Wood Dust and Material Handling | SAFE WORK METHOD STATEMENT (SWMS)

TASK OR ACTIVITY: Wood Dust and Material Handling

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

CLIENT OR PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR DETAILS	
Client:	SCOPE OF WORKS
Project Name:	
Project Address:	
Project Manager:	
Contact Phone:	
Date SWMS supplied to Project Manager:	

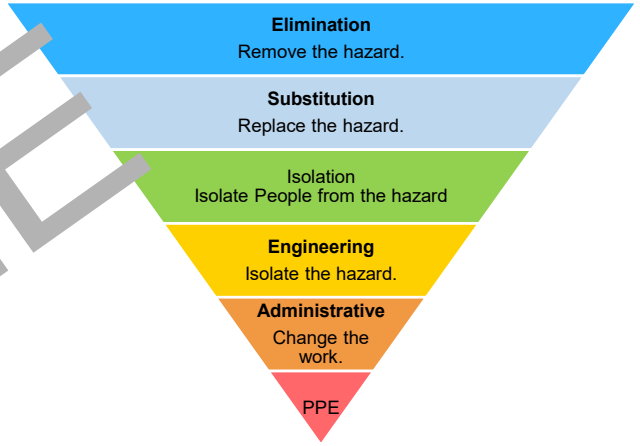
ANY HIGH-RISK CONSTRUCTION WORK BEING CARRIED OUT	
☐ involves a risk of a person falling more than 2 meters	☐ is carried out on or near pressurised gas mains or piping
☐ is carried out on a telecommunication tower	☐ is carried out on or near chemical, fuel or refrigerant lines
☐ involves demolition of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

ANY HIGH-RISK MACHINERY OR EQUIPMENT NEARBY

RISK MATRIX

LIKELIHOOD	INSIGNIFICANT	MINOR	MODERATE	MAJOR	CATASTROPHIC	SCORE	ACTION
ALMOST CERTAIN	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE		
LIKELY	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	4A ACUTE	DO NOT PROCEE
POSSIBLE	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	3H HIGH	Review befo 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	nitor and k records

HEIRARCHY OF CONTROLS



Notes on Hierarchy of Controls: Elimination methods are the most effective and preferre en co lli a hazard. Substitution is the second most effective method of controlling a hazard. Engineering by isolation is the ost ef ve, while Administrative Controls by changing the work is the fourth most effective method. PPE (Personal Protective Eq ment) he least effective method.

PERS AL P TECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Select the appropriate PPE bov uitable or the equipment used or the job task being performed (if applicable).

FOOT PROTECTION	HAND PROTECTION	HEAD PROTECTION	HEARING PROTECTION	EY PROTECTION	RESPIRATORY PROTECTION	FACE PROTECTION	HIGH-VIS CLOTHING	PROTECTIVE CLOTHING	FALL PROTECTION	SUN PROTECTION	HAIR/JEWELLERY SECURED
											
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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	• Unidentified hazardous wood dust • Incompatible wood handling tasks • Inadequate ventilation layout • Unverified dust extraction capacity • Unlabelled chemically-treated wood • Unplanned traffic and material flow	4A	• Review relevant WHS Regulations, Codes of Practice and SDS for timber species, wood dust and chemical treatments before commencing work • Identify all processes generating wood dust, including sawing, routing, sanding, chipboard processing, MDF handling, plywood handling and working with particle boards • Confirm whether Sydney Blue Gum, other hardwoods or softwoods with known sensitising dust are present and document them in the SWMS • Map material flow for unloading, stacking, timber storage management and overhead wood storing tasks to separate pedestrian walkways from mobile plant paths • Verify dust extraction and local exhaust ventilation (LEV) systems are designed and installed in accordance with AS/NZS 1668 and suitable for all connected machinery • Confirm available electrical supply and isolation points for dust extraction fans, heating equipment for kiln drying and thermal modification, hot-press moulded plywood shaping and radio frequency gluing units • Check that kiln drying, thermal modification of wood, fire hardening and wood burning processes are physically segregated from general workshop tasks • Identify chemical products for chemically modifying wood, wood glues and adhesives and treated timber, and ensure SDS are accessible at point of use • Plan housekeeping methods for dust control in saw milling, hardwood processing and softwood processing, specifying vacuum systems and banning dry sweeping • Assign competent supervisors and licensed operators for forklifts, overhead cranes and RF gluing systems, and verify licences and training records • Schedule high dust tasks outside peak occupancy where practicable to reduce exposure to nearby workers and other trades • Develop an emergency plan including fire, explosion, chemical exposure and plant incident responses, and brief all workers at pre-start • DO NOT commence any wood dust or material handling task until hazards have been identified and controls agreed with workers	2M
Receiving and unloading wood materials	• Unstable timber packs • Falling bundled materials • Struck-by forklift or Ute • Crushed by shifting load • Unidentified treated timber • Manual handling overexertion	3H	• Inspect delivery dockets and pack labels to identify timber type, treated timber status, moisture content and any chemical treatments before unloading • Use forklifts, cranes or pallet jacks with adequate SWL/WLL for unloading of wood materials, plywood handling, MDF handling and working with particle boards • Verify forklift tynes are correctly spaced and fully inserted under timber packs before lifting • Check that slings, chains and lifting attachments are tagged, undamaged and rated for the load in accordance with AS 4991 and AS 1418	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
			• Position exclusion zones with cones or barriers around unloading areas to keep pedestrians clear of suspended or mobile loads • Lower timber packs as close to ground height as p[illegible]ible before manual repositioning to reduce strain • Use team lifts, mechanical aids or trolleys ra[illegible] than single-person lifts for heavy or long timber pieces • Open curtains, straps and bindings slowly [illegible]d from th[illegible]on-pinch side to control sudden load movement • Confirm timber and sheet goods are dry enou[illegible] safe handling, or adjust grip and stacking methods if moisture is present • Segregate chemically-treated [illegible]od and treated ti[illegible]er f[illegible]n untreated materials at point of unloading and store in clearly si[illegible]d areas • Wear safety b[illegible]s with pr[illegible]ective [illegible] caps and [illegible]p-resistant soles when working near timber packs and mobile plant • DO N[illegible]T walk [illegible]stand[illegible]nder suspended timber packs at any time • DO N[illegible] exceed [illegible]klift rated capacity, SWL or manufacturer's load centre limits during unloading	
Timber storage and overhead stacking	• Stack collapse • Falling timber fro[illegible]eight • Overloaded storage racks • Entrapment between packs • Exposure to treated timber preservatives • Poor access to stored materials	3H	• Design[illegible]nd i[illegible]all tim[illegible]r storage racks and overhead wood storing systems in accordance with [illegible]nufac[illegible]rer in[illegible]ctions and relevant Australian Standards for static and dynamic loads • Stac[illegible]in[illegible]er, plywood, MDF and particle board on level, stable bearers ensuring dunnage lines up [illegible]rtically [illegible]tween layers • L[illegible]it stack heights based on timber dimensions, moisture content and rack rating to prevent instability • Clearly label racking with maximum load ratings and ensure workers are trained to interpret and comply with rack capacities • Store chemically-treated wood, treated timber and fire-hardened products in designated, signed areas with restricted access • Provide mechanical aids or forklifts for accessing upper racks and prohibit climbing racking or stacks • Maintain clear aisles, access ways and emergency exits free of stacked timber and sheet goods • Install physical barriers or toe boards on elevated storage platforms to prevent materials from sliding or rolling off edges • Use load-rated restraints or edge stops on overhead timber storage to control movement during loading and unloading • Inspect timber stacks regularly for signs of movement, damage, water ingress or decay that may compromise stability • Handle MDF, chipboard and particle board sheets by two persons or suitable mechanical lifter to prevent sudden tipping or dropping • DO NOT store timber, plywood or MDF above signed rack capacity or beyond designed overhang distances	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
			• DO NOT remove lower supports from a stack before upper layers have been safely removed or restrained	
Manual handling and stacking timber	• Musculoskeletal strain • Crushed fingers between boards • Slips on offcuts or sawdust • Uncontrolled stack movement • Contact with splinters or sharp edges • Exposure to Sydney Blue Gum dust [redacted] surfaces	3H	[redacted]	2M
Machining, cutting and chipboard processing	• High wood dust generation • Entanglement in rotating blades • Kickback from saws • Flying timber chips • Noise from machinery • Inhalation of MDF and chipboard dust	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]	
Sanding, grading and high dust tasks	• Respirable wood dust exposure • Allergic reactions to hardwood du • Eye irritation from fine pa[illegible] • Dust accumulation on equipment • Reduced visibility in work area • Sensitisation from Sydney Blue Gum dust exposure	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]	
Chemical treatment and modification of wood	• Chemical inhalation exposure • Skin contact with preservatives • Toxic fume generat[redacted] • Incompatible che[redacted]cal mixing • Contamination of u[redacted]d timber • Chemical splash to eyes	4A	[redacted]	2M
Wood gluing, RF gluing and adhesive use	• Solvent vapour inhalation • Skin sensitisation from adhesives	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
	• High-frequency radiation exposure • Burns from hot press surfaces • Adhesive spill slip hazard • Ignition of flammable vapours		[redacted]	
Kiln drying, thermal modification and fire hardening	• High temperature burns • Steam and hot condensate exposure • Fire and explosion risk • Structural failure of kiln components • Off-gassing of treated timber • Over-pressurisation in heating systems	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]	
Plywood bending, hot pressing and shaping	• Contact with hot surfaces • Pinch points in pre • Steam release during bending • Uncontrolled movement • Exposure to resin fumes • Burns from heated tools	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
			[redacted]	
Wood burning, waste handling and dust control	• Combustible dust explosion • Fire in ducting or filters • Burns from incinerators • Inhalation of smoke and fumes • Uncontrolled spread of embers • Exposure to treated timber combusti products	4A	[redacted]	2M
General housekeeping and dust housekeeping	• Dust inhalation during cleaning • Slip hazards from dust layers • Hidden ignition points • Blocked exits and egress routes • Reduced effectiveness of LEV • Contamination of clean areas	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
			[redacted]	
Training, supervision and health monitoring	• Incorrect machinery operation • Unrecognised wood dust [illegible]ity • Improper PPE use • Unsafe manual handling technique • Unreported early health effects • Complacency with dust controls	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
			[redacted]	

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

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-of-codes-of-practice

Northern Territory
Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011
Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Regulations 2011
Legislation NT: https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/workplace-safety-laws
Codes of Practice NT: https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/forms-and-resources/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

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.

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

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

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

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 process should 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 represented 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.	☒	
All relevant personnel consulted during the development of the SWMS.	☒	
Name, signature, position and date signed of the person approving the SWMS.	☐	
Specific personnel and qualifications, experience is noted in the SWMS.	☒	
Provides a step-by-step process of tasks required to carry out the activity or task.	☒	
Adequate risk assessment of any identified hazards has been completed.	☒	
Foreseeable hazards are identified and documented for each step.	☒	
Any hazards listed in any site risk assessments have been added to the SWMS.	☒	
SWMS initial risk (IR) column as well as residual risk (RR) column completed.	☒	
Check control measures added to the SWMS are the most effective selection.	☒	
Responsible person is assigned and listed on the SWMS for the implementation of control measures.	☒	
Permit or licenses requirements specified, such as Hot Work, Electrical Work, Work at Heights etc.	☒	
SWMS identifies plant and equipment to be used.	☒	
Details of inspection checks required for any equipment listed and noted on the SWMS.	☒	
Describes any mandatory qualifications, experience, training or skills required to perform the work.	☒	
Applicable personal protective equipment is selected on the SWMS.	☒	
Reflects and documents any legislative references and/or Australian Standards.	☒	
Identifies any hazardous substances used with specific control measures in line with any SDS.	☒	

REVIEWED BY		**DATE REVIEWED**	
SIGNATURE		**DATE COMPLETED**	