



COFFS HARBOUR REGIONAL LANDCARE INC.

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY & PROCEDURES KIT

*CHRL Work Health & Safety Policy
Adopted by CHRL Executive
Date: 12th November 2013
Reviewed: 8th June 2017
Next review: June 2019*

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1.0 WORK HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

1.1 Introduction

The Work Health and Safety Act (2011) came into force nationally on the 1 January 2012. It aims to protect the health and safety of all people in every place of work in Australia. Under the Act employers, employees, self-employed and volunteers are to meet certain standards of health, safety and welfare.

This kit contains information about risk assessment and risk assessment sheets to address minimise risks at the beginning of an event or work day, and information about safely using chemicals to control weeds.

The Committee of Coffs Harbour Regional Landcare Inc. have prepared the following policy and procedures for the safety of volunteer workers, employees and members of the community at work sites.

1.2 Roles and Responsibilities

CHRL Executive Committee

- Develop and implement the policy and supporting procedures.
- Monitor and review WH&S policy and procedures in consultation with staff and volunteers.
- Provide resources to develop and maintain a safe and healthy work environment for staff and volunteers within the statutory obligation.
- Ensure that workplace safety procedures and practices are regularly monitored and amended where necessary after consultation with staff.

Employees and contractors

- Regularly monitor WH&S performance and compliance with policies and procedures, and report to executive committee as necessary.
- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of all persons in the workplace.
- Ensure adequate documentation and recording of WH&S issues, registers and incidents.
- Identify workplace risks and hazards as they arise within their workplaces or project sites and ensure procedures are promptly put in place to minimise them.

Volunteers

- All volunteers undertaking activities in association with the organisation have a shared responsibility to maintain high standards of workplace safety.
- Volunteers are expected to read, acknowledge their understanding of and follow the procedures outlined in CHRL's WH&S Policy and Procedures Kit.
- Declare pre-existing injuries or medical conditions that may affect participation
- Immediately report any accident, injury to the CHRL Office or CHRL Executive Committee.
- Wear personal protective equipment, including tick repellent clothing, as required.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF WH&S POLICY

Implementation of this WH&S policy will follow a risk management process underpinned by the SAFER principle i.e. SEE it, ASSESS it, FIX it, EVALUATE it, RECORD it.

1. SEE it

Identification of hazards in the workplace: The worksite risk assessment form (Form 2) is designed to assist in hazard identification and should be completed for each new worksite prior to commencement of works.

2. ASSESS it

Risk assessment activities carried out by the organisation will be carried out in accordance with Table 1.

3. FIX it

Once hazards have been identified and a risk assessment made, actions are taken to control the risk to health and safety to the lowest level reasonably practical through the following prioritised actions:

- Eliminate the risk
- Substitute the hazard with one giving rise to a lesser risk
- Isolate the hazard for the person(s) at risk
- Engineering means (eg. guards)
- Administrative means eg. supervision, implementation of safe work practices, provision of information, instruction and training
- Use of personal protective equipment

4. EVALUATE it

Continued monitoring of health and safety risks is essential to the successful health and safety management. This will be achieved by:

- Prompt assessment of new hazards and implementation of control measures to minimise them
- Regular assessment of hazard control measures
- Ensure that there is good understanding of WH&S issues in the executive committee, employees, volunteers and contractors, by holding regular training in WH&S and first aid.

5. RECORD it

Risk management activities must be recorded to provide the organisation with evidence of fulfilling its obligations under the WH&S Act. Checklists, action plans and form templates to implement the recording process are included in this kit. The recording principle includes maintenance of registers of volunteers and their chemical use, training and injuries.

Unacceptable risk

Where the risk assessment process leaves the committee or Project Manager in any doubt that the project can proceed safely, they should suspend work on the project, or that component which is the source of concern, until such time as the risk can be satisfactorily controlled.

At no time should the achievement of work outcomes be allowed to compromise safety.

3. HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND RISK ASSESSMENT

3.1 Bushland Regeneration Worksite Safety

The following information on worksite safety will ensure that your experience and that of your fellow co-workers is an enjoyable and rewarding one.

All volunteers working on registered work sites are covered by personal accident insurance provided that:

- They are a member of CHRL and are working on an approved CHRL worksite or activity.
- They are working to an approved worksite plan.
- They have participated in site induction for hazard identification and risk assessment
- They sign on prior to commencing work on each occasion

3.2 Identifying and Assessing Risks

Table 1: Risk Assessment Matrix

How severely could it hurt someone or how ill could it make someone?	How likely is it to be that bad?			
	Very likely: Could happen at any time	Likely: Could happen some time	Unlikely: Could happen but very rarely	Very unlikely: Probably never will happen
Kill or cause permanent disability or ill health	1	1	2	3
Long term illness or serious injury	1	2	3	4
Medical attention and several days off work	2	3	4	5
First aid needed	3	4	5	6

The numbers show how important it is to do something: **1** = top priority: do something immediately
6 = low priority: do something when possible

3.3 Common Risks to Landcare Workers & Strategies to manage them

VEHICLES

Whether you are driving or a passenger, you can be at risk when on the road. Avoid driving when tired, take a break every two hours, ensure that the car is in safe condition and carry a mobile phone. Also let others know where you are going and when you expect to return.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS, INCLUDING HEAT, UV RADIATION AND COLD

Bushland regeneration work can be very physically demanding, especially in hot weather. To avoid dehydration and heat stress drink plenty of water and have regular breaks in the shade. Other risk management strategies include:

- Applying 30+ sunscreen
- Wear a hat, sunglasses and appropriate clothing
- Limit or avoid working in direct sun

SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

Strategies to avoid the risk of tripping, slipping and falling include:

- Familiarising yourself and co-workers of terrain before commencing work
- Avoid obvious hazards such as boulders or tree roots, steep embankments, loose rocks etc.
- Ensure boots are firmly laced
- Keep tools away from pathways and from underfoot.
- Cease work if conditions are considered too hazardous

FALLING OBJECTS

Treed areas can be hazardous. Visually check your worksite for dead wood, dying trees, hung up branches and trees that may easily become uprooted. Avoid working in these areas and under trees in windy conditions.

BITES AND STINGS

Beware of ticks, spiders, ants, snakes, wasps, bees and plants that scratch and sting. Risk strategies to avoid being scratched, bitten or stung include:

- Wear appropriate PPE, including tick repellent clothing where mandatory
- Familiarise yourself and alert other group members to plants at worksites that have thorns, prickles or stings
- Apply insect repellent to brim of hat, cuffs and collars to deter ticks and other stinging insects
- Walk heavily in suspected snake habitat.
- Where practicable, avoid working in known snake habitat during early spring when snakes are generally most aggressive.
- Do not work in a circular or 'surrounding' formation that might prevent a snake from escaping.
- If a snake is seen, stay clear and point out its location to nearby workers.

Check your site for wasp and ant nests and mark any found prior to work.

Some people may have an allergic or asthmatic reaction to certain plants and substances. Strategies to reduce the risk of such reactions include:

- Identifying and monitoring group members with a history of allergic reactions or asthma
- Be aware and alert other group members to plants that can cause allergic reactions such as small and large leaved privet and wild tobacco bush.

TICK REACTIONS AND DISEASES

Beware of ticks throughout the mid north coast. Ticks can cause itching and discomfort, allergic reactions and carry diseases including tick typhus, spotted fever and other diseases. Risk management strategies include:

- Reduce tick access to skin by wearing tick repellent coveralls, and broad-brimmed hat (reduces likelihood of ticks from getting into hair and down the neck of clothing).
- If possible, wear light coloured clothing so that any ticks on clothing are more readily spotted.
- Apply repellent containing to exposed skin, around ankles and hat brim.
- Minimise disturbance to vegetation by working for short periods in one location where ticks are a problem.
- After leaving tick area, have team members check each other for ticks – hair, behind ears, back of neck, etc.
- If ticks are present, cover tick/s with scabies cream (Lyclear) as provided in First Aid kits. Continue as directed on Lyclear tube.
- Remove ticks with appropriate tool (tweezers or tick remover) immediately, avoiding squeezing the tick's body.
- Encourage team members to check themselves fully when showering.
- If possible place clothing in a hot dryer for 20 minutes and wash clothing on a hot wash.

CUTS AND BRUISES

Working in bushland is likely to cause cuts and bruises, especially when working with tools such as brush hooks, spades, sledge hammers etc. Be aware of your surrounding and of the presence of other workers, keep safe working distances, wear appropriate boots and long sleeves/trousers to avoid cuts.

EYE INJURY

Eye injuries from tree or shrub branches and twigs can occur easily when working in the bush. To avoid injury wear glasses or protective goggles where conditions require.

MANUAL HANDLING AND REPETITIVE STRAIN INJURY

Manual handling is any activity that involves pushing, moving, carrying, pulling, lifting, lowering or holding. Lifting items correctly will avoid back, shoulder and arm injuries. To lift correctly:

1. Check the path is clear
2. Make sure you are able to lift the load safely. If not ask for help.
3. Place feet close to the object, with one foot beside the load and the other behind the load.
4. Bend your knees and get a good hold, keeping your back straight
5. Lift the load using your leg muscles
6. Support the load with your arms
7. When putting the load down use your leg muscles and bend your knees.

Other strategies to reduce risks of injuries from manual handling include:

- Prior to commencement, plan and negotiate the control of manual handling risks by arranging the strategic pick-up or delivery of project materials and tools so as to minimise the amount of lifting and carrying required.
- Reduce the amount of manual handling by:
 - i. Restructuring the task
 - ii. Using mechanical aids, e.g. crowbars
 - iii. Carefully planning the workplace layout
 - iv. Having heavy materials delivered as near as possible to the worksite
- Use mechanical aids (e.g. wheelbarrow) whenever possible
- Use teamwork to lift/carry awkward objects
- Regularly rotate group members between tasks to avoid over-use induced strain.
- Reduce the weights lifted or carried, or the force applied, when working on uneven or slippery surfaces.

WORKING WITH CHEMICALS

The use of herbicides by volunteers is limited to hand application, such as cut and paint methods. CHRL developed a herbicide spraying policy for volunteers, which is attached. Risk strategies for the reducing the risk of hazards involved with working with chemicals include:

- Receive instruction and demonstration of best practice weed control techniques and use of tools
- Receive adequate instruction concerning safe chemical use, associated health hazards and emergency treatment, and the reasons for use and their competency is assessed.
- Using herbicides in accordance to the label.
- Reading Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for each chemical used (included in this kit)
- Ensure that all chemical containers (eg. drums and poison pots or bottles) are secure and leak free.
- Wear appropriate PPE as instructed in the MSDS.
- Rotate tasks to avoid prolonged periods of exposure.
- Maintain safe working distance to avoid splash or spray drift.
- Ensure that there is enough water available to dilute herbicides should a spill occur and for personal clean up.

BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS

In urban bushland and coastal environments there is a risk of being exposed to various biological hazards such as human wastes and syringes. Reduce your and your co-workers risk of infection when coming into contact with these hazards by:

- Washing your hands before eating, drinking or smoking
- Wearing gloves at all times
- Making others aware of biological hazards that you encounter.

Table 2: Risk assessment *The following risk assessment table covers a range of standard hazards as assessed by CHRL staff. This should be used as a guide only.*

Hazard	Severity of hazard	Likelihood of severity	Priority	Recommended control measures
Office				
Ergonomics	Long term or serious illness	Likely	2	Work place ergonomic assessment
Fire	Kill or cause permanent disability	Very unlikely	3	Fire emergency plan
Lifting objects	Medical attention & several days off	Unlikely	4	Ask for assistance; Instructions for correct lifting in office
Field				
Hazards associated with driving vehicles	Kill or cause permanent disability	Very unlikely	3	Maintain vehicle in safe & roadworthy condition. Take a break every 2 hours. Carry mobile phone.
Hazards associated with being a passenger in vehicles	Kill or cause permanent disability	Very unlikely	3	Carry mobile phone, notify others where you are going and when you expect to return
Environmental conditions, including heatstroke, sunburn, hypothermia	Long term illness	Likely	2	Use personal protective equipment, carry sufficient drinking water, limit or avoid working in direct sun on hot days
Slips, trips and falls	Medical attention & several days off	Likely	3	Work site induction, solid footwear, avoid obvious hazards
Falling objects	Medical attention & several days off	Unlikely	4	Check work site for dead wood and hanging branches; avoid those places during windy conditions.
Bites & stings, allergic reactions	Medical attention & several days off	likely	3	First Aid Kit; Wear PPE, including insect repellent; worksite induction with attention to stinging plants and insect nests (ants etc)
Cuts & bruises	First Aid needed	likely	3	First aid kit, PPE, safe work distance
Eye injury	Medical attention & several days off	Unlikely	4	Wear glasses or goggles where conditions require.
Chemical poisoning	Medical attention & several days off	Very unlikely	5	Chemical user certificate; gloves; maintain safe work distance to avoid exposure from others using chemicals.
Manual handling & repetitive strain	Medical attention & several days off	Unlikely	4	Ask for assistance, follow instructions for correct lifting, avoid heavy lifting, rotate activities to avoid repetitive strain
Biological hazards such as human waste & syringes	Kill or cause permanent disability	Very unlikely	3	Washing your hands before eating or smoking; wearing gloves at all times; making others aware of biological hazards.

SITE INDUCTION SHEET FOR COFFS HARBOUR REGIONAL LANDCARE WORKSITES

(Form 2)

This form is to be discussed and completed with all volunteers on each new worksite or if any changes to the site have occurred since last worked there

At the completion of the briefing, all participants are to sign to the form on the space provided.

The completed form is to be retained by relevant group delegates.

Name of worksite: _____

Date: _____

First Aid Kit location: _____

Nearest phone/mobile: _____

Emergency contacts:

Emergency services: 000
 Council Ranger: 6648 4000
 CHRL: 6651 1308

Amenities location: _____

The participant has received the information about Common Risks to Landcare Groups & Strategies to Manage Them (Section 3.3) and has been instructed in the following areas prior to work:

HAZARD	YES	NO	N/A
UV Radiation, Heat Stress and Fatigue			
Slips, Trips and Falls			
Falling Objects			
Bites, Stings and Allergic Reactions			
Cuts and bruises			
Eye Injury			
Working with Chemicals			
Manual Handling and Repetitive Strain Injury			
Biological Hazards			
Other (please list)			

Note: please report any unusual or problematic hazards of this worksite to CHRL staff so that arrangements can be made with the land manager to reduce or remove the risk.

I have read and observed the Risk Assessment information and taken particular notice of the hazards associated this site. I will endeavour to work towards a safe workplace for fellow workers and myself.

FIRST AID

Register of Members with First Aid Qualifications

Name of worksite _____

Name	First Aid Qualification	Expiry of Qualification

COFFS HARBOUR REGIONAL LANDCARE INC.
INCIDENT & INJURY REPORT FORM
(Form 3)

To be completed by injured person or witness.

1. **Name:** _____

Time: _____ Date: ____/____/____

a) Nature of injury:

b) Where did it occur?

2. First Aid/ Medical Attention

a) Was First Aid required? Yes No

i) Type _____

ii) Provided by _____

b) Is further medical attention required? Yes No

i) Name of medical practitioner _____

ii) When was medical attention provided? _____

3. WH&S issues

a) What caused the injury? _____

b) What has been done to address the issues? _____

c) Has a Hazard Report form been completed? Yes No

Signature of injured person (if able) _____ Date: _____

Signature of witness: _____ Date: _____

Please return this form to the CHRL Office, Coffs harbour Regional Landcare, Po Box 1730 Coffs Harbour, 2450 or email to chrl@coffslandcare.org.au

COFFS HARBOUR REGIONAL LANDCARE INC.



HAZARD REPORT FORM

(Form 4)

To be completed when the group becomes aware of any particular potential hazards that has arisen on-site.

1. Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

2. What is the problem?

3. What has been done to rectify the problem?

On what date? ____ / ____ / ____

4. What further action needs to be taken?

5. Referred to Landcare Office for further information or action by:

Signed: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

To be completed by CHRL staff and/or CHRL Executive Committee

6. Action taken by Executive:

Signed: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

CHEMICAL USE



Conditions of use and chemical safety

- Only Coffs Harbour Regional Landcare Inc. (CHRL) members, who are approved to work on designated CHRL worksites, are allowed to use chemicals in the course of their volunteer work.
- Chemical usage is limited to the application of *glyphosate* by the “cut and paint”, “scrape and paint” and “tree frilling or drilling” methods, unless the person holds the prescribed qualification and has written approval from the land manager.
- When using *glyphosate* in the above-mentioned methods, always follow the safety instructions contained on the label and in the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). Specifically:
 - When filling containers wear PVC gloves and eye protection.
 - When applying chemicals wear gloves and clean any contaminated clothing immediately.
- All glyphosate containers must have the correct label attached and users must have a MDS present at all times.

Supply of Glyphosate by Coffs Harbour Regional Landcare

- CHRL will supply *glyphosate* to members in 1lt containers with an MSDS attached.
- When containers are empty please return the cleaned container to the CHRL office. Please note that additional 1lt containers of *glyphosate* will not be supplied unless a clean empty container is returned.