

TOOLBOX TALK: Working Alone

Toolbox talks are a great way to share important information that can keep your business and workers safe. Take a few minutes to read through this document with your staff and contractors.

WHAT IS IT?

Working alone is work that is isolated from the assistance of other people because of the location, time, or nature of the work.

Working alone work may involve isolated areas, on or off-site, during or outside normal working hours.

Working along may involve remote work where there are few people and where communications and travel are difficult.

Due to the nature of forest operations, there can be greater hazards and risks:

- Emergency events
- Poor communication
- Fatigue and boredom
- Manual felling
- Working at night
- Adverse conditions- weather
- Reduced visibility

CONTROLS

- Aim to work in pairs or groups to avoid working alone.
- Implement a buddy system that would include regular communication and ensuring they are safe.
- Check in - arrange a person to check in with, maintain contact between set times and let them know you're safe.
- Check in - send texts or call at agreed times, using phones, radios or working alone devices.
- Use emergency communication devices. Personal location beacons, EPIRBs, or spot trackers can be used for communication, location and to raise alarms.
- Use technology such as GPS tracking, satellite phones, alarms and reminders to implement check-ins.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Ensure there is access to food and water.
- Ensure there is access to first aid equipment.
- Aim to work in daylight conditions.
- Avoid high-risk work when working alone.
- Be aware of hazards and risks.

DOCUMENTATION

- Implement your safety management system or use the Timber Queensland Working Alone Procedure
- Keep records
- Document any changes
- Ensure that working alone is agreed to and identify controls in place to reduce risk

Ensure a risk management process occurs for every operation:

- Identify hazards
- Conduct a risk assessment
- Eliminate hazards and minimise the risk
- Develop controls and implement a working alone procedure.

We must minimise risk to the health and safety of a worker associated with remote or isolated work.

Refer to Safe Work Australia, available here:
<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/safety-topic/hazards/remote-and-isolated-work/overview>

Information in this Toolbox Talk is taken from the **Timber Queensland Working Alone Procedure, and Working Alone Form**, available from the qldnativeforestry.com.au website via:
<https://www.qldnativeforestry.com/work-health-safety>