

## Risk assessment plan – Ecosystem Explorers

|                             |   |      |         |                                    |   |
|-----------------------------|---|------|---------|------------------------------------|---|
| School/workplace            | Riverina Environmental Education Centre |      |         | Condition, task, activity or event | Students stay at the REEC for a 4-hour period. They walk to a bushland area (800m) and return to the school boundaries. They collect plant specimens (pods, flowers, seeds, leaves) to observe under microscopes. Students participate in team games. |
| Principal/workplace manager | Darron Watt                             |      |         |                                    |   |
| Assessed by                 | Danyelle Scrivener<br>Cathy Strong      | Date | 26.2.25 | Location                           | 7161 Olympic Highway<br>MOORONG<br>Wagga Wagga NSW  |
| Approved by                 | Darron Watt                             | Date |         | Review date                        |   |
| WHS Risk Register update    |   | Date |         | Prepared in consultation with      |   |

## Risk Management process

| Hazard/s  | Risk/s   | Risk rating           | Control action/s  | Risk rating after controls | Responsible                                       | Due                                       | Complete                        |
|---|--|-----------------------|---|----------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------|
| What presents the potential risk to health and/or safety? | What might happen, how likely is it and what could be the consequence/s? | Apply WHS Risk Matrix | What action/s will be taken to eliminate the risk/s or at least reduce them to an acceptable level?   | Apply WHS Risk Matrix      | Who is responsible for putting controls in place? | When should the controls be put in place? | When were controls implemented? |
| General   | Lack of emergency response   | Extreme 15            | <p>REEC staff have current first aid, CPR, anaphylaxis, e-emergency care qualifications and carry first aid kits with snake bite constrictive bandage, Ventolin, asthma medication, EpiPens and mobile phone.</p> <p>REEC emergency management and bushfire plans are in place.</p> <p>Staff carry mobile phones and REEC staff carry walkie-talkies to contact school office when moving to bushland area away from school boundaries.</p> | High 12                    | REEC staff  | Prior to excursion                        | Annually                        |

| Hazard/s              | Risk/s   | Risk rating | Control action/s  | Risk rating after controls | Responsible    | Due  | Complete |
|-----------------------|--|-------------|---|----------------------------|----------------|--|----------|
| Environmental factors | Allergic reaction to plants or stings or bites | Extreme 15  | Student welfare sheets from schools checked before the commencement of study. Any questionable student issues are clarified by phone call before the visit.   | High 12                    | REEC staff     | Prior to excursion and immediately upon arrival of the participating class.          | Ongoing  |
|                       |  | High 12     | REEC staff will ask to sight students with allergies before the program commences.<br>REEC staff carry EpiPens and asthma inhalers in case of emergency.<br>Assessing movement through site and always avoiding areas of higher risk potential<br>REEC staff to regularly check for wasp nest building and spray to control any building sites. | Medium 6                   | REEC staff     | Prior to visit   | ongoing  |
| Environmental factors | Sun  | Medium 6    | Students advised to wear hat, apply own sunscreen, and carry water. All advice for excursion given to classroom teachers to convey to students and parents before visiting. Sun safety info is available at <a href="https://www.cancer.org.a">https://www.cancer.org.a</a>   | Low 3                      | Visiting staff | Email correspondence between REEC staff and visiting teachers 2 weeks prior to visit | Ongoing  |

| Hazard/s | Risk/s                     | Risk rating | Control action/s  | Risk rating after controls | Responsible | Due                                      | Complete |
|----------|----------------------------|-------------|---|----------------------------|-------------|--|----------|
|          | Extreme weather conditions | High 9      | <p><u>u/cancer-information/causes-and-prevention/sun-safety/be-sunsmart/sunsmart-in-schools</u></p> <p>Local decisions made on morning of the visit – consideration given for possible thunderstorms, high rain events or high winds. High winds can cause surrounding trees to break and fall. In the event of high winds or inclement weather, (predicted by BOM), the study may be postponed to another mutually suitable date.</p> <p>In the event of weather conditions changing after students arrive, visiting staff will call transport earlier and return to their school.</p> | Medium 6                   | REEC staff  | Prior to and on the day of the excursion | Ongoing  |
|          | Bushfire                   | Extreme 15  | REEC Bushfire Plan is in place.   | High 12                    | REEC staff  | Annually Term 3                          |          |

| Hazard/s                | Risk/s                | Risk rating | Control action/s   | Risk rating after controls | Responsible | Due  | Complete |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|--|----------------------------|-------------|--|----------|
|                         |                       |             | <p>In the event of an emergency, students and visiting staff move with REEC staff down the driveway and are evacuated to the nearest school (Ashmont PS).</p> <p>Students and visiting staff inducted as to fire/emergency evacuation protocols before study commences. Studies are not conducted during extreme to catastrophic fire danger periods.</p>  |                            |             |  |          |
| Walking on rough ground | Separation from group | High 12     | <p>REEC staff member will give safety talk before embarking on activities on site. Students are advised they are not to run or walk in front of leading teacher.</p> <p>REEC staff member at the front of the group and visiting staff following at the back of the group when moving across the site.</p> <p>REEC staff will carry additional first aid kit. Visiting staff to carry own first aid kit.</p> | Medium 6                   | REEC staff  | <p>At start of excursion</p> <p>All transitional movements across the day.</p> | Ongoing  |

| Hazard/s | Risk/s                                  | Risk rating | Control action/s   | Risk rating after controls | Responsible           | Due                           | Complete |
|----------|---|-------------|--|----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|----------|
|          |   | Medium 6    | Walking through long grasses avoided in transitional movements across the day.   | Low 3                      | REEC staff            |                               |          |
|          | Slips, trips and falls                  | High 12     | Paths to each site mown short.<br>School gives prior advice to students to wear enclosed footwear.<br>Students warned of any uneven ground.  | Medium 6                   | Visiting school staff |                               |          |
|          | Insect bite or sting                    | High 12     | Students warned of known insect presence.<br>Paths taken to each activity avoid bull ant nests, bees, tree branches at eye height etc.   | Medium 6                   |                       |                               |          |
|          | Possible snake encounter                | Extreme 15  | Tarps placed on ground for sitting. No sitting on bare ground.<br>Students with known insect allergies will remain standing.<br>Snake bite kit and mobile phone always carried by REEC staff | High 12                    |                       |                               |          |
| People   | Physical, medical and behavioural needs | High 12     | Schools give prior advice to REEC of student medical, physical or behavioural needs.<br>Student medications are the responsibility of the  | High 9                     | Visiting school staff | Prior to and during excursion | Ongoing  |

| Hazard/s                              | Risk/s   | Risk rating                       | Control action/s  | Risk rating after controls  | Responsible   | Due                  | Complete |
|---------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|---|----------------------|----------|
|                                       |  |                                   | <p>staff of the visiting school.</p> <p>Students with anaphylactic allergies or asthma to bring own EpiPen and asthma medications. REEC staff will carry additional EpiPens and Ventolin puffers.</p> <p>Visiting staff should advise REEC about potential student 'flight risks'. <b>Behaviour support is the responsibility of the visiting staff</b> and supported by REEC staff</p> |                             | <p>Visiting school staff</p> <p>REEC staff</p> <p>Visiting school staff</p> |                      |          |
| Plant, seed, pod, organics collection | <p>Insect bite or sting</p> <p>Pollen, grass, dust allergy</p> | <p>Extreme 15</p> <p>Medium 6</p> | <p>Students with insect anaphylactic reactions should not engage in collection of plants.</p> <p>Students with pollen allergies should not engage in the collection of plants.</p> <p>All ASCIA plans should be brought with the school's medical kits and student autoinjectors for sighting by REEC staff.</p> <p>REEC staff will choose and cut samples of</p>                       | <p>High 12</p> <p>Low 3</p> | Visiting school staff and REEC staff  | During this activity | Ongoing  |

| Hazard/s  | Risk/s                 | Risk rating | Control action/s   | Risk rating after controls | Responsible                          | Due   | Complete                    |
|---|------------------------|-------------|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
|   |                        | Medium 6    | plants for all students to avoid contact with pollens or stinging insect pollinators present.  | Low 3                      |                                      |   |                             |
|   |                        | High 12     | Students with insect or pollen allergies will observe them using samples collected by REEC staff and mounted appropriately for observation under microscopes.<br>Students bitten or stung by invertebrates are observed for any changes that need medical attention. Ice packs are used for minor bites or stings. | High 9                     | Visiting school staff and REEC staff |   |                             |
| Use of electrical equipment (eg microscope lamps) | Electrocution          | High 10     | All buildings are fitted with earth leakage  | Medium 8                   | REEC staff                           | Induction on correct use of microscopes and all equipment used in classroom lab before engaging in microscope activities. | Until activity is completed |
|   | Skin burns             | Medium 6    | Microscope lamps are moved to position before turning on. Students are advised not to move lamps whilst turned on, or immediately after use  | Low 3                      |                                      |   |                             |
| Food chain<br>Food web activity                   | Slips, trips and falls | Medium 6    | Students wear enclosed footwear.<br>Students advised that this activity does not require running – walking only. Students  | Low 3                      | Visiting school staff and REEC staff | During this activity  | Ongoing                     |



| Hazard/s | Risk/s | Risk rating | Control action/s         | Risk rating after controls | Responsible | Due | Complete |
|----------|--------|-------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|-----|----------|
|          |        |             | warned of uneven ground. |                            |             |     |          |

## Risk matrix and evaluation

Table 1: THE WHS RISK MATRIX

|                             |  | CONSEQUENCE (Severity) |  |  |   |  |
|-----------------------------|--|------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| LIKELIHOOD (Probability)    |  | Insignificant<br>1     | Minor<br>2   | Moderate<br>3  | Major<br>4  | Critical<br>5                                |
|                             |  | No treatment required. | Injury/illness requiring first aid treatment only. | Injury/illness requiring hospitalisation on going treatment. | Life-threatening injury/illness or multiple hospitalisations. | Death or multiple life-threatening injuries. |
| <b>Almost certain<br/>5</b> | Expected to occur in most circumstances.             | MEDIUM<br>5            | HIGH<br>10   | EXTREME<br>15  | EXTREME<br>20   | EXTREME<br>25                                |
| <b>Likely<br/>4</b>         | High probability of occurring in most circumstances. | MEDIUM<br>4            | MEDIUM<br>8  | HIGH<br>12   | EXTREME<br>16   | EXTREME<br>20                                |
| <b>Possible<br/>3</b>       | Might occur occasionally.                            | LOW<br>3               | MEDIUM<br>6  | HIGH<br>9  | HIGH<br>12  | EXTREME<br>15                                |
| <b>Unlikely<br/>2</b>       | Could occur at some time, doubtful.                  | LOW<br>2               | MEDIUM<br>4  | MEDIUM<br>6  | MEDIUM<br>8   | HIGH<br>10                                   |
| <b>Rare<br/>1</b>           | May occur but only in exceptional circumstances.     | LOW<br>1               | LOW<br>2   | LOW<br>3   | MEDIUM<br>4   | MEDIUM<br>5                                  |

Table 2: WHS Risk Evaluation

| Risk level     | Acceptability | Priority for action to control risk  | Sign-Off Authority: Schools  | Sign-Off Authority: Other workplace   |
|----------------|---------------|--|--|---|
| Low<br>1-3     | Acceptable    | PROCEED while monitoring existing controls. Manage the exposure to the hazard using existing procedures in consultation with workers and respond to any changes.   | School Principal or delegate   | Immediate Supervisor or Workplace Manager   |
| Medium<br>4-8  | Tolerable     | PROCEED with the activity and/or allow the hazard to persist only after identifying and implementing any additional controls reasonably practicable. Monitor all controls and manage the exposure to the hazard using existing procedures in consultation with workers and respond to any changes. | School Principal or delegate   | Senior Manager or Director  |
| High<br>9-14   | Unacceptable  | <b>DO NOT PROCEED</b> and/or allow the hazard to persist until all risks/hazards are identified and the most effective control methods are documented in a risk assessment. Seek support from the workplace manager and WHS Advisor or the Incident Report and Support Hotline.                    | Principal to sign off.<br>Principal to talk to staff about eliminating or reducing the risk, and contact: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health, Safety &amp; Staff Wellbeing Directorate for review</li> <li>Legal as required.</li> </ul>                          | Executive Director or delegate to talk to staff about eliminating or reducing the risk and contact: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health, Safety &amp; Staff Wellbeing Directorate for review</li> <li>Legal as required.</li> </ul> |
| Extreme<br>15+ | Unacceptable  | <b>STOP IMMEDIATELY</b> and contact your WHS Advisor or the Incident Report and Support Hotline to plan a coordinated response in consultation with key subject matter experts to eliminate or control exposure to the hazard.   | Principal to advise staff about eliminating or reducing the risk, and contact: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Director Educational Leadership for review</li> <li>Health, Safety &amp; Staff Wellbeing Directorate for review</li> <li>Legal as required.</li> </ul> | Executive Director or delegate to advise staff about eliminating or reducing the risk, and contact: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health, Safety &amp; Staff Wellbeing Directorate for review</li> <li>Legal as required.</li> </ul> |

## Hierarchy of controls

| CONTROL        | EFFECTIVENESS | DESCRIPTION  | EXAMPLES  |
|----------------|---------------|--|---|
| ELIMINATION    | BEST          | <b>Eliminate</b> the hazard entirely.                            | Eliminating the risk of a fall from height by doing the work at ground level. |
| SUBSTITUTION   | VERY GOOD     | <b>Substitute</b> the hazard with safer options.                 | Replacing hazardous cleaning chemicals with equivalent non-toxic products.    |
| ISOLATION      | GOOD          | <b>Isolate</b> the hazard from causing harm.                     | Placing a barrier around an area of wet floor as a slipping hazard.           |
| ENGINEERING    | GOOD          | <b>Use engineering</b> controls to reduce the risk.              | Installing guards, rails, or handrails to prevent falls.                      |
| ADMINISTRATIVE | POOR          | <b>Administrate</b> and document safe work practices.            | Training workers in safe work procedures, Safe Operating Procedures.          |
| PPE            | WORST         | <b>Protect</b> workers with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). | Providing goggles and gloves to people handling hazardous chemicals.          |

### Need help?

Speak to your [Work Health Safety Advisor](#) for support and advice or contact the Incident Report and Support Hotline on **1800 811 523**.