SAFE METHOD WORK STATEMENT (SWMS) TEMPLATE INSTRUCTIONS

Purpose of a safe work method statement (SWMS)

The primary purpose of a SWMS is to help supervisors, workers and any other persons at the workplace to understand the requirements that have been established to carry out the high-risk construction work in a safe and healthy manner.
The SWMS:

- Sets out the work activities in logical sequences
- Identifies hazards
- Describes control measures

Both simple and complex activities can be broken down into a series of basic steps that will allow for full analysis of each part of the activity for hazards and potential incidents. The description of the process should not be so broad that it leaves out activities with the potential to cause incidents and prevents proper identification of the hazards nor is it necessary to go into fine detail of the tasks.
The aim of a SWMS is to:

- Describe the activity or task to be undertaken
- Identify the resources, manpower and skills associated with the task
- assess and select control measures (as appropriate)
- systematically plan the activity so it can be completed efficiently and effectively

The SWMS must be able to be easily read by those who need to know what has been planned to manage the risks and implement the control measures and ensure the work is being carried out in accordance with the SWMS.
This includes:

- The supervisor of the high-risk construction work
- The worker carrying out the high-risk construction work
- The principal contractor (if it is a construction project) or the person who has management and control over the high-risk construction work

SAFE METHOD WORK STATEMENT (SWMS) TEMPLATE INSTRUCTIONS

What should be in a safe work method statement (SWMS)?

When preparing a SWMS, the following must be considered:

- The circumstance at the workplace that may affect the way in which the high-risk construction work is carried out
- On a construction project, the WHS management plan prepared by the principal contractor
  - identify the work that is high risk construction work
  - specify hazards relating to the high-risk construction work and risks to health and safety associated with those hazards
  - describe the measures to be implemented to control the risks
  - describe how the control measures are to be implemented, monitored and reviewed

A SWMS should also include the following information:

- The PCBU's name, address and ABN (if they have one)
- Details of the person(s) responsible for ensuring implementation, monitoring and compliance with the SWMS
- If the work is being carried out at a construction project:
  - the name of the principal contractor
  - the address where the high-risk construction work will be carried out
  - the date the SWMS was prepared and the date it was provided to the principal contractor
  - the review date (if any)

A SWMS may also include:

- The names of workers that have been consulted on the content of the SWMS
- The date the consultation occurred
- The signature of each worker acknowledging their participation in this consultation and the opportunity to discuss the proposed measures

SAFE METHOD WORK STATEMENT (SWMS) TEMPLATE INSTRUCTIONS

The content of a SWMS should provide clear direction on the control measures to be implemented. There should be no statements that require a decision to be made by supervisors or workers. For example, the statement 'use appropriate PPE' does not detail the control measures. The control measures should be clearly specified.

Workers and their health and safety representatives should be consulted in the preparation of the SWMS. If there are no workers engaged at the planning stage, consultation should occur with workers when the SWMS is first made available to workers for example, during induction training, or when it is reviewed such as during workplace-specific training or a toolbox talk.

Generic safe work method statement (SWMS)

A generic SWMS may be prepared and used for work activities that are carried out on a regular basis. The content of this type of SWMS may be refined over several years and include consultation with workers and other PCBUs. Prior to each new activity, the SWMS must be reviewed and revised to ensure it applies to the high-risk construction work and the actual workplace.

Providing information and instruction

A PCBU must ensure that all workers who will be involved in high-risk construction work are provided with information and instruction so they:

- Understand the hazards and the risks arising from the work
- Understand and implement the risk controls in a SWMS
- Know what to do if the work is not being conducted in accordance with the SWMS

For example, this information and instruction may be provided during induction training, workplace-specific or during a toolbox talk by principal contractor, contractor or subcontractor.

Job Details

Company name:_____

Description of work activity										
Date of delevlopment						**SWMS Number**				
Author(s) **Names and Contact details**										
Project										
Review Team										
SWMS Approved by										
Location						**Area**				
Skills/Qualifications/Licences required										
Plant/Equipment required										
Permits required										
PPE (tick required)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Uniform	**Footwear**	**Eyewear**	**Gloves**	**Hard hat**	**High-vis**	**Hearing Protection**	**Other**	**Other**	**Other**
										

Potential hazards associated with the job

Company name:_____

Category	Hazard	Category	Hazard	Category	Hazard
Working at heights	☐ Ladders ☐ Lifting equipment, scissors / EWP's ☐ Scaffolding ☐ Stairs / platforms ☐ Working at height ☐ Working above others ☐ Multiple work requiring EWP's	**Pressure**	☐ Competitive pressures ☐ Compressed gases / air ☐ Fluid ☐ High pressure steam ☐ Hydraulic ☐ Water	**Workplace**	☐ Asbestos ☐ Confined space / void space ☐ Falling objects ☐ General access ☐ Housekeeping ☐ Illumination / lighting ☐ Noise, i.e. Exposure / nuisance ☐ Poor ventilation ☐ Protrusions ☐ Restricted visibility ☐ Restricted work area ☐ Slip & trip hazards ☐ Unauthorised personnel ☐ Unlabelled controls ☐ Vibration ☐ Wet / slippery ☐ Wind / storm activity ☐ Fog / mist / smoke ☐ Working in isolation ☐ Dust / particulates
Working with Electricity	☐ Static electricity/Induction ☐ Sub-stations / switch rooms ☐ Underground cables ☐ Contact with electrical equipment ☐ Electrical cables ☐ High voltage equipment ☐ Overhead cables ☐ Non-compliant earths (tagged/tested)	**Human factors**	☐ Rushing ☐ Complacency ☐ Fatigue ☐ Unclear work direction ☐ Stress / Anxiety / Frustration ☐ Lack of knowledge ☐ Poor communications ☐ Negative attitudes		
Radiation	☐ Infra-red ☐ Microwaves ☐ Ultra-violet light, i.e., sun ☐ X-ray ☐ Laser	**Using mobile plant**	☐ Traffic / pedestrian interaction / collision ☐ Uneven terrain ☐ Unlicensed / untrained operators ☐ Vehicle instability ☐ Vehicle access		
Mechanical	☐ Abrasive blasting / grinding ☐ Auto-start equipment ☐ Conveyors ☐ Equipment failure ☐ Hand and power tool ☐ Impact and crushing areas ☐ Pinch / cutting points ☐ Residual / stored energy ☐ Uncontrolled movement ☐ Unguarded moving parts ☐ Welding or cutting	**Hazardous Manual Tasks (ergonomic)**	☐ Awkward / unbalanced load ☐ High / low reach ☐ High force / heavy loads ☐ Lighting ☐ Over exertion / fatigue ☐ Poor design / layout / surface ☐ Repetitive movements	**Chemical**	☐ Chemicals / reagents ☐ Fumes / vapour / mist (e.g. SF6) ☐ Flammable gases ☐ Handling flammable materials ☐ Hazardous chemical exposure ☐ Solid chemical ☐ Splashes / burns ☐ Spills to ground or work area
		Environment	☐ Air contamination ☐ Soil contamination ☐ Storm water contamination ☐ Waste (effluent/hazardous ☐ Solid waste	**Thermal**	☐ Cold – ambient temperature ☐ Heat – ambient temperature ☐ Hot materials/fluids ☐ Hot surfaces ☐ UV exposure

Job Specific Hazards and Controls

Company name:________________________

Job Steps	Reference	Hazards		Controls	
List the steps required to perform the job in the sequence they are carried out	*List the references for the required job step such as work instructions, client requirements etc.*	*For each job step list the hazards that could cause injury when the task is performed*	*Initial Risk Rating*	*List the control measures required to eliminate or minimise the risk of injury arising from the identified hazards*	*Residual Risk Rating*
Plan and prepare					

Job Specific Hazards and Controls

Company name:________________________

Job Steps	Reference	Hazards		Controls	
List the steps required to perform the job in the sequence they are carried out	*List the references for the required job step such as work instructions, client requirements etc.*	*For each job step list the hazards that could cause injury when the task is performed*	*Initial Risk Rating*	*List the control measures required to eliminate or minimise the risk of injury arising from the identified hazards*	*Residual Risk Rating*
Carry out the job					

Job Specific Hazards and Controls

Company name:________________________

Job Steps	Reference	Hazards		Controls	
List the steps required to perform the job in the sequence they are carried out	*List the references for the required job step such as work instructions, client requirements etc.*	*For each job step list the hazards that could cause injury when the task is performed*	*Initial Risk Rating*	*List the control measures required to eliminate or minimise the risk of injury arising from the identified hazards*	*Residual Risk Rating*
Complete the job					

Risk Matrix

Company name:_____

Likelihood	Consequence				
	Low A	Minor B	Moderate C	Major D	Critical E
Almost Certain (5)	11	16	20	23	25
Likely (4)	7	12	17	21	24
Possible (3)	4	8	13	18	22
Unlikely (2)	2	5	9	14	19
Rare (1)	1	3	6	10	15
		LOW	MODERATE	HIGH	EXTREME

Likelihood

	Description	Frequency
Almost Certain (5)	Expected to happen	Occurs once a week
Likely (4)	May easily happen	Occurs once a month
Possible (3)	May happen	Occurs once a year
Unlikely (2)	May happen sometime	Occurs once in 10 years
Rare (1)	May happen in extreme circumstances	Occurs once in 100 years

Consequence

	Safety	Environment
Low (A)	First aid treatment	Limited damage to area of low significance
Minor (B)	Medical treatment	Minor short-term damage to environmental / heritage area
Moderate (C)	Lost time Injury or Restricted work case	Moderate effects on environmental / heritage area
Major (D)	Fatality or severe permanent disability	Significant environmental / heritage damage
Critical (E)	Multiple fatalities / health effects to >50 persons	Severe damage to environmental / heritage damage

Job Specific Hazards and Controls – *Work crew to complete this section*

Company name:_____

Job Steps	Reference	Hazards		Controls	
List the steps required to perform the job in the sequence they are carried out	*List the references for the required job step such as work instructions, client requirements etc.*	*For each job step list the hazards that could cause injury when the task is performed*	*Initial Risk Rating*	*List the control measures required to eliminate or minimise the risk of injury arising from the identified hazards*	*Residual Risk Rating*
Site Specific Amendments					

SWMS Sign off Page

Company name:_____

Crew Member Name	Signature	Date
This SWMS has been developed through consultation with our employees and has been read, understood, and signed by all employees/contractors/persons undertaking the works:		