Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) – Vegetation Clearing & Mulching
Inter-Row Slashing

ORGANISATION DETAILS			
Principal contractor:	Brendan McKenna Earthmoving Pty Ltd	**Contact number:**	0417 710 806
Project manager or supervisor:	Site Supervisor	**Contact number:**	
Person completing the SWMS:	Brendan McKenna	**Contact number:**	0417 710 806
Position:	Site Manager	**Reviewed by:**	Ron Broadhurst
Date prepared:	28/04/2026	**Review date:**	28/04/2028

PROJECT DETAILS	
Project	Generic – Forestry Plantation Inter-Row Slashing
Project Reference	Site / Contract: To be completed before use
What is the scope of the work?	Mechanical slashing of vegetation between established forestry plantation rows using a tractor and approved slasher attachment. Includes travel between work areas, inspection, slashing, refuelling, minor routine maintenance and demobilisation. Excludes tree felling, chainsaw work, mulching and stump removal.
Who else was consulted/involved in preparing this SWMS?	Developed in consultation with relevant workers and supervisors. The Site Supervisor and operator must review and supplement this generic SWMS for the plantation, client requirements and actual site conditions before work.
What high risk work activities are covered by this SWMS?	Tractor and slasher operations on uneven or sloping ground, near hidden stumps, drainage lines, other plant and forestry traffic. Work involving additional high-risk construction activities requires separate assessment and controls.
References: Legislation, Australian Standards, Codes of Practice, MSDS and SOPs.	WHS Act 2011 (Qld) / WHS Regulation 2011 (Qld) / Managing Risks of Plant in the Workplace Code of Practice / Managing Noise and Preventing Hearing Loss at Work Code of Practice / Hazardous Manual Tasks Code of Practice / Environmental Protection Act 1994 (Qld) / Biosecurity Act 2014 (Qld) / Client forestry access and operational requirements / MCK Group IMS, plant risk assessments and emergency procedures.
Plant involved in the scope of work:	Agricultural/forestry tractor with approved slasher attachment; support vehicle and associated tools.
What high risk licence classes will be required to do the work?	Competent, authorised tractor/slasher operators. Site induction and any client-required competencies. A construction White Card only where applicable to the worksite.

The following notes apply to the risk controls where relevant:

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): High Vis Garments Hearing protection Safety Glasses Hard Hats Gloves Safety Footwear Other as identified by the task risk assessment.

Forestry Inter-Row Slashing – Forestry Operations:

Forestry inter-row slashing – general safety requirements:

- Confirm approved plantation compartments, row access and client requirements before starting, and inductions have been completed.
- Inspect inter-rows for high/unremoved stumps, logs, rocks, washouts, steep slopes and hidden obstructions.
- Do not enter or slash an inter-row if stump clearance or terrain is unsafe. Stop, isolate and report the hazard to the supervisor/client; resume only after rectification and reassessment.
- Maintain manufacturer-specified guarding, operator protection and separation distances.
- Keep people and other vehicles outside the slasher projectile and operating exclusion zone.
- Do not attempt to free a hung-up tractor or slasher without a separate controlled recovery plan.
- Follow forestry fire, weather, biosecurity, environmental and communication requirements.

Identify each task in order	Specify the hazards/risks you have identified	What control measures will be implemented?	Who is responsible for implementing and monitoring controls?
Arrival, induction and pre-start	Hazards: Mechanical defects; unverified competency; unsafe access; remote work; fatigue. Risks: Plant failure, falls, collision, delayed response, reduced alertness.	Complete daily tractor/slasher pre-start and defect reporting; confirm operator competency, site induction and manufacturer requirements. Use three points of contact; clean steps. Confirm site map, radios/check-ins, emergency access and fatigue controls. Do not operate defective or unguarded equipment.	Tractor Operator / Site Supervisor
Inspect forestry inter-rows and obstructions	Hazards: Hidden or oversized stumps, rocks, logs, wire, ruts, holes, soft ground, hazardous trees and services. Risks: Sudden impact, loss of steering/stability, rollover, thrown debris, tractor/slasher damage, injury.	Inspect proposed rows and communicate known stump locations and ground conditions. Use slow controlled initial passes only where the route is assessed safe; do not use slashing to locate hidden hazards. STOP and withdraw from affected rows if unremoved/oversized stumps, poor clearance or other obstacles make operation unsafe. Notify Site Supervisor and client/forest manager; isolate/mark affected area where safe. Resume only after hazards are rectified and the route reassessed. Do not attempt to drive over or force machinery across hazardous stumps. Identify services and hazardous trees before work.	Tractor Operator / Site Supervisor
Tractor and slasher operation	Hazards: Thrown timber/rocks; PTO/rotating blades; missing guards; entanglement; slope instability; dust, noise and vibration. Risks: Serious impact/crush injury, entanglement, rollover, hearing damage and fatigue.	Maintain large debris and pedestrian exclusion zones based on manufacturer guidance and conditions; maintain chains/deflectors and PTO guards. Stop immediately if any person enters the zone. Keep ROPS and seatbelt in use where fitted; use safe travel speed, approved slopes and implement position. Use hearing protection and dust controls as required; manage vibration with maintained seat and breaks. Never approach PTO or blades until shut down, isolated and fully stopped.	Tractor Operator / Site Supervisor
Slopes, soft ground and drainage	Hazards: Side slopes; soft shoulders; saturated ground; hidden depressions; stumps lifting wheels. Risks: Rollover, bogging, loss of traction, recovery incident.	Assess terrain, slope and bearing capacity before entering each area; maintain safe setbacks from edges and drains. Avoid side-slope travel beyond manufacturer limits. If hung up, bogged or unstable, stop, secure machine and notify Supervisor; do not attempt improvised self-recovery. Develop a separately assessed recovery plan with suitable equipment and competent persons.	Tractor Operator / Site Supervisor
Forestry traffic and other workers	Hazards: Logging trucks, other plant, pedestrians, public interfaces, blind spots and overhead powerlines. Risks: Collision, struck-by injury, thrown debris, electrical contact.	Coordinate work zones with forestry manager and other contractors. Use radio calls, site traffic rules, designated routes and positive operator acknowledgement before approach. Stop slashing if exclusion zones cannot be maintained. Identify overhead lines and maintain required approach distances; obtain additional controls where needed.	All Operators / Site Supervisor

Refuelling, blocked deck and maintenance	Hazards: PTO/blade inertia, stored energy, pinch points, hydraulic pressure, fuel and hot surfaces. Risks: Entanglement, crushing, fluid-injection injury, burns, fire or spill.	Park securely, lower attachments, disengage PTO, shut down and isolate energy before maintenance or clearing blockages; wait until blades stop completely. Use suitable tools rather than hands where practicable. Do not enter beneath unsupported equipment. Inspect hydraulic hoses without using hands to locate leaks. Refuel in controlled areas with spill response available and no ignition sources. Report and tag defects under Unsafe Plant Isolation Procedure.	Tractor Operator / Maintenance Personnel / Site Supervisor
Fire and extreme weather	Hazards: Dry fuel, hot exhaust, debris accumulation, blade strike sparks, severe weather. Risks: Machinery fire, plantation fire, injury and environmental damage.	Check current fire danger, forestry/client restrictions and weather before and during work. Clean vegetation from engine, exhaust and other hot components at safe intervals. Carry suitable maintained fire extinguisher and know site emergency response. Stop work when restrictions or conditions make ignition risk unacceptable; report smoke/fire immediately and withdraw safely.	Tractor Operator / Site Supervisor
Environmental, fauna and biosecurity	Hazards: Wildlife, weed spread, soil disturbance, waterways and unapproved vegetation damage. Risks: Environmental harm, biosecurity breach and wildlife injury.	Remain within approved inter-rows and designated access. Apply site hygiene and washdown requirements. Avoid waterways and sensitive areas; stop and seek direction if protected fauna, heritage features or unexpected environmental constraints are encountered. Control leaks/spills and report impacts.	All Workers / Site Supervisor
Emergency response and recovery	Hazards: Remote forestry locations, communications blackspots, stuck/unstable plant, serious incident. Risks: Delayed emergency assistance, secondary injury during recovery.	Confirm reliable communication/check-in and site-specific emergency access and meeting point before work. First aid and emergency equipment available. Call 000 for emergencies and give location/access details. Isolate unsafe equipment; do not improvise recovery or place workers near unstable machinery. Supervisor coordinates documented recovery risk assessment and client notification.	All Workers / Site Supervisor
Hazardous trees and unexpected services	Hazards: Dead limbs or unstable trees; overhead powerlines; buried infrastructure. Risks: Falling objects, electrical contact, service damage.	Assess trees and overhead hazards before entry; avoid working under unstable limbs and arrange separately authorised tree treatment if necessary. Locate services where relevant; maintain exclusion distances and stop when location is uncertain. Tree felling is not authorised by this SWMS.	Site Supervisor / Tractor Operator
Manual handling and psychosocial hazards	Hazards: Lifting tools and components; awkward postures; isolated work, workload pressure and poor communication. Risks: Strains, fatigue, reduced concentration and stress.	Use mechanical aids or team handling for awkward loads; plan placement of tools and take breaks. Provide clear job expectations, reasonable work scheduling, check-ins, respectful communication and reporting pathway for psychosocial concerns.	All Workers / Site Supervisor

Transport, loading and restraint	Hazards: Trailer ramps, unstable loading surface, unsecured equipment. Risks: Rollover, crush injury, plant movement in transit.	Use competent operators, suitable rated loading equipment, firm level loading area and exclusion zone. Lower/secure implements and apply rated restraints to transport plan. Check restraint before travel.	Operator / Transport Driver / Site Supervisor
Completion and demobilisation	Hazards: Residual debris; damaged tracks; mobile plant movements. Risks: Injury; environmental damage; collision.	Park and isolate equipment safely. Check and report damage, uncompleted rows, stump hazards and other defects to the supervisor/client. Remove waste and temporary equipment; complete site and plant records.	Tractor Operator / Site Supervisor

WORKER CONSULTATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This SWMS is to be communicated to workers undertaking the scope of works. Workers must understand the hazards and controls before commencing the activity. Consultation and acknowledgement may be recorded through the MCK Group App or other approved company record. A paper signature is not required where electronic acknowledgement is used.

Site-specific review: Before use, confirm plantation, client, access routes, stump/ground conditions, machinery, fire risk, communications, emergency arrangements and any additional controls. Record site-specific changes in the pre-start or task risk assessment.