

# WHS Contractor Induction Handbook

Working safely at Tweed Shire Council



## Disclaimer

Tweed Shire Council has prepared this Handbook in order to assist Contractors and their staff to work safely at Tweed Shire Council workplaces and to comply with Tweed Shire Council's procedures relating to people, property and the environment.

Every effort has been made to explain the local site rules and legal obligations of Contractors working at Tweed Shire Council work sites and facilities. However, responsibility to understand and observe relevant legislation remains with the Contractor at all times.

Further information about legal requirements can be obtained from SafeWork NSW, the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and the *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017*.

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# Introduction

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Tweed Shire Council is the largest council on the north coast of NSW. It is the largest employer in the Tweed with a workforce of approximately 700 employees across a wide range of services and programs.

Tweed Shire Council's guiding principle is that we will not compromise the safety of anyone involved in or is affected by our activities and operations. Health, safety and wellbeing is central to the success and sustainability of our organisation.



## Minimum requirements

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There are numerous circumstances in which contractors are engaged to work at Tweed Shire Council and as such, the work will vary depending on what project or task you have been contracted to perform. No one will be expected to work under conditions that are not safe, but everyone working at a Tweed Shire Council site is obliged to take all reasonable care to ensure:

- your own health and safety
- cooperation with all instructions provided in relation to health and safety requirements
- you are aware of the relevant legislative requirements that apply to your area or trade for which you have been contracted
- that your work activity and site are safe and free from risk to yourself or others who may be affected by your work
- practice good housekeeping to minimise the risk of an incident
- use and maintain all equipment properly
- that your work environment is free from hazards
- that you immediately eliminate or minimise any risk associated with any hazards as soon as you become aware of it. If you are unable to safely eliminate a hazard, please advise the relevant contractor supervisor on site or contact Tweed Shire Council Work Health & Safety immediately on (02) 6670 2244 as required.

Tweed Shire Council and the contractor or sub-contractor have responsibilities for ensuring health and safety (where practicable) relating to:

- premises
- plant and machinery
- substances
- portable electrical equipment
- systems of work
- provision of information
- instruction
- training and supervision
- suitable working environment/facilities

Tweed Shire Council supervisors have a responsibility for managing matters relating to work health and safety on site that are within their control.

## Risk management

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Risk management is an integral component of all activities at Tweed Shire Council. For contractors who are engaging in works that involve construction or have a moderate to high risk of harm, a safe work method statement plan must be provided to the Tweed Shire Council contact for the work.

When assessing risk, you should consider:

- what the hazards are
- what type of risk that the hazard poses
- how likely is it to occur
- how severe could the consequences be
- how will you eliminate the hazard and/or manage the risk that cannot be eliminated

## Identifying hazards

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A hazard is something that has the potential to cause harm or injury. For example, a loose cord lying across the floor has the potential to cause someone to trip and fall; therefore it is a hazard. When a hazard has been identified, the next step is to assess the risk associated with that hazard.

## Risk assessment

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Risk is the likelihood of harm resulting from a hazard. Following on from the previous example; the loose cord is lying across a busy hallway, the likelihood of someone tripping over it and falling is high. Whereas if the cord was lying across the floor of an unused cupboard, it is less likely that someone will trip over it so the risk is low.

The level or severity of risk will determine how urgent the need is to eliminate the hazard and if that cannot be done, then the risk must be controlled to the lowest acceptable risk. In the example of the loose cord in the busy hallway; it cannot be eliminated because there is no other way to get electrical power to the area it is in. So, in order to control and minimise the risk the cord could be covered with an acceptable floor cover.

This will minimise the risk of trips and falls. An important concept to keep in mind is that you need to be wary of any controls put in place that they do not create a new risk. If the covering placed over the loose cord was not adequate and rolled up at the edges, then a new tripping hazard would be created.

## Controlling the risk – hierarchy of control

When identifying ways to minimise or control risk, the hierarchy of control must be considered. You must always aim to eliminate the hazard, which is the most effective control. If this is not reasonably practicable, you must minimise the risk by working through the other alternative in the hierarchy which are:

- Level 1:** Eliminate the hazard
- Level 2:** Substitute the hazard for something safer  
Isolate the hazard from people  
Use engineering controls
- Level 3:** Use administrative controls  
Use personal protective equipment (PPE)

The hierarchy of control works through controls from the most effective (elimination) to the least preferred personal protective equipment (PPE). When a medium or high risk has been identified and it cannot be eliminated it is generally not sufficient to just introduce administrative controls (policies, procedures, training etc) or PPE. You must consider more robust ways of protecting workers from risk. Once control measures have been identified and put in place, you must have a system in place to monitor those controls to ensure they are effective and not posing any further risk.

Below is the matrix that Tweed Shire Council uses to assess risk in all areas of the organisation.

Effect \ Likelihood	Negligible No injury or illness	Minor First aid	Moderate Medical treatment, some lost time	Major Hospitalisation	Catastrophic Multiple deaths or extensive injuries
<b>Almost certain</b> Is expected to occur in most circumstances	Low	Medium	Very high	Extreme	Extreme
<b>Likely</b> Will probably occur in most circumstances	Low	Medium	High	Very high	Extreme
<b>Possible</b> May occur at some time	Low	Medium	Medium	High	Very high
<b>Unlikely</b> May occur but probably never will	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	High
<b>Rare</b> Will probably never occur	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium

**Extreme/very high/high risk:** Unacceptable level of risk which must be controlled as soon as possible (generally **immediately**)

**Medium risk:** Unacceptable level of risk – additional risk controls to be implemented **within 28 days**

**Low risk:** Manage accordingly



## Safety breaches

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Tweed Shire Council treats instances of safety breaches seriously. Should any worker observe any contractor, sub-contractor or any other of their employees acting in an unsafe manner, the contractor will be required to take immediate action to address the situation. The Site Supervisor and/or WHS is to be informed and the incident reported. If repeat instances occur, the contractor may be instructed to leave the site. Failure to wear appropriate protective clothing and/or use safety equipment are examples of a safety breach. The incorrect storage, handling or use of a hazardous chemical is another example of a safety breach.

## Incident reporting

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The definition of an incident is an unplanned event at a workplace that has or has the potential to expose a worker or any other person to a risk of harm to a person's health or safety and includes near miss events, injuries and illnesses.

All incidents that occur while undertaking work as a contractor for Tweed Shire Council must be reported immediately to the key Tweed Shire Council contact for the works. The contractor must also follow the incident management process for their own organisation.

In the event of a serious or 'notifiable' incident, the relevant Supervisor must report the incident to the Tweed Shire Council WHS Section as soon as practicable after the incident has occurred. The contractor may also have an obligation to report the notifiable incident to SafeWork NSW and must do so as part of their legal obligation outside the contractual obligation they have with Tweed Shire Council. The scene where the incident occurred is to be left 'as is' until advice has been received from SafeWork NSW and/or the police. The scene may only be disturbed if it is necessary to aid or retrieve any person involved in the incident and/or to prevent further injury to persons or property.

## Security of contractors and equipment

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Contractors will receive a site specific induction on their first visit which outlines site rules, emergency procedures and expectations for behaviour.

Contractors are responsible for the security of their equipment whilst on site. Toolboxes and other equipment should be locked or stowed in a secure location when not in use. Gas equipment (welding) must be turned off and keys removed from machinery when not in use. Contractors are responsible to provide fencing or barriers to secure their allocated work area to prevent access by unauthorized personnel where required.

## Emergency management

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In the event of an emergency, such as fire, you are to follow the directions given to you by the person in control of the site. If you are the first to identify a fire, ring 000 and then alert others on site who will then respond according to the site specific emergency procedures. Evacuate as directed and do not re-enter the site until you have been directed by emergency services or the person in control of the site.

In the event that you have a serious injury:

- remain calm
- request a first aider to attend and assess the injury – they will ring for an ambulance if one is needed
- follow the instructions of the person providing the first aid or ambulance staff
- Tweed Shire Council will be required to report the incident so be cooperative and transparent as to what happened

## Certificates of competency

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All contractors and their employees must have the relevant competencies and current certificates for the work/activity for which Tweed Shire Council has engaged them. Contractors will be required to supply a copy of any relevant qualifications along with proof of currency for relevant insurances.

## Personal protective equipment (PPE)

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Contractors are to ensure that all their employees and sub-contractors have and use/wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). You are to enforce the correct wearing and use of PPE as required by Contractor's risk assessment and any applicable legislation and/or codes of practice. PPE includes hard hats, safety boots, protective eyewear, gloves, hearing protection, clothing, etc. PPE used at all Tweed Shire Council sites must be as per the relevant Australian Standards.

# Harassment, discrimination and inappropriate language

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Tweed Shire Council aims to provide a working and learning environment which is free from harassment and discrimination. Contractors are advised that they are to treat Tweed Shire Council and other workers with courtesy and respect at all times.

Offensive language (e.g. swearing) and offensive behaviour in the form of bullying, harassment and/or discrimination will not be tolerated at any time whilst performing work on Tweed Shire Council sites.

Discrimination is any conduct or practice which involves making a distinction between one person and another (or one group and another) and treating that person or group differently, on the basis of that person or group's race/ethnicity, disability, age, gender, marital or relationship status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, breastfeeding, parental status or religious belief or affiliation.

Harassment is any conduct that offends, humiliates, intimidates, insults or ridicules another person on the basis of any of these attributes and can include:

- abuse, insults or jokes about a person's physical features, disability, accent or pattern of speech
- making derogatory comments or taunts about someone's race or religion or based on their gender
- telling insulting jokes about racial groups

Offensive behaviour and/or language also includes behaviours which reinforce inappropriate demeaning or discriminatory attitudes or assumptions. Behaviour such as whistling and unsolicited remarks of a sexual nature is specifically prohibited as are:

- continuous unwanted advances or requests for a friendship, relationship or date
- unwanted phone calls, emails or messages that are unrelated to work

## Noise

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Contractors are requested to take all practicable precautions to minimise noise.

## Dogs and pets

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Contractors are not to bring dogs or other pets onto Tweed Shire Council sites. Contractors with a visual impairment are the only exception.

## Smoking restrictions

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Tweed Shire Council restricts the areas where smoking is allowed. Some sites have areas allocated to smoke. Smoking is not allowed inside any Council premises or vehicles. Non-smoking signs are to be observed at all times.

## Alcohol and other drugs

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Persons affected by alcohol or other drugs are not permitted to carry out work at a Tweed Shire Council site. Where it is observed that a contractor or their employee may be affected by alcohol or other drugs, the matter will be referred to the Contractor's principal who will be required to take immediate action. Should the situation re-occur, the contractor may be requested to leave the site.

On Council controlled worksites, contractors are subjected to Council's random or post incident alcohol and other drugs testing.



## Interruption of services

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Where a contractor's work involves a requirement to isolate services (electricity, gas, water supply, communications (data and telephone), sewer, or fire protection) to all or a part of a building, appropriate notice is to be given to the Tweed Shire Council staff on site to assist in making alternative arrangements as required. Except in emergencies, interruptions to services are to be at mutually agreed times in order to minimise the disruption to services.

## Isolation of fire alarms

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If works involve dust, vibration, moisture, aerosol sprays, fumes or any other material or substance which may result in mechanical damage to detection equipment, the contractor is to ensure that the fire alarms are temporarily isolated by a qualified person prior to the commencement of work and that they are activated by a qualified person once the work has been completed.

In all cases, the contractor is to contact the security company and the fire brigade and advise that the alarms will be isolated and the expected duration of the isolation and advise the same once they have been reactivated.

## Hazardous chemicals

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A Hazardous Chemical Register along with relevant and current safety data sheets (SDS) will be maintained in the vicinity of the use and/or storage of the hazardous chemicals. If large quantities of a hazardous chemical are used on site, a spill kit will be required that is sufficient to clean up a spill of that chemical.



# Electrical plant and tools

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## Electrical

All portable electric power tools and equipment are to be connected to an approved residual current device (safety switch – RCD). Power tools and electric leads are to have a current test tag affixed and portable generators are to have a RCD.

Electric leads must be supported clear of floors or under protective covers. Leads passing through doorways are to be protected. Double adapters and piggybacked leads are not to be used.

## Machine guarding

All hand tools, machinery or other equipment must be operated with effective guards and regularly checked to ensure they are without damage or defects.

## Hand tools

Picks, shovels, axes, crowbars, hammers, wrenches, files, screwdrivers, etc. which are used on site are to be kept in a safe and secure location when not in use and are to be removed at the end of each working day unless a negotiated secure and locked cupboard/room has been allocated for afterhours storage.

## Manual Handling

Where the contractor has identified that any of the work to be undertaken has a hazardous manual task associated with the activity (repetitive movements, sustained or awkward positions and/or repetitive or sustained forces), it is expected that the contractor will have effective correct manual handling techniques in place along with training in those techniques for their employees.



# Waste management

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## Rubbish, spoil and clean up

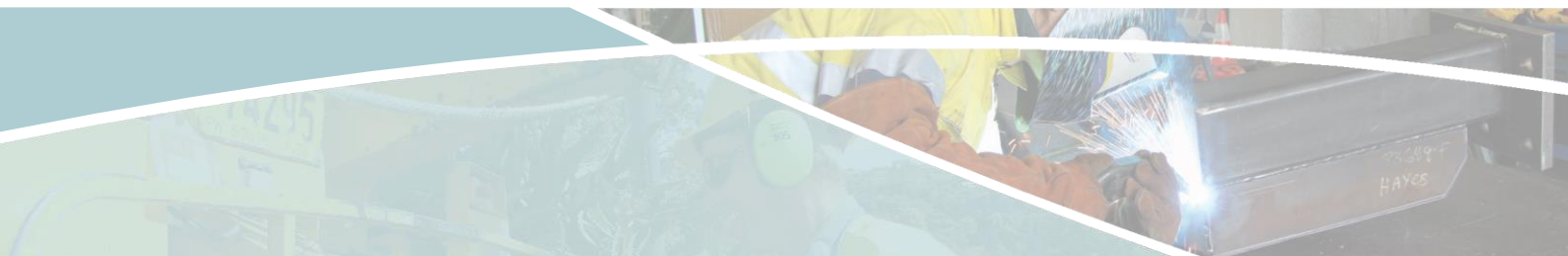
Rubbish must be removed progressively to an appropriate contractor's bin on site and not to a Tweed Shire Council rubbish bin. Rubbish must be disposed of offsite and all fees or charges for the removal of the rubbish are the contractor's responsibility. Under no circumstances are contractors to dump rubbish on any Tweed Shire Council site. The disposal and washing out of excess concrete from trucks is not permitted on site. Painting contractors are not to dispose of paints, thinners or to clean painting equipment at Tweed Shire Council sites.

Tweed Shire Council strongly encourages contractors to identify waste minimisation options at the start of each job, for example:

- work out costs and savings involved in minimising waste
- take care not to over order
- ensure that sub-contractors are responsible for their own waste
- utilise off-cuts
- recycle materials where practicable
- buy materials with minimal packaging and require suppliers to accept their packaging back

## Environmental protection

All contractors are required to ensure their works are completed without causing damage to the environment. If an incident occurs that may cause environmental harm (e.g. chemical spill or leak) you are required to notify the key Tweed Shire Council contact as soon as you become aware of the incident. Ensure all relevant services are notified and the site is cleaned safely and as quickly as possible.



## Working at height

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### Ladders

No domestic type ladders are to be used at Tweed Shire Council sites. Industrial ladders must comply with Australian Standard AS 1892 for the design, selection and use of portable ladders. Ladders must be regularly maintained and inspected. The tops and bases of extension ladders must be secured when in use.

### Scaffolding and work platforms

All scaffolding and working platforms (elevated or not) must conform to all relevant statutory and Australian Standard requirements. Scaffolds and platforms must be erected by an individual with appropriate certificate of competency. All work at heights must be carried out in accordance with the Code of Practice for Managing the Risks of Falls in the Workplace.

### Asbestos

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The identification of material containing asbestos or materials suspected of containing asbestos must be notified to the Tweed Shire Council Site Supervisor immediately. All work with asbestos is to be in accordance with the Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017. All contractors who undertake the removal of asbestos are to hold the relevant licence. All removal of asbestos is to be undertaken in accordance with the Code of Practice for How to Safely Remove Asbestos.





## Hot work

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Hot work includes welding, grinding, brazing, acetylene or gas burning, soldering, heat gun operation, use of open flames, abrasive blasting, power tools that generate sparks and internal combustion engines and similar appliances that produce sufficient heat to ignite flammable vapours.

Adequate fire protection must be present with suitable fire extinguishers attached to or near each welding plant. Welders must use screens to protect all personnel from welding flashes and any hot waste produced during the welding process. Workers undertaking welding are to wear the correct PPE. Isolation of alarms may be required.

Hot work in open areas is prohibited during total fire ban days.

## Confined space

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Confined spaces are to be identified through documented risk assessment. A confined space entry permit must be completed prior to commencing any work in a confined space.

If a contractor is engaged to work in a confined space they must be trained to do so and work is to be undertaken in accordance with the Confined Spaces Code of Practice—with all control measures, rescue plan in place.



# Chain of responsibility

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## Heavy vehicle operations – chain of responsibility

Under the Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL) chain of responsibility (CoR) provisions, every person in the transport supply chain has a responsibility to ensure the safe and legal transport of goods.

Under CoR, all parties who influence, direct or control transport operations in the supply chain share responsibility for compliance with the law and for the safety of heavy vehicle operations, even if they have no direct role in driving or operating a heavy vehicle.

Under the HVNL, a road-going vehicle that has a gross vehicle mass (GVM) of more than 4.5 tonnes must meet a number of requirements in relation to mass, dimension, loading and speed. Vehicles that have a GVM or gross combination mass (GCM) of more than 12 tonnes, are fatigue-regulated heavy vehicles and are subject to requirements in relation to fatigue management.

As a heavy vehicle operator you must ensure the following from your operators:

- **Mass** – a loaded vehicle must not exceed its gross or axle mass limits.
- **Dimension** – no part of a vehicle or its load may extend beyond the permitted limits in any direction.
- **Load restraint** – all goods on a vehicle, including those within a container, must be restrained so that they meet the Performance Standards set out in the *Load Restraint Guide 2018* and are not able to shift to a degree that would contribute adversely to vehicle instability or become dislodged from the vehicle.
- **Speed** – no vehicle may exceed any speed limit and certain heavy vehicles must be fitted with 100km/h speed limiters; no person may require, request, encourage or provide any incentive for a driver to speed.
- **Fatigue** – no driver may drive while adversely affected by fatigue or in breach of mandatory work/rest hours; no person may require, request, encourage or provide any incentive for a driver to drive in breach of fatigue laws.
- **Vehicle roadworthiness** – every vehicle must comply with relevant heavy vehicle standards as to their registration requirements and roadworthiness.

Information on how TSC manages Chain of Responsibility obligations can be reviewed within the Protocol Chain of Responsibility upon request.

Further information and advice can be sought from the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator at [www.nhvr.gov.au](http://www.nhvr.gov.au)



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# Think.Act.Be **SAFE**

