

HRP04: Plant and Equipment

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

(1) This Procedure aims to ensure Southern Cross University (SCU) management, employees, students, and others understand the risks associated with plant and equipment in the workplace and the risk management strategies adopted by the University.

(2) This Procedure applies to all SCU Work Units and sites. All SCU workers and students must comply with the requirements of this Procedure.

(3) This Procedure is to be read and applied in conjunction with the WHS Act, WHS Regulation, applicable Codes of Practice, and other SCU WHS procedures. Where the expectations set out in this Procedure exceed the current operational capacity of SCU, a risk-based and staged implementation approach will apply. Responsibilities are assigned in accordance with WHSMP13 and must be actively monitored to ensure compliance.

Section 2 - Definitions

Competent Person	<p>A person who has acquired through training, qualification or experience the knowledge and skills to carry out the task.</p> <p>A competent person has a more specific meaning in the following circumstances:</p> <p>For design verification, the person must have the skills, qualifications, competence, and experience to design the plant or verify the design.</p> <p>For inspecting plant for registration purposes, the person must have:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Educational or vocational qualifications in an engineering discipline relevant to the plant being inspected. 2. Knowledge of the technical standards relevant to the plant being inspected. <p>For inspecting mobile cranes, tower cranes, amusement devices and passenger ropeways, the person must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have the skills, qualifications, competence, and experience to inspect the plant and be registered under a law that provides for the registration of professional engineers in jurisdictions where such a law exists or be determined by the regulator to be a competent person.
Plant	<p>The plant includes machinery, equipment, appliances, containers, implements, tool components, and anything fitted or connected to them. It also includes items as diverse as lifts, cranes, computers, machinery, conveyors, forklifts, vehicles, power tools, quad bikes, mobile plant, and amusement devices. Plant that relies exclusively on manual power for its operation and is designed to be primarily supported by hand, for example a screwdriver, is not covered by the WHS Regulations. The general duty of care under the WHS Act applies to this type of plant.</p> <p>Certain kinds of plant, such as forklifts, cranes, and some pressure equipment, require a licence from the regulator to operate, and some high-risk plant must also be registered with the regulator.</p>

Section 3 - General Principles

(4) SCU minimises the risks arising from the use of plant and equipment by:

- Ensuring workers have access to this Procedure and are inducted into the WHS Management System, including contractor controls, training, maintenance protocols, and pre-start inspection processes.

- b. Ensuring each Work Unit maintains an up-to-date Plant and Equipment Register in consultation with Property Services.
- c. Ensuring that plant and equipment are assessed for foreseeable risks before use, with controls proportionate to the level of risk.
- d. Permits are required for high-risk work involving plant in accordance with WHSMP09: Permit to Work.
- e. Ensure that plant and equipment are acquired through approved procurement channels and comply with relevant Australian Standards.

Limitations

(5) This Procedure does not cover plant that rely exclusively on manual power for their operation and are designed to be primarily supported by hand, such as a screwdriver.

(6) This Procedure does not cover the selection and guidance for using personal protective equipment (PPE).

Consultation

(7) Consultation regarding physical safety and security will be aligned with the WSHMP07: Consultation, Communication and Participation.

Information, Instruction and Training

(8) SCU will, so far as is reasonably practicable, ensure the provision of information, training, instructions, or supervision necessary to protect all persons from risks arising from work carried out as part of the conduct of SCU business.

(9) SCU supervisors and operators are responsible for familiarising themselves with all associated documentation (e.g., operator manuals) to ensure the safe operation of plant and equipment.

Acquisition, Purchase or Hire of Plant

(10) Where a Work Unit intends to acquire plant or equipment, the responsible person must:

- a. Complete the HRP04 pre-purchase checklist.
- b. Identify whether the plant requires registration under Schedule 5 of the WHS Regulation.
- c. Ensure supplier documentation (e.g., manuals, service records) is obtained.
- d. Ensure documentation is retained for the life of the plant.

Plant Registration

(11) SCU will ensure that registrable plant is identified and appropriately registered in accordance with WHS Regulation Schedule 5. Where SCU has management or control of a registrable plant, the person responsible must obtain a copy of the design registration and consult WHS to verify the registration status.

Positioning of the Plant in the Workplace

(12) The Plant shall be positioned so:

- a. Risks from hot plant, such as friction, molten material, and hot gases, are controlled through restricted access, guarding, or insulation.
- b. There is sufficient space (suggested 600 mm, the minimum width of a walkway) for safe access to the plant for operation, cleaning, maintenance, inspection and emergency evacuation.

- c. The plant does not obstruct doorways and emergency exits – the proximity to other plant does not negatively affect the operation of the plant or work processes.
- d. Where required, the plant rests on a suitable foundation, such as a floor or other support, that ensures its stability and security.
- e. Ventilation can deal with the nature and volume of emissions from the plant.
- f. Workers and others are not exposed to noise levels higher than those stated in the noise exposure standard under the WHS Regulation. Consideration could also be given to placing plant in areas with sound insulation or mounting to decrease reverberations and noise levels.

(13) A plant purchased directly from overseas is assessed for suitability for use in Australia before purchase. Attention to the operating voltage and frequency ranges is essential (particularly in the case of three-phase equipment, whether the rated voltages refer to phase-to-phase or phase-to-neutral connection). If the frequency is incorrect, some devices within the plant may overheat, lose time, or otherwise fail.

Commissioning

(14) All plant must be commissioned by a competent person before operation. The responsible Work Unit must:

- a. Appropriate for the task.
- b. Ensure a consultation process is involved in the operation of the plant.
- c. Confirm that operational controls, guarding, and safety features operate as designed.
- d. Ensure that relevant work instructions and plant hazard assessments have been completed.
- e. Provide induction and instruction to users before use.
- f. Document the commissioning process.
- g. Confirmed by a certificate or equivalent that it works according to design and manufacturers' specifications.

Modification and Alterations to Plant and Equipment

(15) Where the responsible person initiates modification or alteration to an item of plant or equipment, they must ensure:

- a. A qualified or competent person conducts the modification or alteration.
- b. Certification certificates, engineering reports etc, are obtained.
- c. A documented risk assessment is completed following consultation with the person completing the modifications or alterations.

Operating Procedures

(16) Operating procedures must be documented for plant equipment as per the SCU Safe system of work. These procedures should be based on manufacturer guidance and local risk assessment, where reasonably practicable.

(17) A low-risk or hand-held plant may be managed through general safe work practices unless a higher risk is identified.

(18) The responsible Work Unit must:

- a. Assess the risks that may arise from using the plant and associated work systems, and ensure that hazards are controlled to an acceptable level.
- b. Complete Operating procedures for plant equipment as per the SCU Safe system of work.
- c. Implement controls to prevent unauthorised use.

- d. Ensure supervision and competency checks for students using the plant.
- e. Include required PPE in the relevant procedure.
- f. Employees are prevented from contacting moving parts in the plant through appropriate risk control (e.g., Fixed plant and equipment—machine guarding procedure).
- g. Maintenance, isolation, and cleaning procedures for the plant are carried out in compliance with the procedure.

Guarding Plant

(19) The makeup of guarding must comprise the following:

- a. A solid, securely mounted construction that can resist impact or shock.
- b. An ability to prevent bypassing or disabling the guard.
- c. Not to introduce an additional risk to the plant, such as obstructing vision.
- d. Be adequately maintained.
- e. Control risks associated with a potential breakdown or ejected parts and workpieces.
- f. Allow for servicing, maintenance, and repair to be undertaken.
- g. If removed, enable the plant to be inoperable until the guarding is refitted or replaced.

Operational Controls

(20) Operator controls must:

- a. Identify the plant's natural function and operating direction.
- b. Be located so they can be readily and conveniently operated by each person using the plant.
- c. Be located or guarded to prevent unintentional activation.

Powered Mobile Plant

(21) The person responsible for the management and control of the powered mobile plant at SCU workplaces must manage the risks to health and safety associated with:

- a. The plant in overturning.
- b. Things falling on the operator of the plant.
- c. The operator being ejected from the plant.
- d. The plant colliding with any person or thing.
- e. Mechanical failure of pressurised elements of the plant that may release fluids that pose a risk to health and safety.

Emergency Stops

(22) SCU must ensure that emergency stop controls of SCU controlled plant are:

- a. Prominently, clearly and durably marked, coloured red and immediately accessible to each plant operator.
- b. An electrical or electronic circuit malfunction cannot adversely affect the stop control.
- c. Where the plant is designed to be operated or attended by more than one person and more than one emergency stop control is fitted, multiple controls must be of the 'stop and lock-off' type so that the plant cannot be restarted after an emergency stop control has been used unless each activated stop control is reset.

Warning Devices

(23) Warning devices need to be positioned on the plant when the moving plant is likely to collide with another plant or workers nearby. The following is an example of warning devices:

- a. Automatic audible alarms.
- b. Motion sensors.
- c. Lights.
- d. Flashing lights.
- e. Percussion alarms.
- f. Radio sensing devices.
- g. Air horns.

High-risk Work Licences

(24) The person who operates an item of plant or equipment must have the necessary competencies and/or licences before operating an item of plant or equipment. Plant or equipment, such as forklifts, scaffolding, pressure equipment, and some types of cranes, is identified in the WHS Regulations as plants or equipment that require a high-risk work licence.

Spotter Safety

(25) Spotters must be assigned where required by risk assessment or under Permit to Work. They must:

- a. Maintain a line of sight with plant operators.
- b. Be positioned outside the line of fire.
- c. Wear high-visibility clothing.
- d. Operators must use clear and consistent communication methods, such as approved hand signals or radio communication.
- e. Be authorised to direct cessation of work if the risk escalates.

Maintenance, Repair, and Cleaning

Isolation/Tagout

(26) Refer to [HRP22: Lock Out, Tag Out](#).

(27) All plant must be maintained according to manufacturer specifications, or where not available, as a competent person advises. All service and inspection records must be recorded.

(28) Where a plant is removed from use for decommissioning, maintenance, or cleaning, energy sources must be isolated according to HRP22: Lock Out Tag Out. If isolation is not possible, alternative measures must be documented and risk assessed.

Decommissioning, Dismantling and Disposal

(29) When the plant is to be decommissioned or demolished, it must be carried out by a competent person. Some plant may contain hazardous materials. The person responsible is to inspect the plant or review any necessary documentation, including hazard assessments and manufacturer guidelines. The inspection will occur in the planning stage before decommissioning, dismantling, and disposal to identify hazardous materials. Contact the WHS team and your local regulator for further guidance if hazardous materials are suspected.

Section 4 - Roles and Responsibilities

(30) Refer to [WHSMP13: Responsibility and Accountability Statement](#).

Section 5 - Records of Documentation

(31) All relevant documentation will be recorded and kept in accordance with WHS Legislation and other legislative obligations.

Section 6 - Revision and approval history

(32) This procedure will be reviewed as per nominated review dates or because of other events, such as:

- a. Internal and external audit outcomes.
- b. Legislative changes.
- c. Outcomes from management reviews.
- d. Incidents.

Section 7 - References

Work Health and Safety Act (in the applicable jurisdiction that SCU operates)

Work Health and Safety Regulation (in the applicable jurisdiction that SCU operates)

Managing Risks of Plant in the Workplace Code of Practice. 2011 (QLD) 2022 (NSW)

Section 8 - Related Documents

[WHSMP09: Permit to Work - Hazardous Work](#)

[HRP07: Electrical Safety](#)

[HRP14: Workplace Environment and Facilities Management](#)

[HRP22: Lock Out, Tag Out](#)

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