

Contractor Standard Working Outdoors STD005

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EAST GIPPSLAND CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY WORK STANDARD STD 005

TASK: Working Outdoors

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Objective: To address the risks faced by contractor when working outdoors on behalf of the Authority, and to define appropriate controls considered by the Authority to be the minimum that should apply unless alternate and equivalent controls are proposed and accepted. This Standard is to be read in conjunction with any applicable EGMA OHS Standard for specific tasks faced when working outdoors and is provided to assist the Authority's Contractor / Supplier of Services' in meeting their obligations to provide a safe workplace for their employees.

This document sets a standard expected by the Authority for working outdoors. The Contractor / Supplier of Services' must adapt their Safe Work Procedure to meet or exceed these standards and ensure that a Safe Working Method Statement (SWMS) is completed with reference to the Contractor / Supplier of Services' procedures.

Working Outdoors – Many OHS hazards arise when persons work outdoors, and not all will be applicable to each situation or task. Before a task is commenced this Standard must be reviewed to determine which hazards apply to that situation, therefore which controls need to be considered for inclusion in the Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) for the task that is to be undertaken.

The following checklist can be used to quickly identify which hazards might apply - the Yes or No boxes should be checked as appropriate and, for all Yes boxes checked, the corresponding controls should be considered when preparing the SWMS.

The wearing of long-sleeved shirts and long pants is defined as a minimum requirement when working outdoors and applies to all tasks undertaken on behalf of the Authority.

When planning works under this Standard, the requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety (Psychological Health) Regulations 2025 apply and must be considered.

Risk or Hazard		Could occur during the proposed task	
		YES	NO
UV exposure	<i>guide - September to April higher UV index</i>		
Excessive heat	<i>guide - Over 35°C</i>		
Excessive cold	<i>guide - Under 10°C</i>		
Total Fire Ban	<i>guide - declared</i>		
Fire Rating	<i>guide - extreme or above</i>		
High winds	<i>guide - Over 50km/h</i>		
River Heights	<i>guide - moderate or above</i>		
Planned Burns	<i>guide - impacting your area of work</i>		
Thunderstorm/lightning			
Uneven terrain			
Risk of encountering snakes			
Risk of insect bites (bees, wasps, ticks)			
Working from a boat or barge			
Working within 3 metres of water over 1 metre deep			
Working where loss of contact with work team members or emergency services might occur			

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Activity	Hazard Description	Control Measures - Actions to be Taken
<p>General requirements before commencing a contracted task for the Authority</p>	<p>Planning, SWMS preparation and approval, daily pre-start checks</p>	<p>The following steps are to be followed when preparing to undertake a contracted activity on behalf of the Authority:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A site-specific Safe Working Method Statement (SWMS) MUST be completed BEFORE commencing work. The SWMS must include a list of pre-approved sub-contractors / Supplier of Services'. The use of sub-contractors / Supplier of Services on Authority worksites must be by written authorisation of the Authority's CEO prior to works commencing. 2. The Contractor / Supplier of Services' representative and Authority's Supervisor will normally meet on-site well before work is to commence to identify elements of the SWMS. The SWMS is to be submitted for review at least 2 week prior to starting works, to allow time for the Works Co-ordinator review it. 3. The SWMS must be reviewed, adjusted if necessary, and agreed by the Authority and contractor / Supplier of Services prior to work commencing at a site. 4. All workers MUST be inducted into the SWMS & the site by the Contractor / Supplier of Services' Supervisor or Principal. This includes any pre-approved sub-contractor / Supplier of Services. 5. Workers MUST be adequately trained including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of two current first aid trained employees in any work crew (Minimum Level II). • Safe manual handling techniques and complete a manual handling risk assessment for the task. Those techniques must be applied to the task. • Emergency response procedures.

		<p>6. Workers with known allergic responses should consult a doctor and ensure that the appropriate first aid supplies to enable self-administration (e.g., EpiPen, Asthma inhaler) are contained in the first aid kit which must be available at all times during work. Workers are responsible to ensure that the employer is informed of allergies and any additional precautions that may be required.</p> <p>7. Workers MUST be supervised by the Contractor / Supplier of Services nominated person to ensure these procedures are followed.</p> <p>8. The Authority's Works Coordinator will review the work in progress against the SWMS and applicable Contractor / Supplier of Services Safe Work Procedures and may direct work to cease if it is believed agreed safety procedures are not being followed.</p> <p>9. Pre-commencement Site Safety Check</p> <p>Before commencing work on any site, a preliminary site walk must be undertaken to make a thorough assessment for the presence of site-specific hazards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consult with the landowner to identify known higher risk areas. i.e. location of stock posing a risk to workers.• Exposure to animal/insect bites, hazardous trees, obscured holes, uneven ground, unstable ground, deep/fast moving water, rising water levels, prevailing weather conditions, traffic management, loud noise and vibration, heavy or awkward lifting, exposure to harmful substances, exposure to high-pressure fluids, communications, contact with electricity and falling/falls from height.• Where appropriate, set out and identify the area to be worked on by using hi-vis tape. A staged approach is required to ensure a thorough inspection of the areas to be worked on. Ensure that NO GO zones are clearly identified (e.g., marked with fluoro tape) and communicated to the workers and incorporated into the SWMS, together with any additional hazards identified during the site assessment.• Review, update and document progress on each newly defined site then attach to the original SWMS.
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		<p>Daily Pre-start Prior to commencing each day's work, a physical pre-start assessment is to be completed by the Contractor / Supplier of Services' Supervisor or Leading Hand and the work team and recorded at a toolbox meeting, to be signed off by each member of the work team to certify that they participated in the assessment and understand its contents.</p> <p>The completed forms are to be retained on site for inspection by the Authority at any time during the contracted works.</p>
<p>Exposure to the sun and UV radiation</p>	<p>Exposure to the sun's rays can cause sunburn, sun damage to skin or eyes, and possible skin cancer.</p>	<p>Long-sleeved shirts and long pants are to be worn at all times. As per the Cancer Council of Australia, when the UV Index (as published by the Bureau of Meteorology) is predicted to be above 3, the following requirements are to be applied when working in the open, or in partial shade:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A broad-brimmed hat is to be worn. • Sunscreen with a minimum rating of SPF30+ is to be applied and re-applied to exposed skin in accordance with the product's instructions. • Awareness training of risks resulting from UV exposure. • Sunglasses or safety sunglasses are to be worn. • Where the work schedule can be adjusted, tasks requiring working in direct sunlight should be avoided between 11 am and 3 pm.
<p>Exposure to extreme weather</p>	<p>Exposure to extreme weather events, heat, cold, storms, high wind, lightning and bushfires</p>	<p>Temperature On days of extreme heat (BOM forecast over 35°C) contractors May:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undertake non-strenuous works • carry out strenuous works before/after the temperature reached 35°C if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the Authority works co-ordinator has a discussion with the contractor to ensure that the contractor was aware of the temperature requirements for the day and this is recorded in the daily prestart document and appropriate precautions implemented to minimise the risk of heat-related hazards

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ the Authority works co-ordinator monitors the temperature to ensure that the temperature did not exceed 35°C prior to the predicted time, and would let the contractor know if this was the case○ the contractor monitors the temperature as well and keeps the Authority's works co-ordinator informed of when they start/stop works● regardless of the temperature, if the day is declared a day of total fire ban or has a fire danger rating of extreme or catastrophic, no outdoor works are to be undertaken <p>On cold days outdoor work should only occur when an employee can avoid prolonged exposure to cold conditions (i.e., when the maximum forecast temperature for the site is 10°C or less). This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Being in cold weather for a prolonged period.● Spending excessive time in wet clothes.● Spending excessive time in cold winds.● Supervisors must ensure that workers have sufficient layered clothing to maintain body temperature <p>High Winds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● When working in forested areas workers should be on alert to tree or branch fall as wind speed rises, and time spent directly under trees should be minimised. If wind speed exceeds 35 km/h or is forecast to exceed 35 km/h, workers should evacuate or not enter forested areas until wind speeds decrease.● No field work to be undertaken in a forested area impacted by bushfire when wind speed is above 25km/h.● Hard hats must be worn as determined by the contractor / Supplier of Services' risk assessment for that area of forest.● When wind speed of greater than 25 km/h is experienced, or forecast, when working on a boat, the work should cease or be deferred.
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		<p>Imminent Storms</p> <p>Avoid working in areas of higher risk if thunderstorms are forecast. Areas of higher risk include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wide open areas, ridge tops, near ledges or rock outcrops.• On water.• Operating, machinery or electric motors.• Tall trees, wire fences, utility lines and other elevated conductive objects. <p>If a thunderstorm or lightning is imminent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take shelter in a vehicle or building if possible.• If unable to take shelter, stay low to the ground, near small trees and shrubs and make minimal contact with the ground (i.e. Stand or crouch, don't lie down).• Do not resume work in an exposed area for 30 minutes after a thunderstorm has passed over. <p>Bushfire Potential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No work is to be undertaken in the bush on days of Total Fire Ban or when the fire danger rating is extreme or higher.• If a Total Fire Ban or a fire danger rating is extreme or higher is declared, workers in the bush are to be evacuated at the earliest opportunity.• If a fire is in the vicinity of works, Vic Emergency website is to be followed for all advice and to review CFA Fire Rating Forecast.• Works can continue while the advice 'no threat to community' is in place, contractor must review Vic Emergency warnings every two hours and document and have a detailed emergency evacuation plan.• Contractor must set up Watch Zones in the Vic Emergency app for the location that they are going to be working in. The Vic Emergency app allows for multiple Watch Zones to be set up.
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<p>Working outdoors implies the probability of uneven surfaces</p>	<p>Risk of slips, trips and falls due to uneven or unstable surfaces</p>	<p>Areas of particular risk of falls due to the terrain should be identified on the initial site assessment, identified with tape and documented in the SWMS.</p> <p>Ankle supporting boots and soles with non-slip tread shall be worn when working outdoors except where the task requires specific footwear such as gumboots.</p>
<p>Exposure to bites from Snakes</p>	<p>Risk of snake bite</p>	<p>IMPORTANT: Snakes are territorial and may return to their habitat after initially moving away during the walk through.</p> <p>Be aware of surroundings (snakes can be found anywhere, especially under rocks, logs, planks, long grass and near water sources).</p> <p>If you see or suspect a snake is present remain still and alert other workers while making sure that they do not approach the snake. Move slowly away while making some noise, watch its movements and be alert for other snakes in the area you are moving towards. Allow the snake to move away. If possible, maintain the higher ground and stay up hill from its last known location as snakes typically travel down slopes/hills when trying to get away from danger.</p>

		<p>Never attack or attempt to harm a snake, they will become more aggressive if provoked. Be mindful that they are a protected species. Treat every snake as if it is venomous. Remain aware of its presence and do not approach a snake (dead or alive).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two Level 2 first aid trained persons to be present at all times.• Carry a snake bite kit within the first aid kit.• Avoid known areas of high snake concentration in peak risk periods.• Advise other works groups in the area of multiple sightings or aggressive snakes. <p>PPE Feet, legs, arms and hands must be protected from a bite. The PPE requirement will depend on the vegetation encountered. The approach to be adopted must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In open grazed paddocks or bare ground, boots and long pants are required.• In grassed areas below knee height, knee-high gaiters closely fitted to boots are required.• In vegetation areas above knee height (grasses or shrubs), full-length chaps or waders must be worn. <p>If the task requires placing the hands or arms near vegetation, additional PPE such as arm gaiters and gloves (no bare skin permitted), or elbow length gloves of a suitable puncture resistant material must be worn.</p>
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<p>Working outdoors resulting in potential exposure to biting/stinging insects</p>	<p>Contact with Wasps, Ticks, Ants, Bees & Mosquitos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of bite/sting • Allergic reaction 	<p>Workers should act so as to minimise the likelihood of any bite or sting by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being aware of surroundings (bee’s hives, wasp nests) – communicate to other workers and include in SWMS. • Wasps nest in trees, logs, or underground. They are generally more aggressive than bees and attracted to food and drink. • Do not contact/disturb nests/hives. If nests/hives are located in work area – redeploy to a safer area. If necessary, contact a professional to remove before undertaking further work. • Do not drink directly out of cans if left unattended. • Avoid wearing perfumes and scents. • Inspect for ticks regularly - all workers must be familiar with identification and first aid treatment for tick bite. • Apply insect repellent and reapply regularly. <p>Note: Potential adverse reactions to repellent can be decreased by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • applying repellents in accordance with product instructions. • avoid high concentrations of DEET. • do not inhale, ingest, or get into eyes. • never use on wounds or irritated skin. • wash repellent-treated skin after coming indoors. <p>There is a requirement for workers to notify employers if they have a known sensitivity to insect bites, and first aid kits must have an Epi-pen or equivalent at all times.</p>
<p>Working on, above or adjacent to a waterway or dam</p>	<p>Working on, above or adjacent to a waterway or dam creates the risk of falling into the water and drowning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persons working from a watercraft must wear a life jacket at all times as specified by the Marine Regulations. • Persons working on a bank or water’s edge within 5 metres of water over 1 metre deep must complete a risk assessment.
<p>Loss of Contact</p>	<p>Loss of contact with the work crew, emergency services or extended response time of emergency services and work team</p>	<p>Workers should not be visibly or audibly separated from the work team unless particular provision is made for maintaining contact with someone working alone.</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Workers must wear hi-vis clothing on any worksite to assist in maintaining visual contact.• Any worker out of visual and audible contact must be provided with a form of 2-way electronic communication which is assured to work in the area such as mobile phone including text via satellite, VHF radio or another suitable device.• Consideration must be given to likely battery life, spare batteries or other means of charging the device. <p>If working in a remote location the following requirements apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• First aid kit with a snake bite kit must accompany the work team at all times.• At least two persons holding a current Level 2 First Aid qualification with current CPR training must be present.• An emergency response plan must be developed before the task commences, and a copy held by the work team, the Contractor / Supplier of Services' Principal and the Authority. (attached to the SWMS). <p>The emergency response plan must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• emergency contact details• location of the closest medical facility• evacuation points• ambulance meeting points• helicopter landing points <p>An assured 24/7 means of check-in service must be available within the team. Individual team members, at a minimum, must carry an EPIRB/PLB.</p>
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