

Working Alone | SAFE WORK METHOD STATEMENT (SWMS)

TASK OR ACTIVITY: Working Alone

Business Name: [Company Name]

ABN: [ABN]

SWMS#

Business Address: [Company Address]

Contact Person:

Phone: [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 AND DATED SIGNATURE 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.

NAME

SIGNATURE

DATE

CLIENT OR PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR DETAILS












Client:	SCOPE OF WORKS Provide a detailed description of the specific work being carried out (otherwise known as scope of works).
Project Name:	
Project Address:	
Project Manager:	
Contact Phone:	
Project Manager Signature:	
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

<input type="checkbox"/> Forklift	<input type="checkbox"/> Crane/s	<input type="checkbox"/> Hoist/s	<input type="checkbox"/> Excavator	<input type="checkbox"/> Backhoe/Loader	<input type="checkbox"/> Boom Lift	<input type="checkbox"/> EWP	<input type="checkbox"/> Genie Lift
<input type="checkbox"/> Trencher	<input type="checkbox"/> Drilling Rig	<input type="checkbox"/> Trucks	<input type="checkbox"/> Formwork	<input type="checkbox"/> Bobcat	<input type="checkbox"/> Flammable Gas	<input type="checkbox"/> Fuel	<input type="checkbox"/> Dozer
<input type="checkbox"/> High Voltage	<input type="checkbox"/> Mulcher	<input type="checkbox"/> Tilt-up Panels	<input type="checkbox"/> Roller	<input type="checkbox"/> Scissor Lift	<input type="checkbox"/> Tractor	<input type="checkbox"/> Other -	

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			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 the work.		
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)										
FOOT PROTECTION	HAND PROTECTION	HEAD PROTECTION	HEARING 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"/>
Select the appropriate PPE above suitable for the equipment used or the job task being performed (if applicable).										
<p>Note: A SWMS must be reviewed regularly to make sure it remains effective. A SWMS 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 subcontractors) who may be affected by the operation of the SWMS and their health and safety representatives who represented that work group at the workplace.</p> <p>When a SWMS has been revised, the person conducting a business or undertaking must ensure all:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> persons involved in the work are advised that a revision has been made and how they can access the revised SWMS; 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; and, workers that will be involved in the work are provided with the relevant information and instruction that will assist them to understand and implement the revised SWMS. 										

JOB STEP	POTENTIAL HAZARDS	IR	CONTROL MEASURES	RR	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
SPECIFIC WORK STEPS	HAZARDS THAT MAY ARISE	INITIAL RISK	SPECIFIC MEASURES TO BE PUT IN PLACE TO ELIMINATE OR CONTROL THE RISKS	RESIDUAL RISK	NAME OF PERSON
1. Preparation	Slips, trips and falls, Inadequate lighting	2M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct a thorough inspection of the work area before commencing the task to identify and remove any potential trip or slip hazards such as loose cables, uneven surfaces, and wet or slippery floors. - Ensure that proper housekeeping is maintained throughout the working alone process by keeping the work area clean, organised, and free from clutter. - Provide and make use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) such as non-slip footwear to protect workers against slips, trips, and falls. - Clearly mark and signpost any identified hazards in the workplace with relevant warning signs, hazard cones, or barriers. - Implement a buddy system where possible to provide support and an extra set of eyes for identifying potential hazards. - Establish clear communication processes for workers who are working alone, including a check-in procedure at regular intervals to ensure their safety. - Provide adequate training and instruction to workers on safe work practices when working alone, including hazards associated with slips, trips, and falls, and how to prevent them. - Install sufficient lighting in the work area to ensure that all hazards can be clearly seen and avoided. If required, use portable lights to create adequate visibility. - Make sure that workers have easy access to emergency exits and escape routes in case of accidents or emergencies. - Develop and implement emergency response procedures for workers who are working alone, including guidelines on how to raise the alarm and seek help if they encounter a hazard or are involved in an accident. - Encourage workers to report new hazards or potential risks immediately so that they can be promptly addressed and removed from the work area. - Regularly review and update risk assessments to ensure that all potential hazards are identified and appropriate control measures are implemented. - Establish a reporting and follow-up procedure for any incidents related to slips, trips, and falls for workers working alone. Analyse these reports to improve current safety measures. - Promote a positive safety culture within the workplace that prioritizes hazard identification and prevention, encouraging workers to be vigilant and proactive in addressing hazards related to slips, trips, and falls when working alone. 	1L	
2. Equipment Check	Faulty equipment, Lack of training	2M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and implement a comprehensive equipment inspection programme, including regular checks for wear and tear, damage or malfunction. - Provide staff with the necessary training on the proper use, maintenance, and storage of all equipment used in their tasks. 	1L	

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement policies and guidelines to ensure that all workers are aware of the appropriate use of each piece of equipment and understand the risks and hazards associated. - Encourage workers to report any faulty equipment or machinery promptly and display clear instructions for workers in case of equipment malfunction. - Establish a procedure for regularly reviewing and updating training materials to ensure that they remain current and relevant to the specific equipment being used. - Ensure that workers who may be working alone have a reliable means of communication (e.g., cell phone, radio) in case of emergency, equipment failure, or other issues. - Schedule regular safety meetings or toolbox talks where equipment usage, potential hazards, and control measures are discussed to help maintain a high level of awareness among workers. - Store equipment properly when not in use, ensuring that it is protected from adverse environmental conditions and potential damage. - Maintain thorough records of equipment maintenance, inspections, and repairs to track problem areas and identify trends for future improvements. - Update equipment inventory and replacement schedules after identifying faulty equipment. This ensures all tools remain up-to-date and in good working condition. - Periodically assess workers' competency levels on various equipment pieces, providing refresher training or retraining as necessary. - Provide ongoing support and supervision for workers, particularly for those new to using particular equipment, reducing initial risk exposure until familiarity is achieved. - Install and maintain Emergency Stop buttons or similar safety devices on equipment where appropriate to allow for immediate shutdown in the case of a malfunction. - Promote a strong workplace safety culture that encourages workers to exercise diligence when performing equipment checks and prioritise safety at all times—both individually and as part of a team effort. 		
3. Workspace Setup	Poor ergonomics, Electric shock	2M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a well-lit workspace: Ensure that the work area has sufficient lighting to prevent eye strain, reduce the risk of trips and falls, and facilitate proper identification of potential hazards. - Set up an ergonomic workstation: Arrange the desk, chair, and equipment such that they offer optimal comfort and reduced physical strain on the worker. This might include adjusting the height of the chair, placing the monitor at the correct eye level, and providing a footrest if necessary. - Organise tools and equipment: Keep all necessary tools and equipment in their designated places, within easy reach, to minimise unnecessary movements, bending, and stretching. 	1L	

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular breaks: Schedule regular breaks for workers operating alone to help mitigate fatigue and stress, encouraging them to step away from their workspace and stretch or move around. - Electrical inspection: Regularly inspect electrical outlets, cords, and wiring for any signs of damage or wear. Replace or repair any damaged electrical components immediately. - Use of RCDs (Residual Current Devices): Utilise an RCD for each circuit in the workspace, which will automatically shut off power if an unbalanced current is detected, reducing the risk of electric shock. - Proper use of extension cords: Avoid overloading extension cords by plugging too many devices into one outlet or daisy-chaining multiple cords together. Instead, use high-quality, heavy-duty cords designed for the intended purpose and distribute power outlets evenly throughout the workspace. - Proper storage of liquids and chemicals: Ensure that liquids and chemicals are stored in clearly labelled containers and kept a safe distance away from electrical outlets and equipment to minimise the risk of spills, electrical shorts, and fire hazards. - Hazard communication and signage: Clearly identify and communicate potential hazards in the work area through appropriate cautionary signs, labels, and markings. - Emergency contact information: Provide workers with a list of essential emergency contacts, including colleagues, supervisors, and first aid or medical assistance, as needed. - Workspace inspection and housekeeping: Regularly inspect the work area to ensure that there are no potential hazards such as clutter, spills, frayed wiring, and poorly maintained equipment that may pose a risk to the worker. - Training for safe work practices: Educate workers on how to identify and minimise risks associated with working alone, including ergonomics, proper use of tools and equipment, and best practices to prevent accidents and injuries. Provide ongoing refresher training to reinforce safe working methods. 		
4. Work Alone Communication	Ineffective communication, Lack of support	3H	<div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div>	2M	

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5. Work Permit Processing	Failure to obtain permit Miscommunication	2L		1L	

SAMPLE

JOB STEP	POTENTIAL HAZARDS	IR	CONTROL MEASURES	RR	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
SPECIFIC WORK STEPS	HAZARDS THAT MAY ARISE	INITIAL RISK	SPECIFIC MEASURES TO BE PUT IN PLACE TO ELIMINATE OR CONTROL THE RISKS	RESIDUAL RISK	NAME OF PERSON
			[REDACTED]		
			[REDACTED]		
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6. Material Handling	Manual handling injuries, heavy storage	3H	[REDACTED]	2M	
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10. Break Time	Poor diet, insufficient rest	2M	<div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div>	1L	

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12. Work Completion	Incomplete documentation, Overlooking hazards	2M	<div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div>	1L	

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			<div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div>		
14. End-of-Day Security	Unauthorised access, Vandalism	2M	<div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div>	1L	

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 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 2017

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>

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

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	Position	Signature	Date	Time	Supervisor
			Date:		
			Date:		
			Date:		
			Date:		
			Date:		
			Date:		
			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 needed. The review process should be carried out in consultation with workers (including contractors and subcontractors) 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	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 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	TO BE DONE	COMMENTS
The company details have been entered, including the project name and address.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Names and signatures of all relevant personnel consulted during the development of the SWMS.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Name, signature, position and date signed of the person approving the SWMS.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Specific personnel and qualifications, experience is noted in the SWMS.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provides a step-by-step process of tasks required to carry out the activity or task.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Adequate risk assessment of any identified hazards has been completed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Foreseeable hazards are identified and documented for each step.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Any hazards listed in any site risk assessments have been added to the SWMS.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
SWMS initial risk (IR) column as well as residual risk (RR) columns completed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Check control measures added to the SWMS are the most effective solutions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Responsible person is assigned and listed on the SWMS for the implementation of control measures.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Permit requirements specified, such as Hot Work, Electrical Work, Work at Heights etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
SWMS identifies plant and equipment to be used.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Details of inspection checks required for any equipment listed are noted on the SWMS.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Describes any mandatory qualifications, experience, training, skills required to perform the work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Applicable personal protective equipment is selected on the SWMS.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Lists any required permits or licenses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Reflects and documents any legislative references and/or Australian Standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Identifies any hazardous substances used with specific control measures in line with any SDS.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
REVIEWED BY		DATE REVIEWED	
SIGNATURE		DATE COMPLETED	