REMOTE SITE SAFETY STANDARDS

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Faculty of Science (the Faculty) regularly conducts work at diverse sites remote to main campuses. This presents particular risks associated with working remotely such as potential limitations to immediate face to face assistance and supervision.

The management of a broad range of comparatively infrequent practical teaching and research activities carried out in the natural environment and classed as fieldwork is managed through the University’s Fieldwork Safety Standards. However, work performed by Faculty staff on behalf of the Faculty at remote sites on a full-time or fractional basis requires management that commonly overlaps with, but is distinct from that outlined in the Fieldwork Safety Standards.

Safe work at remote sites is dependent on appropriate planning, the use of suitable procedures and equipment, and the availability of experienced and competent workers. Faculty research and teaching activities involve people with a large range of training experience that should be acknowledged in planning and procedure development.

The standards defined in this document draw context from, and are closely aligned with the University’s Fieldwork Safety Standards.

2. PURPOSE

This document outlines the Faculty’s minimum performance standards for safety on remote sites and outlines specific considerations to accommodate dynamic environmental conditions.

These standards give effect to the Work Health and Safety Policy 2016. Compliance with these performance standards assists the University to meet the legislative requirements of the NSW Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and Regulation 2017.

3. SCOPE

These performance standards apply at Faculty controlled remote site locations listed in Table 1 (below). Infrastructure at most sites is managed by Campus Infrastructure and Security (CIS).
### Table 1 - Remote Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Site Custodian</th>
<th>Remote Site Safety Officer</th>
<th>WHS Reporting</th>
<th>Faculty Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arthursleigh Farm</td>
<td>Marulan, NSW</td>
<td>Stephen Burgun</td>
<td>Stephen Burgun</td>
<td>CIS</td>
<td>James Bell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badgery’s Creek Complex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Fleurs Farm</td>
<td>1793-1951 Elizabeth Drive, Badgerys Creek, NSW</td>
<td>Stephen Burgun</td>
<td>Stephen Burgun</td>
<td>ROSC &amp; FOS</td>
<td>James Bell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- McGarvie Smith Farm,</td>
<td>1793-1951 Elizabeth Drive, Badgerys Creek, NSW</td>
<td>Stephen Burgun</td>
<td>Stephen Burgun</td>
<td>ROSC &amp; FOS</td>
<td>James Bell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bringelly Complex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- John B Pye Farm (including Greendale School site)</td>
<td>532 Greendale Road, Greendale NSW</td>
<td>Paul Lipscombe</td>
<td>Jim Hull</td>
<td>ROSC &amp; FOS</td>
<td>James Bell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Wolverton Farm</td>
<td>Greendale Road, Greendale, NSW</td>
<td>Oliver Roberts</td>
<td>Oliver Roberts</td>
<td>ROSC &amp; FOS</td>
<td>James Bell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camden Farms, collectively constituting the Camden Campus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Animal Reproduction Unit (Sheep Unit)</td>
<td>107 Cobbitty Road, Cobbitty, NSW</td>
<td>Cameron Sharpe</td>
<td>Jim Hull</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Cannons Farm</td>
<td>Werombi Road Brownlow Hill</td>
<td>Colleen Richards</td>
<td>Jim Hull</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Coates Park Farm</td>
<td>Greendale Road, Greendale, NSW</td>
<td>Oliver Roberts</td>
<td>Oliver Roberts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Corstorphine Farm (Dairy)</td>
<td>335 Werombi Rd, Brownlow Hill</td>
<td>Oliver Roberts</td>
<td>Oliver Roberts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Horse Unit</td>
<td>107 Cobbitty Road, Cobbitty, NSW</td>
<td>Greg Hogan</td>
<td>Jim Hull</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lansdowne Farm (Lansdowne Farm Crop Science)</td>
<td>Cobbitty Road, Cobbitty, NSW</td>
<td>Paul Lipscombe</td>
<td>Jim Hull</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lansdowne Turf Farm</td>
<td>Cobbitty Road, Cobbitty, NSW</td>
<td>Paul Lipscombe</td>
<td>Jim Hull</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- May Farm</td>
<td>May Farm Rd, Brownlow Hill, NSW</td>
<td>Oliver Roberts</td>
<td>Jim Hull</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Moffats Farm</td>
<td>Werombi Rd, Brownlow Hill, NSW</td>
<td>David Palmer</td>
<td>Jim Hull</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Mt Hunter</td>
<td>May Farm Rd, Brownlow Hill, NSW</td>
<td>Oliver Roberts</td>
<td>Oliver Roberts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Site Custodian</td>
<td>Remote Site Safety Officer</td>
<td>WHS Reporting</td>
<td>Faculty Contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
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<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Camden Farms</strong>, collectively constituting the Camden Campus (continued)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant Breeding Institute (PBI)</td>
<td>107 Cobbitty Road Cobbitty, NSW</td>
<td>Paul Lipscombe &amp; Jim Hull</td>
<td>Jim Hull</td>
<td>ROSC &amp; FOS</td>
<td>James Bell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poultry sheds</td>
<td>425 Werombi Rd, Camden NSW</td>
<td>Joy Gill</td>
<td>Jim Hull</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westwood Farm</td>
<td>Stanhope Road, Theresa Park Camden, NSW</td>
<td>Oliver Roberts</td>
<td>Oliver Roberts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Camden Veterinary Hospital</strong></td>
<td>410 Werombi Road, Brownlow Hill Camden, NSW</td>
<td>John House</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Keith Merchant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Crommelin Biological Research Station</strong> (Warrah)</td>
<td>75 Crystal Ave, Pearl Beach, NSW</td>
<td>Colin &amp; Leigh McKenzie</td>
<td>Michael Joseph</td>
<td>SOLES &amp; FOS Dianne Fisher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E J Holtsbaum Agricultural Research Institute (Nowley Farm)</td>
<td>681 Howes Hill Road Spring Ridge, NSW</td>
<td>Peter Bell (Acting)</td>
<td>Peter Bell (Acting)</td>
<td>SOLES &amp; FOS James Bell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.A. Watson Research Station (Grains Research Station)</td>
<td>12656 Newell Highway, Narrabri, NSW</td>
<td>Peter Bell</td>
<td>Peter Bell</td>
<td>SOLES &amp; FOS James Bell Dianne Fisher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Llara Farm</td>
<td>790 Killarney Gap Road, Narrabri, NSW</td>
<td>Peter Bell</td>
<td>Peter Bell</td>
<td>SOLES &amp; FOS James Bell Dianne Fisher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molongolo Observatory Synthesis Telescope</td>
<td>Hoskinstown, ACT</td>
<td>Tim Bateman</td>
<td>David Beech</td>
<td>Physics &amp; FOS Dianne Fisher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Tree Island Research Station</td>
<td>One Tree Island, Great Barrier Reef, Qld</td>
<td>Paul Baker Ainsley Carlin</td>
<td>Paul Baker Ainsley Carlin</td>
<td>FOS Dianne Fisher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydney University Stellar Interferometer (SUSI or Paul Wild Observatory)</td>
<td>Narrabri, NSW</td>
<td>Peter Tuthill</td>
<td>David Beech</td>
<td>Physics &amp; FOS Dianne Fisher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tropical Ecology Research Facility</td>
<td>Middle Point near Fogg Dam, NT</td>
<td>Greg Brown</td>
<td>Greg Brown</td>
<td>SOLES &amp; FOS Dianne Fisher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife Health and Conservation Centre (Avian Reptile &amp; Exotic Pet Hospital)</td>
<td>345 Werombi Road, Brownlow Hill</td>
<td>Colleen Ritchard</td>
<td>Kathy Brammell</td>
<td>Keith Merchant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*CIS = Campus Infrastructure Services  
FOS = Faculty of Science  
ROSC = Rural & Remote Operations & Safety Committee  
SOLES = School of Life and Environmental Sciences*
4. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The Faculty has established the following minimum performance standards to manage health & safety risks associated with remote sites. Compliance with performance standards is compulsory by all staff, students, contractors, volunteers and visitors whilst on remote sites under the management of the Faculty.

- WHS safety plans are established for all remote field sites
- Activity on remote sites is subject to regular and timely risk assessment
- Safe work procedures are established for all hazardous tasks as well as hazardous plant and equipment used on remote sites
- Work on site follows the defined biosecurity plan applicable to the site, with all issues resolved or appropriately managed in a timely manner
- Site based equipment is regularly maintained
- Operation of plant and equipment on remote sites is only conducted by competent and, where applicable, appropriately licensed personnel
- Work is supervised by experienced and competent personnel
- Appropriate communication is available at all times on and around site, e.g. mobile and/or satellite phones, VHF/UHF radio or GPS tracking devices
- Emergency response plans are established for all remote sites, including the planning for ethical animal handling in circumstances involving severe or extreme weather and fire risk
- Appropriate safety, emergency and first aid resources are available
- All personnel (including staff, students, contractors, volunteers and visitors) receive induction which includes any specific hazards associated with the site before they commence work at the site
- All personnel (including staff, students, contractors, volunteers and visitors) are prompted to disclose medical information that may impact their health and safety during remote site activity
- Vehicles are properly maintained, insured and, where applicable, registered
- Guidelines are established for all activities that may be particularly impacted by fatigue or seasonal conditions, for example driving, heat stress or fire risk

5. DEFINITIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crisis</td>
<td>An incident, emergency or other set of circumstances, which significantly threaten remote site operations and/or people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme weather</td>
<td>Extreme weather in the context of this Standard is any condition meeting the parameters listed in Table 2 of this document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazardous Plant and Equipment</td>
<td>Plant or equipment that has a high or extreme current risk rating using the University’s Risk Matrix (refer Schedule 1 of the WHS Procedures 2016). All powered mobile plant and equipment is considered as hazardous in the context of this standard</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hazardous Tasks

Those tasks that have a high or extreme risk rating using the University’s Risk Matrix (refer Schedule 1 of the WHS Procedures 2016). The following are also to be considered hazardous tasks in the context of this Standard: use of hazardous materials; risk of drowning; use of mobile plant; activities in confined spaces; exposure to artificial extremes of temperature; tasks involving potential risk of falling greater than 2 metres; work on electrical equipment; and others as determined by local management.

Personnel

Personnel in the context of this Standard are the same as ‘worker’ as defined in the NSW WHS Act, i.e.: an employee; a contractor or subcontractor; an employee of a contractor or subcontractor; an employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work at the remote site; an outworker; an apprentice or trainee; a student gaining work experience; or a volunteer. Students and visitors are also considered ‘personnel’ in the context of this standard.

Remote Site

Site of recurrent University activity remote to the main Camperdown and Westmead campuses where there may be less supervision and support, and may be isolated from the assistance of other persons because of location, time or the nature of the work.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1. DEAN

The Dean (or Deputy Dean or Head of School where authority is delegated) must:

- Ensure that a safety officer and site custodian are identified and appointed for all sites of direct responsibility.
- Ensure that adequate resources have been allocated to maintain the larger elements of built infrastructure at remote sites that house personnel, animals and laboratory equipment on a regular basis.
- Oversee the initiation and delivery of large building projects, as required.
- Ensure a Local WHS Action Plan and a Site Emergency Response Plan have been established for all remote sites.
- Ensure a clear chain of command and supervision arrangements are established for each site, and a safety committee established that is responsible for monitoring site safety.
- Be familiar with the risks associated with remote sites.
- Provide visible leadership through periodic visits to remote sites.

6.2. FACULTY CONTACT

This position will typically be assigned to the Manager Facilities and Remote Sites or the Manager Farms Operation. This role must:

- Coordinate facilities on Faculty premises and remote sites, including security, environmental issues and the oversight of WHS compliance and good practice.
- Be familiar with the risks associated with remote sites.
• Prepare and maintain the Farm and Remote Site Plan for each site in accordance with section 7.1 of this document
• Provide leadership and be an advocate for the Remote Site Safety Standards (this document) and associated University policies

6.3. REMOTE SITE SAFETY OFFICER

The person delegated responsibility by the Dean or Head of School to oversee safety on a remote site. The remote site safety officer must have the skills, knowledge and practical experience required to manage the remote site safely.

The Remote Site Safety Officer must:

• Create and maintain the site WHS Action Plan and Emergency Response Plan, and report progress of the plans to the relevant WHS committee(s)
• Ensure that the appropriate provision of first aid is available and site first aid supplies are maintained
• Ensure emergency response arrangements are subject to periodic checking and that drills and/or preparatory exercises are performed
• Monitor information relating to hazardous weather conditions and alert the relevant Emergency Management Group/Emergency Control Organization
• Ensure that all personnel receive appropriate induction to the site
• Maintain a database of on-site plant and equipment and schedule maintenance according to the recommended service and replacement intervals
• Coordinate the completion of risk assessments and safe work procedures for hazardous tasks in relation to site operations in consultation with local personnel
• Ensure appropriate site communication mechanisms are available
• Ensure that all incidents are reported in RiskWare, investigated and that appropriate corrective action is taken as soon as reasonably possible

6.4. REMOTE SITE CUSTODIAN

The person delegated responsibility by the Dean or Head of School to oversee University activity on a remote site and act as the primary site contact. This will generally be the senior professional staff member working on and responsible for the day to day running of the remote site.

The Remote Site Custodian must:

• Oversee University activity on a remote site and act as the primary site contact for work activities
• Provide on-site leadership and be an advocate for the Remote Site Safety Standards (this document) and associated University policies
• Support and where appropriate share/assist in the Remote Site Safety Officer workload
6.5. SITE EMERGENCY CONTACT

A person or staffed work station that can be contacted during normal work hours on the site.

The Site Emergency Contact must:

- Maintain regular and timely communication with remote workers
- Oversee site work plans
- Raise the alarm in accordance with the site emergency response plan

6.6. LOCAL MANAGEMENT

Onsite personnel with management or supervisory responsibilities, for example academics responsible for research on the site, unit of study coordinators, farm supervisors and facility supervisors.

Local management must:

- Ensure that all visitors to site are fully briefed on site risks and the emergency response protocols.
- Ensure that all hazardous work is only performed by competent persons
- Ensure all plant and equipment with a safety critical aspect is maintained according to manufacturer requirements and, if faulty, removed from service and the Remote Site Safety Officer informed
- Manage and monitor site communication devices and ensure all visitors have appropriate communication devices while out in the field
- Ensure all personnel establish regular check-ins in accordance with the requirements of the site emergency response plan
- Ensure contractors are qualified, informed of local hazards and site rules, inducted and supervised
- Report and investigate incidents, accidents and near misses to the Remote Site Safety Officer and ensure they are recorded in RiskWare

6.7. CONTRACTORS

Contractors must:

- Complete the University’s CIS contractor induction and attend a local site induction before undertaking work
- Follow safe work procedures and all reasonable directions from local management relating to health and safety, including the use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
6.8. VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

Visitors and volunteers must:

- Participate in site-related briefings and associated training
- Provide local Management with evidence of competencies for hazardous operations before attending site, along with all relevant safety documentation in relation to their work on site (e.g. safety plan, Safe Work Procedures, dive plans, certificates of competency, relevant licenses etc.)
- Disclose and discuss medical information that may impact their health and safety to local management before attending site
- Follow safe work procedures and all reasonable directions from local management relating to health and safety, including the use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Refer to the site emergency plan and procedures in relation to operation of Faculty owned plant and equipment in their planning of activities to be undertaken on site
- Not complete outdoor activities when extreme weather is predicted or there is elevated risk of fire

6.9. FACULTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT GROUP

A Faculty Emergency Management Group is to be defined for each remote site and tasked with coordinating response to a situation of crisis or extreme weather. The Rural Academic Strategy Committee (RASC) is to determine the membership of the Faculty Emergency Management Group for each remote site – it will typically comprise the Dean, Deputy Dean, General Manager, Head of School, Faculty Contact, Site Custodian and the Site Safety Officer.

Membership and chain of command (i.e. hierarchy of decision making responsibility) is to be documented in the Site Emergency Response Plan for each Site.

7. REMOTE SITE MANAGEMENT

7.1. FARM AND REMOTE SITE PLANS

The Faculty Contact for each site is to prepare and maintain a business plan that outlines:

- the teaching, research and commercial purpose of activities conducted on the site
- the current operation of buildings, machinery and equipment
- relevant biosecurity and livestock welfare details where applicable
- key future business plans for the site justified with financial detail
7.2. **WHS ACTION PLAN**

A WHS Action Plan is to be established for each remote University site under the management of the Faculty. The action plan must correspond to the nature of activities completed at the site, and indicate the risk associated with the facilities, planned work activities and the environment in which they are completed.

The WHS Action Plan is a live document. It is to be reviewed at least quarterly, updated as required and presented to the relevant WHS committee(s) at least annually. The plan is to include as a minimum:

- A brief summary of the purpose of the teaching and research activity completed at the site, drawn from the Farm and Remote Site Plan
- Chain of command and supervision arrangements
- Identification of key site operational risks and planned actions to address them
- Details of the equipment required to support safe work, including communication and emergency equipment

7.3. **SITE EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN**

An emergency response plan is to be established for each remote site, including but not limited to:

- Building evacuation plans for all buildings occupied on a regular basis by personnel
- Contact information for the site contact, site safety officer, Head of School, Faculty Emergency Management Group and any relevant statutory bodies that should be consulted in the event of an emergency (including their website details). These could include, for example, details of local Council staff, the nearest hospital, harbour management, local State Emergency Services (SES), Rural Fire Service and bodies that may be able to assist with any emergency response
- Details of leadership and lines of responsibility in the event of extreme weather conditions being forecast, and of key Faculty staff on the Emergency Response Group that need to be notified in the event of extreme weather conditions being forecast
- Details of site specific circumstances that could likely trigger an emergency including threshold points for decision making
- A general communication strategy, including details of the site emergency contact(s), how emergency help will be summoned, and a scheduled check-in procedure
- Medical emergency procedures including first aid arrangements and the details of the nearest medical assistance
- Site evacuation procedures
- Missing person procedure
- Acknowledge any long term occupants residing at the site outside of normal working hours

The Emergency Response Plan is to be created in consultation with local management and regularly updated by the site safety officer as circumstances change and at least every 6 months. The reviews should as a minimum:

- Reconsider and confirm or change the type of potential emergencies covered by the plan
- Verify that inspections and tests of alarm and response equipment are up-to-date (e.g. fire extinguishers, exit lights, fire blankets, first aid kits, EPIRBs)
- Verify that trials have been undertaken in accordance with planned arrangements
- Check and respond to any changes to people assigned particular emergency response tasks such as fire wardens, first aiders

All personnel including the nominated emergency contact(s) must be familiar with the plan.

### 7.4. SITE WHS RISK MANAGEMENT

All remote site activities are subject to the University procedures for WHS risk management. Refer to clause 7 of the Work Health and Safety Procedures, 2016 for details.

Hazardous tasks performed on site must be identified and risk assessed. These include, but are not limited to:

- those tasks that have a high or extreme current risk rating using the University’s Risk Matrix (refer Schedule 1 of the WHS Procedures 2016)
- use of hazardous materials
- exposure to artificial extremes of temperature
- risk of drowning
- use of mobile plant
- activities in confined spaces
- tasks involving potential risk of falling greater than 2 metres
- maintenance activities
- work on electrical equipment
- any other tasks deemed to be hazardous

The results of the risk assessment must be recorded using the University’s risk assessment template available on the University Staff Intranet and be available to personnel involved in the task.

### 7.5. SAFE WORK PROCEDURES (SWP)

Safe work procedures (SWP) are to be established for all regular or repeated hazardous tasks. A SWP outlines the steps involved in a potentially hazardous task or activity and specifies how the risks associated with identified hazards will be eliminated or reduced. The University [Safe Work Procedure template](#) available on the Staff Intranet is a suitable template to document the SWP.

Personnel undertaking hazardous tasks in relation to Faculty equipment or facilities must be either directly supervised by a competent person or assessed as competent for unsupervised work. Copies of relevant SWPs should be made available to personnel utilizing Faculty equipment and resources.

### 7.6. HAZARDOUS WEATHER EVENTS

Work at remote sites commonly presents situations of elevated risk related to, for example, larger variations in diurnal temperature and/or bush fire than is common in the Sydney Central Business District.
University work practices at remote sites need to acknowledge such risks and be adapted to the context of both normal seasonal variation and exceptional weather conditions.

Staff at remote sites are encouraged to maintain strong connections with local emergency response organizations, such as the Rural Fire Service and State Emergency Services. Where relevant, WHS documentation should address a range of fire-safety readiness measures for the site, such as training, points of water supply to assist fire-fighting, vehicular access routes, and planning for hazard reduction.

Table 2 below details the minimum controls and communication channels to be enacted in the case of a hazardous weather event.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Severe weather</th>
<th>Work practice at all remote sites is to be modified when:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• the temperature is predicted to reach or exceed 35°C (Steadman Apparent temperature in shade), or fall below minus 5°C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• there has been an exceptional amount of rain over a period of a week or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• there is a forecast for heavy rain or low-level flooding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• strong and damaging winds (gusts exceeding 60 km/h) are forecast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• a tropical low-pressure system with the possibility of developing into a cyclone has formed and the site lies in the predicted path</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• a bush or grass fire alert has been raised in the local area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• persistent smoke haze is present due to hazard reduction operations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The modifications are to include: a higher and appropriate frequency of communication between all personnel on site and the nominated site emergency contact; changing the timing of outdoor work to cooler/warmer parts of the day as appropriate; use of air conditioned worksites and vehicles; ensuring that all work activities have appropriate access to water, shelter and a clear means of returning from isolated work sites. All remote personnel are to work in teams and lodge daily work plans with the site emergency contact.

When a condition of severe weather is forecast, the site safety officer is to regularly monitor information that enables a planned response commencing six days ahead of any further deterioration of the weather or other environmental conditions where possible.

Plans should be enacted to ensure the appropriate handling of all animals in the event of a sustained period of severe weather. These should include plans for redundancy in water and food supply, and responding to the effects of bush or grass-fire.

SafeWork NSW has a series of recommended procedures for working in hot conditions:

Steadman Apparent temperature in shade:
### Extreme weather

All work that is conducted outdoors or without air conditioning at remote sites is to be regarded as high risk and involving extreme weather when:

- the temperature is predicted to reach or exceed 35°C in association with forecast high winds and/or low seasonal humidity
- the temperature is predicted to reach or exceed 40°C, or fall below minus 10°C
- there is a forecast for heavy rain in a situation of existing low-level flooding
- strong and damaging winds (gusts exceeding 60 km/h) are forecast in association with heavy rain
- a tropical cyclone or violent electrical storm has developed and is tracking towards the site
- a bush or grass fire exists in the local area

When extreme weather is forecast, the site safety officer is to send an alert to the Faculty Emergency Management Group two or more days ahead of such forecast conditions eventuating. The emergency response management plan is to be re-circulated to all on site, and appropriate actions completed to ensure safety controls are in place including animal welfare.

In the circumstance of extreme weather, the site emergency action plan needs to be enacted and regular outdoor activity suspended. Depending on the circumstances, consideration is to be given to evacuating the site with all personnel being relocated to safer locations. Leaving early is generally the safest option.

Consideration is to be given to the suitability of site access and equipment use in extreme weather. Diesel (not petrol) vehicles should be used to reduce the risk of fire ignition. Welding or oxy-torch cutting is NOT permitted in extreme weather.

All personnel working in the field should remain close to air-conditioned vehicles and be mindful of guidelines regarding the period spent outdoors.

Circumstances may arise where work other than teaching will need to be completed at remote sites under extreme weather conditions. Appropriate detail is to be provided for such work in the site emergency response plan, reviewed and approved by the relevant Head of School or Dean prior to such work being completed. All remote personnel are to work in teams and lodge daily work plans with the site emergency contact.

### Catastrophic fire danger rating

When catastrophic fire danger rating is declared covering the site, all personnel should leave the night before or early in the day – do not wait and see what happens.
7.7. SITE COMMUNICATIONS

7.7.1. Communication devices

Reliable communication is essential whilst working on remote sites. The mechanism will be dependent on the local circumstances and should be determined based on a risk assessment. It is essential that, in the event of something going wrong, assistance can be summoned and emergency services notified. Mobile phones are convenient but are not always suitable as the only means of communication. Very or ultra-high (VHF, UHF) frequency radio, satellite phones and GPS tracking and duress devices (e.g. EPIRB or PLBs) are also required in some circumstances. All remote sites are to ensure that persons performing work on the site have the ability to call for assistance at all times and be notified of any imminent danger. Details of communication devices are to be included in the Site WHS Action Plan and the Site Emergency Response Plan.

7.7.2. Check-ins

Local management is to establish a scheduled check-in procedure with all personnel performing work at the site, along with procedures to take action and raise the alarm with the emergency services when there is evidence that something has gone wrong, such as a missed check-in.

7.8. FIRST AID

Each site is to determine provision for first aid based on a risk assessment. This should consider as a minimum the number of trained first aiders, contents and location of first aid kits, the need for a first aid room, and proximity to the nearest hospital/medical centre.

As a minimum, the Site Custodian, the Remote Site Safety Officer and the Site Emergency Contact must maintain a current ‘Apply First Aid’ certification (HLTAID003) as a minimum, and preferably ‘Provide first aid in remote situations’ (HLTAID005).

In addition, groups of 10 people or more intending to come to site must include in their planning at least one person in the group with a current ‘Apply First Aid’ certificate (HLTAID003) or equivalent.

The following table is a guide to requirements for first aid resources for larger groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups up to 10 people</th>
<th>Minimum of one trained person</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Groups of 11 to 20</td>
<td>Minimum of two trained people</td>
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<tr>
<td>Groups of 21 to 60</td>
<td>Minimum of three trained people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups over 60</td>
<td>Minimum of three trained people, plus an extra trained person for every additional 30 people above 60</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

7.8.1. First Aid Equipment

Adequate first aid supplies must be available to all personnel working on remote sites. The supplies must be appropriate to the type of work, the hazards that might be encountered and the size of groups on site. At a minimum, a remote area first aid kit is to be available on site and include materials that assist with
responding to snake bite injury. It is also recommended that a First Aid Kit be available in all vehicles used on remote sites.

A process for monitoring and replenishing the contents of the kits is to be established and documented in the site emergency response plan. For further information about first aid equipment, refer to the guidance within the University’s First Aid Procedures available on the University Intranet.

7.9. HEALTH AND MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.9.1. Physical Capability

Some remote site activities are physically demanding and may be outside of the physical capability of some personnel. Personnel are to be encouraged to disclose physical restrictions to local management to ensure that appropriate precautions are taken to prevent injury or illness. In some cases, specific first aid requirements may need to be planned for.

Personnel on remote sites must be provided with sufficient information to allow them to assess their personal physical capability against the physical requirements of activities at the site, e.g. walking for long distances, working in boats.

7.9.2. Personal Health Considerations

If a person self-identifies as having a health or medical condition that may affect their ability to safely participate in work at the site, independent medical advice may be required before approval is given for them to attend a remote site.

Refer to the ‘Staff and Student Disclose of Medical Conditions’ information on the University Safety Health and Wellbeing portal of the intranet for guidance on managing such information.

7.9.3. Q Fever

Q fever is a zoonotic disease caused by Coxiella burnetii and is one of the most commonly reported direct zoonosis in Australia. People at highest risk include those that are in contact with livestock including goats, cattle, sheep, however cats and dogs, rodents, kangaroos, bandicoots and birds have been shown to be reservoirs for the pathogen. Ticks may also be involved in disease transmission.

The organism responsible for Q fever can survive in the environment as a non-replicative spore like state that can be spread by aerosol transmission and may be present in the immediate environment of infected animals for several weeks to months post decontamination.

The risk of exposure to, and management of Q fever on all remote sites is to be managed in accordance with the Faculty's Q Fever Management Plan.
7.10. **INDUCTION**

Good communication helps to set clear expectations, prevent misunderstandings and alert short-term site personnel to potential hazards.

Relevant information should be presented to visitors in writing by local management before they attend site where possible, for example through the provision of an information pack.

Each person, at the time of first commencing work at the site is to be provided with a site-specific induction relevant to the activities they will be involved in. This should include as appropriate:

- Local travel arrangements, such as key access roads
- Amenities such as field shelters and water supplies
- Site Contact(s)
- Identified site hazards
- Standard risk controls
- Site Rules, Code of conduct and potential consequences
- Available safety equipment
- Physical requirements, e.g. need to walk for long distances, stand for extended periods, climb
- Minimum dress requirements
- Personal supplies required, e.g. sunscreen, insect repellent, sunglasses, footwear, weatherproof coat, water bottle, personal medications sufficient for time away etc.
- Emergency procedures
- Communication arrangements including check-in protocols as applicable
- First Aid arrangements
- Incident reporting

A record of the induction should be maintained.

7.11. **TRANSPORT**

The following principles apply to transport used on remote sites under the management of the Faculty of Science:

- Vehicles are to be suitable for purpose, properly maintained and insured, and registered where applicable
- All vehicles driven across paddocks and parked on verges of the field sites need to be diesel powered, not petrol driven

Additional information on the use of University vehicles is available on the University Intranet [https://intranet.sydney.edu.au/services/campus-services/university-vehicles.html](https://intranet.sydney.edu.au/services/campus-services/university-vehicles.html)
7.11.1. Authority to drive vehicles

Authority to drive vehicles on remote sites is provided to staff with the appropriate class of NSW license (or recognized equivalent) and the specific permission of the Site Custodian they may drive a University vehicle.

For off-road use of a 4WD vehicle, the driver must have completed an accredited four-wheel drive (4WD) driving course or be able to demonstrate 4WD competency to the satisfaction of the Remote Site Custodian or approved delegate.

Only those persons who can demonstrate competency to the satisfaction of the Remote Site Custodian should be allowed to drive a tractor, quad bike or side-by-side vehicle and tow a trailer.

7.11.2. Use of private vehicles

- Private vehicles should only be used for remote site work as a last resort
- Only a Head of School (or equivalent) can authorise private vehicle use for remote site work
- Private vehicles must be roadworthy and be comprehensively insured

7.11.3. Quad bikes and side-by-side vehicles

A risk assessment is to be conducted before a quad bike or side-by-side vehicle is brought onto the site. A Safe Work Procedure is to be available, documenting the specific jobs for which the vehicle is to be used, the conditions of operation (including speed, load and tow limits), the areas on the site on which the machine is to be and is not to be operated.

The following minimum rules apply to the use of quad bikes and side-by-side for the Faculty business:

**Machine or vehicle selection**

Consider whether there is a more appropriate and safe way of performing the task. Where possible, select a machine or vehicle that has a low risk of rollover.

**Training, competency and induction**

All persons operating a quad bike or side-by-side vehicle are to have completed training meeting the requirements of AHCHMOM212 Operate quad bikes, and to have completed a local induction to safe operation of the vehicle on the specific property. This is to include as a minimum the risks associated with the use of the equipment, familiarisation with the operators manual for the particular vehicle, conditions of operation such as 'no-go' zones, speed and load limits, communication systems and emergency procedures.

**Helmets**

A suitable helmet is to be worn at all times when on a quad bike

**Roll-over Protection**

All quad bikes must be fitted with a suitably tested crush protection device.
Attachments and loads
The instability of quad bikes makes them unsuitable for carrying loads or towing. For side-by-side vehicles make sure that attachments and loads comply with the specifications in the Operator’s Manual, taking into account that loads will reduce stability.

Passengers and children
Passengers are not permitted on quad bikes. Children under 16 years are not permitted to operate or to be carried as passengers on quad bikes of any size.

Maintenance
Machines are to be maintained in accordance with the manufactures recommendations.

Emergency communication
Effective communication systems between the operator and base are to be established, e.g. UHF radio or mobile phone where coverage is present. Ensure someone knows the location of where the operator is going and the expected time of return.

7.11.4. Motor Bikes
The use of motor bikes on remote sites requires approval by the Site Custodian prior to use.

7.11.5. Boats
All boats must be suitable for purpose, regularly maintained and equipped with life jackets, first aid kits and other safety equipment appropriate to the number of passengers and location of the activity.

NSW and Queensland maritime agencies provides guidance to legislative requirements:

- NSW Centre for Maritime Safety
- Maritime Safety Queensland

7.11.6. Driver Fatigue Management
Excessive hours spent travelling to and from remote sites can lead to significant fatigue. Community standards for fatigue management must be applied to driving, e.g. stop, revive, survive breaks and driver rotation every two hours. NSW Roads and Maritime have produced a Road Users’ Handbook which provides guidance on avoiding driver fatigue:


Staff must not drive under conditions where fatigue is likely, and driving hours must be scheduled to incorporate regular breaks.
7.12. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

Chemicals taken to and from remote sites must be handled and transported in accordance with the University’s Chemical Safety Standards available on the WHS portal of the intranet http://sydney.edu.au/whs/guidelines/chemical/index.shtml

These describe minimum performance standards to ensure that University faculties, schools, research institutes and individual research groups apply a consistent approach to manage chemical risks associated with University activities. Compliance with these performance standards is compulsory.

Appropriate justification needs to be provided for the introduction of all hazardous materials to a remote site, and a plan established for their safe disposal with stipulated timelines. Any restrictions on the transport of hazardous materials are to be followed, for example hazardous materials taken to and from One Tree Island by sea are subject to additional marine chemical transport requirements.

7.13. INCIDENT REPORTING

All incidents and hazards at remote sites must be notified immediately to local management and the site safety officer. All incidents are to be formally reported using RiskWare in accordance with the requirements of the Work Health and Safety Procedures 2016.

RiskWare can be accessed from the University website https://riskware.sydney.edu.au

8. REFERENCES AND USEFUL LINKS

8.1. UNIVERSITY POLICY, PROCEDURES AND RESOURCES

University Work Health and Safety Policy 2016
http://sydney.edu.au/policies

University Risk Management Policy 2017
http://sydney.edu.au/policies

Work Health and Safety Procedures, 2016
https://sydney.edu.au/policies

University’s Fieldwork Safety Standard

WHS Action Plan template

Safety of Quads and Side by Side Vehicles on Australian Farms

Specialist advice and support for students – A guide for staff to assist students to access the right support at the right time

University’s Chemical Safety Standards
8.2. LEGISLATION

Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)

Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017 (NSW)

8.3. CODES OF PRACTICE

SafeWork NSW Code of Practice – Managing the work environment and facilities, Dec 2011

SafeWork NSW Code of Practice – How to manage work health and safety risks, Dec 2011

SafeWork NSW Code of Practice – First Aid in the Workplace, Jul 2015

8.4. USEFUL REFERENCES

- Australian Government Bureau of Meteorology

- Fire & Rescue NSW

- Maritime Safety Queensland

- NSW State Emergency Service (SES)

- NSW Centre for Maritime Safety

- RiskWare
  https://riskware.sydney.edu.au

- NSW RMS Road Users’ Handbook

- Steadman Apparent temperature in shade
9. DOCUMENT CONTROL AND REVIEW

Updates and reviews of this Standard will be undertaken in consultation with the Rural and Remote Campuses Operations and Safety Committee (ROSC), the Rural Academic Strategy Committee (RASC), and the Faculty of Science WHS Committee.

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<tr>
<th>Version Control</th>
<th>Date Released</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Custodian</th>
<th>Approved By</th>
<th>Summary of Change</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>31 Jan 2018</td>
<td>Professor Geoff Clarke</td>
<td>Dr Jane Radford, Head Technical Operations, Faculty of Science</td>
<td>Dean, Faculty of Science</td>
<td>Original</td>
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