SAFE WORK METHOD STATEMENT (SWMS)

Business name

Document: SWMS-001 Rev 1
Prepared: 9 Nov 2026
Review by: 9 Dec 2026
Highest risk after controls: Medium

1. BUSINESS AND JOB DETAILS

Job	Scaffold alteration	**Start date**	9 Nov 2026
Working hours	7:00 am to 3:30 pm	**Trade**	Scaffolding

2. HIGH RISK CONSTRUCTION WORK COVERED BY THIS SWMS

YES	Risk of a person falling more than 2 metres		Work on or near chemical, fuel or refrigerant lines
	Work on a telecommunication tower		Work on or near energised electrical installations or services
	Demolition of an element of a structure that is load-bearing or related to its physical integrity		Work in an area that may have a contaminated or flammable atmosphere
	Likely to involve disturbing asbestos		Work involving tilt-up or precast concrete elements
	Structural alterations or repairs that require temporary support to prevent collapse		Work on, in or next to a road, railway, shipping lane or other traffic corridor in use by traffic other than pedestrians
	Work in or near a confined space		Work in an area with movement of powered mobile plant
	Work in or near a shaft or trench with an excavated depth greater than 1.5 metres		Work in an area with artificial extremes of temperature
	Work in or near a tunnel		Work in or near water or other liquid that involves a risk of drowning
	Use of explosives		Diving work
	Work on or near pressurised gas distribution mains or piping		

3. JOB STEPS, HAZARDS AND CONTROLS

#	Job step	Hazards	Risk before	Controls	Risk after	Responsible
1	Only licensed or carded scaffolders alter scaffold; tag it out first	Scaffold collapse or fall from scaffold Rules: WHS Regulation 2011, Part 4.4 Falls, Part 5.1 Plant and r.225 (scaffolds)	**Extreme Possible / Catastrophic**	1.1 Scaffold is built, altered and taken down only by a competent scaffolder, on a firm base with sole boards and ties. [Engineering] 1.2 Fit guardrails, mid rails and toe boards on every working platform. [Engineering] 1.3 Use mobile scaffolds only on firm, level ground with castors locked and outriggers fitted. Never move one with anyone on it. [Engineering] 1.4 Scaffold where a person or object could fall more than 4 metres is built by a licensed scaffolder (High Risk Work Licence). [Administrative] 1.5 Do not use a scaffold over 4 metres until the scaffolder gives a written	**Medium Rare / Catastrophic**	Site supervisor

#	Job step	Hazards	Risk before	Controls	Risk after	Responsible
				handover certificate. [Administrative] 1.6 Inspect the scaffold before first use, after any change or bad weather, and at least every 30 days. Record it on the scaffold tag. [Administrative] 1.7 Do not overload platforms. Know the duty rating and keep material stacks over the standards. [Administrative] 1.8 Never remove ties, braces, guardrails or boards. Only the scaffolder alters the scaffold. [Administrative] 1.9 Wear a hard hat and safety boots on and around the scaffold. [PPE]		
2	Clear other workers from the area	Falling tools and materials Public entering the work area Rules: WHS Regulation 2011, Part 3.2 (falling objects)	**High Possible / Major**	2.1 Barricade and sign the drop zone under overhead work so nobody walks beneath. [Isolate] 2.2 Fit toe boards, kick plates and mesh screens on scaffolds and edges. [Engineering] 2.3 Falling tools and materials: see step 4 for the full controls [Administrative] 2.4 Fence off the site with secure temporary fencing and lock the gates when you leave. [Isolate] 2.5 Give pedestrians a safe, marked path around the work, with ramps for prams and wheelchairs. [Isolate] 2.6 Use hoarding, covered walkways or catch fans where work is above public areas. [Engineering] 2.7 Put signs at each entry: site name, contact number and "No unauthorised entry". [Administrative] 2.8 Make the site safe at the end of each day: cover holes, lower plant, remove ladders and lock tools away. [Administrative] 2.9 Use a spotter when moving plant or materials across public paths. [Administrative]	**Medium Unlikely / Major**	Site supervisor
3	Make the change, keeping ties and bracing in place	Scaffold collapse or fall from scaffold Falling from height Rules: WHS Regulation 2011, Part 4.4 Falls, Part 5.1 Plant and r.225 (scaffolds); WHS Regulation 2011, Part 4.4 Falls	**Extreme Likely / Catastrophic**	3.1 Scaffold collapse or fall from scaffold: see step 1 for the full controls [Administrative] 3.2 Do the work from the ground where you can, for example pre-assemble on the ground or use extension poles. [Eliminate] 3.3 Install guardrails or edge protection on all open edges before work starts. [Isolate] 3.4 Falling from height: see step 4 for the full controls [Administrative]	**Medium Rare / Catastrophic**	Site supervisor
4	Reinstate guardrails and toe boards	Falling from height Falling tools and materials Rules: WHS Regulation 2011, Part 4.4 Falls; WHS Regulation 2011, Part 3.2 (falling objects)	**Extreme Likely / Catastrophic**	4.1 Do the work from the ground where you can, for example pre-assemble on the ground or use extension poles. [Eliminate] 4.2 Install guardrails or edge protection on all open edges before work starts. [Isolate] 4.3 Use a scaffold, mobile work platform or EWP instead of working off a ladder. [Engineering] 4.4 Where edge protection is not practical, use a fall restraint or fall arrest system on a rated anchor point. [Engineering] 4.5 Everyone working at height holds a White Card and has been briefed on this SWMS before going up. [Administrative] 4.6 Have a written emergency and rescue plan, tested before work starts,	**Medium Unlikely / Major**	Site supervisor

#	Job step	Hazards	Risk before	Controls	Risk after	Responsible
				so a worker hanging in a harness can be brought down within minutes (WHS Regulations r.80). [Administrative] 4.7 Wear a full body harness with a shock-absorbing lanyard, clipped on at all times when using fall arrest. [PPE] 4.8 Barricade and sign the drop zone under overhead work so nobody walks beneath. [Isolate] 4.9 Fit toe boards, kick plates and mesh screens on scaffolds and edges. [Engineering] 4.10 Use catch fans, debris netting or covered walkways where people pass below. [Engineering] 4.11 Tether hand tools when working at height. [Engineering] 4.12 Keep platforms tidy. Do not stack materials near edges or above toe board height. [Administrative] 4.13 Lower materials with a hoist, chute or rope. Never throw or drop anything down. [Administrative] 4.14 Wear a hard hat anywhere objects could fall. [PPE]		
5	Re-inspect and re-tag	Scaffold collapse or fall from scaffold Rules: WHS Regulation 2011, Part 4.4 Falls, Part 5.1 Plant and r.225 (scaffolds)	**Extreme Possible / Catastrophic**	5.1 Scaffold collapse or fall from scaffold: see step 1 for the full controls [Administrative]	**Medium Rare / Catastrophic**	Site supervisor

Risk key: risk = likelihood x consequence on a 5 x 5 matrix. Low, Medium, High, Extreme. Work must not start while the risk after controls is high or above. Controls are listed in order of the hierarchy of control: Eliminate, Substitute, Isolate, Engineering, Administrative, PPE.

4. PPE AND PERMITS

Required PPE	Permits and plans
Steel cap boots Hard hat Safety harness and lanyard Work gloves Hi-vis shirt or vest Safety glasses	Working at heights permit

5. PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

Plant / equipment	Licence or training needed	Inspection needed	Rego / ID	Last inspected	Certificate / report
Fixed scaffold	Scaffolding HRWL (SB, SI or SA) to erect, alter or dismantle where a fall of more than 4 m is possible	Over 4 m: not used until a competent person gives a written handover certificate (WHS Regulations r.225(2)); inspected before use after any incident, alteration or repair and at least every 30 days (r.225(3))			

Plant / equipment	Licence or training needed	Inspection needed	Rego / ID	Last inspected	Certificate / report
Hand tools					

6. CREW COMPETENCY, TICKETS AND LICENCES

Crew listed at sign-on below, with ticket and licence numbers.

7. EMERGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

Emergency number	000	**First aid kit**	In the work vehicle
Fire extinguisher	In the work vehicle	**Alarm and evacuation**	Shout for help and stop work. Make the area safe and go to the assembly point. Call the emergency number and send someone to meet the ambulance.
Reporting incidents	Notify the regulator immediately of any notifiable incident and preserve the site.		

8. IMPLEMENTING, MONITORING AND REVIEWING THE CONTROLS

How they are put in place	Controls are set up before the work starts. The person responsible explains this SWMS to every worker before they start, and workers sign to confirm they understand it.	**How they are monitored**	The person responsible checks the controls are in place before work starts each day and during the work, and talks to the workers about any problems. Stop work and review this SWMS if the work changes, the controls are not working, after any incident, or if a worker raises a concern.
When it is reviewed	Reviewed when the work or site changes, after any incident, if a control is not working, or if a worker or health and safety representative asks.		

Legal basis: Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011, Part 6.3 (Victoria: OHS Regulations 2017). A SWMS must be prepared before any high risk construction work starts. It must list the high risk work, the hazards and risks, the control measures, and how those controls will be put in place, monitored and reviewed. It must be easy for the workers to read and understand.

Keep this SWMS, and every revised version, until the high risk construction work is finished, where workers and inspectors can see it on site. If a notifiable incident happens during the work, keep it for at least 2 years after the incident.

9. REVIEW AND AMENDMENT RECORD

Rev	Date	By	What changed
1	9 Nov 2026		First issue

10. SIGN-OFF

	Name	Signature	Date	
Prepared by				
Person responsible (supervisor)				
Principal contractor review				Accepted for use: Yes / No

By signing below, each worker confirms they were consulted on and have read and understood this SWMS, and will follow it. If the work cannot be done as this SWMS says, stop as soon as it is safe and do not restart until the SWMS is reviewed.

Name	Role / company	Tickets / licences	Inducted	Signature	Date

Name	Role / company	Tickets / licences	Inducted	Signature	Date