

## Water Safety | SAFE WORK METHOD STATEMENT (SWMS)

### TASK OR ACTIVITY: Water Safety

Business Name:	ABN:	SWMS#
Business Address:		
Contact Person:	Phone:	Email:

### THIS SAFE WORK METHOD STATEMENT 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 safe work method statement (SWMS) is prepared before the proposed work starts.

Full Name:		
Signature:	Title:	Date:
Details of the person(s) responsible for ensuring implementation, monitoring compliance of the SWMS as well as reviews and modifications of the SWMS.		
Full Name:	Title:	Phone:

### ALL PERSONNEL PARTICIPATING IN ANY ACTIVITY ON THIS SWMS MUST HAVE THE FOLLOWING COMMUNICATED

Safety meetings or toolbox talks will be scheduled in accordance with legislative requirements to first identify any site hazards, then to communicate those hazards and then to further take steps to either eliminate or control each hazard.

If an incident or a near miss occurs, all work must stop immediately. Depending on the severity of the incident, a meeting will be called with all workers to amend the SWMS if required. The meeting may also be an educational opportunity.

Any changes made to the SWMS after an incident or a near miss must be approved by the Person Conducting Business or Undertaking and communicated to all relevant personnel.

The SWMS must be kept and be available for inspection at least until the work is completed. Where a SWMS is revised, all versions should be kept. If a notifiable incident occurs in relation to which the SWMS relates, then the SWMS must be kept for at least two years from the occurrence of the notifiable incident.

### NAME OF ALL RELEVANT PERSONNEL WHO HAVE BEEN CONSULTED AND COMMUNICATED TO IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF THIS SWMS

### CLIENT OR PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR DETAILS

Client:	SCOPE OF WORKS
Project Name:	
Project Address:	
Project Manager:	
Contact Phone:	
Date SWMS supplied to Project Manager:	

### ANY HIGH-RISK CONSTRUCTION WORK BEING CARRIED OUT

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> involves a risk of a person falling more than 2 meters  | <input type="checkbox"/> is carried out on or near pressurised gas mains or piping                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> is carried out on a telecommunication tower   | <input type="checkbox"/> is carried out on or near chemical, fuel or refrigerant lines                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> involves demolition of an element of a structure that is load-bearing                           | <input type="checkbox"/> is carried out on or near energised electrical installations or services                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> involves demolition of an element related to the physical integrity of a structure              | <input type="checkbox"/> is carried out in an area that may have a contaminated or flammable atmosphere                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> involves, or is likely to involve, disturbing asbestos  | <input type="checkbox"/> involves tilt-up or precast concrete  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> involves structural alteration or repair that requires temporary support to prevent collapse    | <input type="checkbox"/> is carried out on, in or adjacent to a road, railway, shipping lane or other traffic corridor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> is carried out in or near a confined space  | <input type="checkbox"/> is carried out in an area of a workplace where there is any movement of powered mobile plant  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> is carried out in/near a shaft or trench deeper than 1.5m or tunnel involving use of explosives | <input type="checkbox"/> is carried out in areas with artificial extremes of temperature.                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> is carried out in or near water or other liquid that involves a risk of drowning.               | <input type="checkbox"/> involves diving work.   |

### ANY HIGH-RISK MACHINERY OR EQUIPMENT NEARBY

RISK MATRIX									
LIKELIHOOD	INSIGNIFICANT	MINOR	MODERATE	MAJOR	CATASTROPHIC	SCORE	ACTION	HEIRARCHY OF CONTROLS	
ALMOST CERTAIN	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE			 <p><b>Elimination</b> Remove the hazard.</p> <p><b>Substitution</b> Replace the hazard.</p> <p><b>Isolation</b> Isolate People from the hazard</p> <p><b>Engineering</b> Isolate the hazard.</p> <p><b>Administrative</b> Change the work.</p> <p><b>PPE</b></p>	
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	Review before work starts.		
UNLIKELY	1 LOW	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	2M MODERATE	Ensure control measures in place.		
RARE	1 LOW	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	1L LOW	Monitor and keep records		

**Notes on Hierarchy of Controls:** Elimination methods are the most effective and preferred when controlling a hazard. Substitution is the second most effective method of controlling a hazard. Engineering by isolation is the third most effective, while Administrative Controls by changing the work is the fourth most effective method. PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) is the least effective method.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)											
Select the appropriate PPE above suitable for the equipment used or the job task being performed (if applicable).											
FOOT PROTECTION	HAND PROTECTION	HEAD PROTECTION	HEARING PROTECTION	EYE PROTECTION	RESPIRATORY PROTECTION	FACE PROTECTION	HIGH-VIS CLOTHING	PROTECTIVE CLOTHING	FALL PROTECTION	SUN PROTECTION	HAIR/JEWELLERY SECURED
											
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other PPE Required:											
Permit or Licenses Requirements						Mandatory Qualifications and Training					

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
Pre-start planning and assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unidentified deep water</li> <li>Fast moving currents</li> <li>Steep or unstable banks</li> <li>Hidden submerged objects</li> <li>Remote or difficult emergency access</li> <li>Extreme weather conditions</li> </ul>	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a documented site-specific risk assessment before work and identify all nearby rivers, creeks, ponds, dams and drains on a scaled site plan</li> <li>Consult BOM weather and flood warnings prior to work each day and postpone work if heavy rain, storms or flood alerts are issued</li> <li>Walk the work area perimeter with a competent person and physically mark the edge of water bodies and any steep or unstable banks with high-visibility bunting or barrier mesh</li> <li>Identify and record entry and exit points for emergency services and verify that emergency vehicles can safely access the work area without bogging</li> <li>Determine whether work is High Risk Construction Work due to risk of drowning under WHS Regulations and document corresponding controls in the SWMS</li> <li>Identify and allocate vulnerable workers (e.g. non-swimmers, medical conditions) and allocate them to tasks away from water edge</li> <li>Develop an emergency response plan that includes rescue procedures, communication protocols and hospital directions and brief all workers before starting</li> <li>Verify mobile phone and two-way radio reception at the site and establish a communication backup (e.g. satellite phone) if coverage is unreliable</li> </ul>	2M
Access and egress to water sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vehicle roll into water</li> <li>Slip on muddy banks</li> <li>Trip on rocks and roots</li> <li>Vehicle bogging near edge</li> <li>Uncontrolled pedestrian access</li> </ul>	3H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish designated vehicle parking areas at least 5 metres from the water edge and clearly signpost 'No Vehicle Access Beyond This Point'</li> <li>Install physical barriers such as wheel stops, star pickets and bunting or water-filled barriers between parking areas and the water body where practicable</li> <li>Construct defined pedestrian access paths using gravel, matting or temporary walkways to provide firm footing on slopes and muddy sections</li> <li>Install handrails or grab ropes on steep or frequently used access points to reduce slip and fall risk</li> <li>Prohibit reversing vehicles towards water without a spotter and ensure spotters remain on firm ground clear of the vehicle path</li> <li>Inspect vehicle parking areas daily for erosion or undercutting and relocate parking further from the edge if ground stability is compromised</li> <li>Fit vehicles with park brake alarms where provided and instruct drivers to apply park brake and chock wheels when parked on any grade near water</li> <li>DO NOT park Utes, trucks or plant on soft or undermined edges even temporarily</li> </ul>	1L
Set-up of exclusion and safe work zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unauthorised access to water edge</li> <li>Falls from bank into water</li> <li>Drowning in shallow water</li> </ul>	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a clearly marked exclusion zone along the water edge using barrier mesh, cones and signage reading 'Danger – Deep Water' or 'Danger – Drowning Hazard'</li> </ul>	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plant contact with workers near edge</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set a minimum exclusion distance from the water edge (e.g. 2–3 metres) based on ground stability and water depth and record this distance in the SWMS</li> <li>Install temporary edge protection such as guardrail or robust fencing at work positions where workers must operate close to unstable banks</li> <li>Position plant and equipment outside the exclusion zone and on level, compacted ground checked for signs of erosion or slumping</li> <li>Provide designated safe standing zones for observers and spotters outside plant slewing or travel paths and outside the water edge buffer</li> <li>Display clear directional signage for safe routes between work areas, amenities and vehicles so workers do not shortcut along the water edge</li> <li>Review and adjust exclusion zones immediately after significant rain, erosion, or change in water level</li> <li>DO NOT remove or relocate barriers or warning signs without approval from the supervisor</li> </ul>	
Working near shallow water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drowning in shallow water</li> <li>Slips on algae or mud</li> <li>Entrapment in soft silt</li> <li>Sudden change in water depth</li> <li>Hypothermia from cold water</li> </ul>	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>[REDACTED]</li> <li>[REDACTED]</li> <li>[REDACTED]</li> <li>[REDACTED]</li> <li>[REDACTED]</li> <li>[REDACTED]</li> <li>[REDACTED]</li> <li>[REDACTED]</li> <li>[REDACTED]</li> </ul>	2M
Working within close proximity to water bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fall into deep water</li> <li>Strong currents and undertow</li> <li>Striking submerged objects</li> <li>Entanglement in vegetation</li> <li>Fatigue reducing situational awareness</li> </ul>	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>[REDACTED]</li> <li>[REDACTED]</li> <li>[REDACTED]</li> </ul>	2M

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Use of plant and vehicles near water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plant roll over into water</li> <li>Unplanned vehicle movement</li> <li>Edge collapse under load</li> <li>Striking workers near edge</li> <li>Loss of control on rough surfaces</li> </ul>			1L
Working near water with electrical equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electric shock from faulty tools</li> <li>Electrocution in wet areas</li> <li>Damaged extension leads</li> <li>Contact with overhead lines</li> <li>Inadequate earthing of equipment</li> </ul>	4A		2M

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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
Manual tasks around water bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of balance when carrying loads</li> <li>• Musculoskeletal strain on slippery ground</li> <li>• Dropped objects into water</li> <li>• Foot entrapment between rocks</li> <li>• Falling while using tools near water</li> </ul>	3H		1L
Public and third-party protection near water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unauthorised public access</li> <li>• Children entering work zone</li> <li>• Member of public falling into water</li> <li>• Recreational water users entering site</li> <li>• Confusion from inadequate signage</li> </ul>	3H		1L

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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
Weather, tides and changing water levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rapid water level rise</li> <li>• Increased current speed</li> <li>• Bank erosion and collapse</li> <li>• Reduced visibility in rain or fog</li> <li>• Lightning strike near water</li> </ul>	4A		2M
Emergency response and rescue preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delayed rescue from water</li> <li>• Ineffective CPR</li> <li>• Panic during drowning incident</li> <li>• Untrained use of rescue equipment</li> <li>• Rescuer entering water unsafely</li> </ul>	4A		2M



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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
Training, induction and supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unfamiliarity with water risks</li> <li>• Incorrect use of PFDs</li> <li>• Complacency near familiar water</li> <li>• Inadequate supervision of new workers</li> </ul>	3H		1L
PPE, inspection and close-out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure of flotation devices</li> <li>• Damaged footwear on slippery ground</li> <li>• Missing rescue equipment</li> <li>• Unreported near miss incidents</li> </ul>	2M		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

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 IF ANY STATE IS 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>

### 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

### 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.

## SIGNATORIES OF THE SAFE WORK METHOD STATEMENT

The signed and dated personnel listed below have cooperated in the consultation and development of this Safe Work Method Statement which has been approved by the Person/s Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU). In signing this Safe Work Method Statement each individual acknowledges and confirms that they have read this SWMS in full, having raised any questions for items on this Safe Work Method Statement that require clarification, and confirms that they are competent, skilled and knowledgeable for the task assigned to them. Every person acknowledges that they have received the relevant training and qualifications where required, before carrying out any work contained in this Safe Work Method Statement. By signing this Safe Work Method Statement each individual agrees to work safely, to follow any safe work instructions which are provided, and agrees to use all Personal Protective Equipment where appropriate.

Worker Name	Signature	Date

## SAFE WORK METHOD STATEMENT MONITORING AND REVIEW

**The SWMS must be reviewed regularly** to make sure it remains effective and must be reviewed (and revised if necessary) if relevant control measures are revised. The review must be carried out in consultation with workers (including contractors and sub-contractors) who may be affected by the operation of the SWMS and their health and safety representatives who represent that work group at the workplace.

When the SWMS has been revised the PCBU must ensure that all persons involved with the work are advised that a revision has been made and how they can access the revised SWMS, including all persons who will need to change a work procedure or system as a result of the review are advised of the changes in a way that will enable them to implement their duties consistently with the revised SWMS. All workers that will be involved in the work must be provided with the relevant information and instruction that will assist them to understand and implement the revised SWMS.

**The SWMS must be monitored regularly** for the effectiveness of ensuring hazard controls are effective in reducing the risk of incidents, keeping the workplace safe for all personnel. The person responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the Safe Work Method Statement should employ a multi-faceted approach which includes but is not limited to:

1. Spot Checks.
2. Consultation with workers, contractors and sub-contractors.
3. Internal audits on a continual basis.

An approach of continuous improvement, promptly recording inconsistencies or deficiencies, followed up by immediate corrective action and consultation with all relevant personnel ensures that the PCBU is consistently developing ever-improving systems of safe work principles.

REVIEW NUMBER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NAME							
INITIALS							
DATE							

## SAFE WORK METHOD STATEMENT REVIEW CHECKLIST

This Safe Work Method Statement Review Checklist is to be followed and used upon initial development of the SWMS to help ensure that all steps have been adequately taken before work commences. Think of this document as an internal audit review checklist before commencing work, and may form part of a Toolbox Talk (safety meeting) and may be used as an opportunity for education and training.

ITEMS WHICH MUST BE INCLUDED IN THE SWMS	COMPLETED	COMMENTS
The company details have been entered, including the project name and address.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
All relevant personnel consulted during the development of the SWMS.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Name, signature, position and date signed of the person approving the SWMS.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Specific personnel and qualifications, experience is noted in the SWMS.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Provides a step-by-step process of tasks required to carry out the activity or task.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Adequate risk assessment of any identified hazards has been completed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Foreseeable hazards are identified and documented for each step.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Any hazards listed in any site risk assessments have been added to the SWMS.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SWMS initial risk (IR) column as well as residual risk (RR) column completed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Check control measures added to the SWMS are the most effective selected.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Responsible person is assigned and listed on the SWMS for the implementation of control measures.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Permit or licenses requirements specified, such as Hot Work, Electrical Work, Work at Heights etc.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SWMS identifies plant and equipment to be used.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Details of inspection checks required for any equipment listed and noted on the SWMS.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Describes any mandatory qualifications, experience, training or skills required to perform the work.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Applicable personal protective equipment is selected on the SWMS.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Reflects and documents any legislative references and/or Australian Standards.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Identifies any hazardous substances used with specific control measures in line with any SDS.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
REVIEWED BY	DATE REVIEWED	
SIGNATURE	DATE COMPLETED	