, incidents and audit outcomes as part of WHS governance processes • Allocate dedicated funding within operational and capital budgets for safe design, inspection, repair and replacement of fencing assets • Embed due diligence requirements for officers under the WHS Act 2011, including review of information about significant fencing risks and adequacy of organisational controls 	Medium
3. Contractor and Supplier Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement of fencing contractors who lack appropriate competence, supervision or WHS systems • Inadequate pre-qualification and tender processes that fail to assess contractors' WHS performance and capacity 	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a formal contractor management procedure that sets minimum WHS requirements for all wire fencing contractors and suppliers • Use a structured pre-qualification process that assesses contractors' licences, insurances, Safe Work Method Statements where relevant, WHS policies, training records and incident history 	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
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor coordination of activities between multiple contractors and the PCBU, leading to interface risks on or near fencing works Insufficient clarity over who controls the work area and associated fencing when multiple duty holders are present Lack of monitoring, verification and performance review of contractors' WHS compliance on fencing projects 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require written agreements that clearly describe WHS responsibilities, consultation arrangements, supervision expectations and reporting processes for fencing work Develop an interface management plan for sites where multiple duty holders operate, specifying how fencing risks will be jointly managed and communicated Establish a system of periodic audits, inspections and performance reviews of fencing contractors focused on WHS outcomes rather than only schedule and cost Require contractors to provide project-specific documentation (e.g. risk assessments, design verifications, inspection reports) prior to handover and payment Include WHS performance on fencing works as a key criterion in contractor selection, re-engagement and preferred supplier status 	
4. Training, Competency and Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers and supervisors lacking competency in identifying and controlling wire fencing risks across the lifecycle No formal training or induction covering specific hazards associated with high-tension wires, barbed or razor wire, and electric fencing systems Inadequate understanding of requirements for working near overhead or underground services when planning or modifying fences Poor awareness of emergency response procedures for incidents involving fencing, such as entanglement or electric shock Failure to maintain competency over time due to turnover, seasonal workforces or infrequent fencing activities 	High	<p>[REDACTED]</p>	Medium
5. Planning, Site Assessment and Change Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wire fencing installed or altered without adequate assessment of site conditions, leading to uncontrolled interaction with vehicles, livestock, the public or other work activities Failure to identify and manage underground or overhead utilities in fencing routes, particularly when changing fence alignments 	High	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	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
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncontrolled changes to fencing layouts, access points or gates that impact traffic management, emergency access or security Poor integration of fencing plans with broader property or project planning, resulting in conflicting controls or duplicated risk Lack of formal change management when upgrading from standard fencing to higher-risk systems such as electric or razor wire 		[REDACTED]	
6. Inspection, Maintenance and Asset Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degradation of wire fencing (corrosion, broken wires, loose posts) due to lack of systematic inspection and maintenance Uncontrolled tension loss or wire failure creating entanglement, piercing or laceration risks to workers, livestock and the public Inaccurate or outdated records of fence locations, types and condition, leading to unmanaged risks and inefficient responses Failure to identify and rectify non-compliant or ad hoc fence modifications made on-site by workers or contractors No prioritisation system for reporting high-risk defects such as live electric wires, compromised boundary fences or damaged security fencing 	High	[REDACTED]	Low
7. Electric and High-Risk Fencing Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electric fences installed or operated without adequate controls, posing shock or electrocution risks to workers, neighbours and the public High-tension, barbed or razor wire systems creating severe laceration and entanglement risks, particularly in emergency situations Inadequate labelling, signage and public information about the presence of 	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
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> electric or high-risk fencing along property boundaries Lack of coordination with network operators and regulators when installing electric fencing near existing electrical infrastructure Failure of isolating or control equipment, resulting in unexpected energisation of fencing during maintenance or emergency response 		[REDACTED]	
8. Interaction with the Public, Neighbours and Other PCBUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of the public, including children, coming into contact with hazardous fencing along property boundaries, easements or public rights-of-way Disputes or misunderstandings with neighbouring landowners leading to ad-hoc, non-compliant or unsafe fencing arrangements Inadequate coordination with other PCBUs working on or adjacent to shared boundaries, utility corridors or road reserves Insufficient notification or signage where fencing adjacent to public roads, tracks or recreational areas, leading to collision or entanglement risks Lack of clear rules for public access points, gates and shared driveways intersecting wire fencing 	High	[REDACTED]	Medium
9. Incident Reporting, Emergency Preparedness and Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delayed or ineffective response to incidents involving wire fencing, increasing severity of harm Under-reporting of near misses and minor injuries related to fencing, leading to missed opportunities for system improvement Lack of clear procedures for emergency services access through or 	High	[REDACTED]	Low

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
	<p>around fencing during fires, medical emergencies or rescues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate analysis of fencing-related incidents to identify underlying system or management failures • Poor communication of lessons learned from incidents across worksites and business units 		[REDACTED]	
10. Monitoring, Audit and Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complacency over time resulting in gradual deterioration of fencing risk controls and compliance • Lack of objective verification that policies and procedures for fencing are implemented in the field • Data related to fencing condition, incidents and costs not being systematically analysed to drive improvement • Failure to identify emerging risks such as new fencing technologies, changing land use or climate impacts on fence stability • No structured mechanism for workers and contractors to provide feedback on the practicality and effectiveness of fencing controls 	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>

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/factsheets-and-resources/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.