

Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) – Overhead Power

ORGANISATION DETAILS			
Principal contractor:	Brendan McKenna Earthmoving PTY LTD	Contact number:	0417 710 806
Project manager or supervisor:		Contact number:	
Other contractors (PCBUs):		Contact number:	
Person completing the SWMS:	Brendan McKenna	Contact number:	0417 710 806
Position:	Site Manager	Reviewed by:	Ron Broadhurst
Date prepared:	19/11/2025	Review date:	19/11/2027
PROJECT DETAILS			
What is the scope of the work?	Overhead Power		
Who else was consulted/involved in preparing this SWMS?	This SWMS has been developed in consultation with Subject Matter Experts. Reviews will be conducted two years, in the event an incident occurs, if there is a change in operational practices and if there is a change in legislation. It will also be reviewed in conjunction with any review of associated procedures and/or training programs. Effectiveness of control measures will be monitored by on site Managers/Supervisors		
What high risk work activities are covered by this SWMS?	Overhead Power		
References: Legislation, Australian Standards, Codes of Practice, MSDS and SOPs.	WHS Act and Regulations 2011 Local and State legislation		
Plant involved in the scope of work:			
What high risk licence classes will be required to do the work?			

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The following notes apply to the risk controls where relevant:

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): The following PPE will need to be worn by workers at times on this project as directed:

☐ High Vis Garments ☐ Hearing protection ☐ Safety Glasses ☐ Hard Hats ☐ Gloves ☐ Safety Footwear ☐ Other

SAFETY MESSAGES

1. For planned work, take the time to locate overhead powerlines, identify them on the work order and contact the relevant Electrical Authority as early as possible in the event power needs to be shut down.
2. For all work tasks, LOOK UP AND LIVE, always assess the risk of power lines on site.
3. Determine the exclusion zone and follow the rules around entry to exclusion zones.
4. Determine the safety observer zone and ensure the authorised person (safety observer) knows what to do. (Authorised Safety Observers Only)

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Identify each task in order	Specify the hazards/risks you have identified	What are the risks to health and safety?	Who is responsible for implementing and monitoring controls?
Pre-start planning for planned work Identification of overhead power lines	Hazard: Inadequate Planning Risk: Unsafe work site	ALWAYS assess the risk of working near overhead powerlines prior to starting work. Do this as early as possible in the planning stage of works. For planned work Service Delivery Supervisors or equivalent must identify work areas and processes that may require equipment to be operated in the Safety Observer Zone or Exclusion Zone. Risks to be considered may include: Person(s) contacting live conductors. Equipment contacting live conductors. Equipment contacting and damaging overhead lines (live or de-energised) and associated equipment. Equipment being dropped from above onto exposed electric lines, e.g. while operating a crane over powerlines. Overhead electric lines are to be treated as being live unless otherwise confirmed in writing by the relevant Electrical Authority. Communications cables such as those used by Optus and Telstra for Internet and cable television carry up to 100 volts and are to be considered as 'insulated low-voltage overhead electric line'. A reduced Exclusion Zone of 1 m applies to all communication lines. Notice of the need to enter the exclusion zone must be provided to the owner of the overhead power line, e.g. (Regional) Ergon Energy, (Brisbane) Energex, Powerlink.	Site Manager or Supervisor

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		The owner of the line must respond within 7 days. It is therefore necessary to notify the owner well in advance of the start date of the work to be done. Work is not to commence until the written advice from the owner is received and the required safety controls are implemented in place.	
Arrival at worksite	Hazard: Inadequate Planning Unsafe equipment Risk: Unsafe work site	Take all the usual precautions at the work site as per the Health Safety Management Plan. Ensure that all equipment and signage needed to undertake the work task is available. Ensure that all plant and equipment is maintained as per manufacturer instructions. Before operating the plant or equipment, conduct a thorough inspection of the machine and attachments e.g. steering, brakes, controls, warning devices, brake fluid, hydraulic oil, etc. LOOK UP AND LIVE: ALWAYS assess the site for proximity of overhead powerlines prior to starting work.	Site Manager or Supervisor
Carrying out the work	Hazard: Electricity. Risk: Person/Equipment contacting powerlines causing electrocution	No employee or other persons on the worksite are to enter the exclusion zone for overhead electric lines unless: A written “safety advice” is obtained from the relevant Electrical Authority; and The work is authorised by the Site Manager/Supervisor If an unauthorised machine or person enters the Exclusion Zone, immediately withdraw from the zone if possible and report to the Supervisor on site. If it is not possible to withdraw from the exclusion zone, shut down the machine in a safe manner and contact the supervisor on site. Do not operate a vehicle or item of plant closer than 1m from overhead lines; Where a safety observer has been appointed, they: Need to be an adequately trained and authorised person to perform the role. Shall maintain a safe distance from the work, plant, equipment and/or load they are observing.	Site Manager or Supervisor

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		Wear the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Shall have a direct view of the work, plant, equipment and load if it is operating near or within the safety observer zone. Shall not perform any other duty or observe any more than one activity while acting as safety observer. Shall be able to communicate effectively with the employee, other persons on the worksite or operator of the plant/equipment at all times. Must warn the operator if any part of the work, plant, equipment or load is about to enter the exclusion zone. Where possible shall mark the border of the exclusion zone with suitable markers e.g. red warning tape or a line painted on the ground.	
Emergency Procedure		If unplanned contact with electric lines occurs, the following action is to be taken: Stay away. Do not try to break contact between the machinery and the power line because lines can be damaged. Stay in the cabin. Machinery operators must not leave their machinery until the power is switched off and the area declared safe by the relevant Electrical Authority. Call the owner of the line immediately. Keep all employees and other persons on the worksite no less than 8m away. If immediate evacuation of the machine is necessary: JUMP WELL CLEAR, WITH FEET TOGETHER, AND HOP AWAY. Do not touch the ground and the machinery at the same time. Stay well clear of tyres. Contact with live high voltage may cause vehicle tyres to explode, however not necessarily immediately.	Site Manager or Supervisor

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		If powerlines are brought down: Do not go near them. Keep well clear and barricade off, making the site safe.	
Plant, Equipment & Vehicle Maintenance	Hazard: Poorly maintained plant/equipment Faulty hydraulics, brakes or limiters Defective warning systems Fluid leaks creating slip hazards Damaged exclusion-zone markers Faulty spotter communication equipment Overhead powerline proximity hazards Risk: Electrocution or arcing Uncontrolled movement of plant Collision with structures/vehicles/people Fire or explosion Plant failure under load Breach of electrical exclusion zones Slips, trips and falls	All plant; equipment, vehicles, height-operated machinery and insulated tools used near overhead electrical powerlines must be maintained, inspected and kept in safe working order at all times. This includes excavators, tippers, cranes, EWPs, trucks, spotter equipment, height/slew limiting devices and electrical protection equipment. Maintenance Procedures: Scheduled Maintenance • All plant and equipment must undergo servicing in accordance with: – Manufacturer specifications – Australian Standards – Brendan McKenna Earthmoving's maintenance schedule • Service logs must be kept and available for audit. • Height and slew limiters must receive regular functional checks. Pre-Start and Daily Checks: Operators must complete daily pre-start inspections before working near overhead powerlines, including checking: • Warning devices (reverse alarms, flashing beacons, lights) • Hydraulic systems and hoses • Slew/height limiting devices • Electrical hazard stickers and overhead hazard alerts	Site Manager or Supervisor

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		• Tyres, brake systems, mirrors and cameras • Boom/jib condition and movement controls • Spotter communication equipment (UHF radios etc.) Any defect must be reported immediately, and the plant must not be used until confirmed safe. Tag-Out and Fault Reporting: If any plant or equipment is found unsafe: • It must be removed from service immediately • A “Danger – Do Not Operate” tag must be attached • A defect report must be given to the Site Supervisor • Plant may only be repaired by a competent person • Equipment must not return to service until fully repaired and signed off Repairs and Return to Service: Plant must NOT return to service until: • A competent person completes repairs • Safety systems (limiters, alarms, controls) are re-tested • The Site Supervisor confirms the plant is safe • Repair documentation is recorded in the maintenance log Electrical Safety Equipment Maintenance: • Spotter radios must be fully functioning • Exclusion-zone markers, bunting, bollards and signage must be checked for condition • Insulated tools must be inspected and replaced if damaged	
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		- Any protective equipment used for overhead electrical hazards must be kept in good condition Risks if Maintenance Is Not Performed : Poorly maintained plant near overhead powerlines increases the risk of: - Electrocution from overhead contact or arcing - Plant contacting or breaching exclusion zones - Uncontrolled movement of booms, jibs or buckets - Failure of height/slew limit devices - Fire or explosion due to electrical strike - Injury to workers, traffic or the public - Severe property damage or infrastructure damage - Plant breakdown under load Responsibilities: Site Manager / Supervisor: - Ensure all plant has up-to-date maintenance records - Verify height/slew limiters and warning devices are functioning - Ensure defective equipment is removed from service - Confirm operators are competent to work near overhead hazards - Ensure electrical clearance requirements are implemented Plant Operators / Workers: - Complete pre-start checks - Report defects immediately	
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		• Never operate plant that is tagged out • Maintain safe distances from overhead lines • Follow spotter instructions at all times Record Keeping: The following must be kept: • Maintenance logs • Pre-start inspection forms • Defect reports • Repair documentation • Spotter logs • Electrical authority correspondence (if isolation required)	
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This SWMS has been developed in consultation and has been read, understood and signed by all workers undertaking the scope of works:		
Print Names:	Signatures:	Dates: