



# ***WORKPLACE HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT GUIDELINES***

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The most recent version of this document can be obtained  
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# 1. Definitions

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Unless otherwise defined within this document,

<b>AS or AS/NZS</b>	means Australian Standard or joint Australian/New Zealand Standard <sup>1</sup>
<b>Guidelines</b>	means the Workplace Health, Safety and Environment Guidelines adopted by the Dog Groomers Association of Western Australia Inc., as amended from time to time
<b>Code for Professional Conduct</b>	means the Code for Professional Conduct adopted by the Dog Groomers Association of Western Australia Inc., as amended from time to time
<b>DGAWA</b>	means the Dog Groomers Association of Western Australia Inc.
<b>Member</b>	means a member of the Dog Groomers Association of Western Australia Inc.
<b>OSH</b>	means occupational safety and health <sup>2</sup>
<b>OSH Act</b>	means the <i>Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984</i> (WA)
<b>OSH Regulations</b>	means the <i>Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996</i> (WA)
<b>WHS</b>	means workplace health and safety
<b>WorkSafe</b>	means the Western Australian State Government agency responsible for the administration of the <i>Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984</i> .

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<sup>1</sup> Standards are documents setting out specifications and procedures designed to ensure products, services and systems are safe, reliable and consistently perform as intended. On their own, standards have no legal status and no requirement for compliance. However, Australian (AS) or joint Australian/New Zealand (AS/NZS) Standards are often referenced in State and Commonwealth legislation. In these cases, the Standard becomes mandatory and there can be penalties for not following the Standard. Further information is available from Standards Australia at [www.standards.org.au](http://www.standards.org.au)

<sup>2</sup> The terms “occupational safety and health” and “workplace health and safety” are often used interchangeably. In Western Australia, “occupational safety and health” is the term most commonly used to describe the regulatory environment around safety in workplaces.

## 2. About these Guidelines

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### *Background*

These Guidelines are published by the Dog Groomers Association of Western Australia Inc. They have been developed in consultation with key industry and regulatory stakeholders.

### *Objective*

The objective of the DGAWA in developing these Guidelines is to improve safety, animal welfare and environmental management practices throughout the dog grooming industry in Western Australia. The Guidelines also represent an endeavor on the part of DGAWA to provide a convenient reference to information about the minimum legislative requirements relating to workplace health and safety in the industry.

### *References*

Where possible, internet links have been provided to external documents referred to in these Guidelines. Although these links have been checked prior to publication, it is important to note that these links are to websites controlled by other parties and therefore the DGAWA cannot guarantee their accuracy. If in doubt, users of these Guidelines should verify the information with the external publisher.

If users identify any incorrect or broken links, please advise the DGAWA so that we can amend these in future revisions of these Guidelines. This advice can be sent to the DGAWA by email on [enquiries@dgawa.com.au](mailto:enquiries@dgawa.com.au).

### 3. Important Disclaimer

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Workplace Health and Safety Laws impose a Duty of Care upon employers to maintain a safe working environment.

Users of these Guidelines are reminded that it is their individual responsibility to ensure safety in the workplace, and while these Guidelines are intended to be a general guide they can not cover the workplace health and safety legislation and regulatory requirements applicable to every situation.

These Guidelines are in no way intended to be a substitute for proper risk management practices or training.

The Dog Groomers Association of Western Australia Inc., its office bearers, committee members, members and agents do not under any circumstances accept any legal liability for the accuracy, adequacy or effectiveness of any of the information contained herein and nothing contained herein shall be or be construed as a warranty of any kind to any person, corporation or body corporate, to the extent that the Dog Groomers Association of Western Australia Inc., its office bearers, committee members, members and agents shall be absolutely immune from prosecution or proceedings of any kind arising out of or resulting from any use made of any information contained in these Guidelines.

## 4. Who Should Use These Guidelines

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These Guidelines are intended to apply to employers, self-employed persons, and employees engaged in the companion animal grooming industry.

The DGAWA Code for Professional Conduct provides that Members should observe any recommendations contained within the WHSE Guidelines, or else have in place a workplace health and safety management system containing measures for assessing, identifying and managing safety issues that are no less effective than the measures set out in the WHSE Guidelines.

## 5. How to read these Guidelines

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There are 3 categories of information in these Guidelines, which are marked with a symbol and highlighted to differentiate them.



**Mandatory provisions, such as legislative requirements which may include Acts, Regulations and some mandatory Standards and Codes of Practice (such as those specified in the OSH Regulations), which must be observed at all times.**



**Recommended provisions, such as non-mandatory Codes of Practice and Standards, which should be followed unless there is a better solution in place.**



**Suggestions, such as examples of good industry practices, which are presented to assist in improving safety systems.**

## 6. Occupational Safety and Health

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### 6.1. Legislative Framework

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Worksafe's Guidance Note, *General Duty of Care in Western Australian Workplaces*<sup>3</sup>, sets out the overall legislative framework for occupational safety and health in Western Australia.

In summary, the legislative framework consists of the *Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984*, regulations made pursuant to the Act and supporting guidance material.

#### *The Act*

The *Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984* provides for the promotion, co-ordination, administration and enforcement of occupational safety and health in Western Australia.

With the objective of preventing occupational injuries and diseases, the Act places certain duties on employers, employees, self-employed persons, manufacturers, designers, importers and suppliers.

In addition to the broad duties established by the Act, it is supported by a further tier of statute, commonly referred to as regulations, together with lower tiers of non-statutory codes of practice and guidance notes.



**The *Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984* covers employers, employees, self-employed persons and others, such as people who control workplaces, design and construct buildings or manufacture and supply plant in Western Australia.**

**Severe penalties can be imposed where a person breaches their obligations under the OSH Act.**

**Members can access a current copy of the Act online at**

**[http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/legislation/agency.nsf/docep\\_main\\_mrtitle\\_650\\_homepage.html](http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/legislation/agency.nsf/docep_main_mrtitle_650_homepage.html)**

#### *Regulations*

Regulations have the effect of spelling out the specific requirements of the legislation. Regulations may prescribe minimum standards. They may have a general application or they may define specific requirements related to a particular hazard or a particular type of work. Regulations may also be for the licensing or granting of approvals, certificates, etc.



**The *Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996* set out detailed requirements about a range of health and safety matters. It is mandatory to follow the requirements set out in the Regulations, and there are penalties for non-compliance.**

**Members can access a current copy of the OSH Regulations online at**

**[http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/legislation/agency.nsf/docep\\_main\\_mrtitle\\_1853\\_homepage.html](http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/legislation/agency.nsf/docep_main_mrtitle_1853_homepage.html)**

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<sup>3</sup> Available online at [http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Guidance\\_notes/general\\_duty\\_of\\_care.pdf](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Guidance_notes/general_duty_of_care.pdf)

## Guidance Material

Guidance material includes Codes of practice and Guidance notes issued by WorkSafe.

**Note: Codes of practice that are not issued by WorkSafe or another regulatory body (such as these Guidelines) are not part of the formal legislative system.**

A code of practice is defined in the OSH Act as a document prepared for the purpose of providing practical guidance on acceptable ways of achieving compliance with statutory duties and regulatory requirements.

A code should be followed, unless there is another solution which achieves the same or better result and a code can be used to support prosecution for non-compliance.

A guidance note is an explanatory document issued by WorkSafe providing detailed information on the requirements of legislation, regulations, standards, codes of practice or matters relating to occupational safety and health.



**Some Codes of Practice are specified in the OSH Regulations and must be followed regardless of whether it is considered that an effective risk management approach is already in place. The OSH Regulations might make it mandatory to follow all or part of a Code. For instance, Regulation 5.6 refers to the *National Code of Practice for the Preparation of Material Safety Data Sheets [NOHSC: 2011 (2003)]* and makes it obligatory to follow that Code of Practice in relation to labelling hazardous substances.**

### 6.1.1. *The new National Workplace Health and Safety System*

Each Australian State and Territory along with the Commonwealth has responsibility for the regulation of workplace health and safety in their jurisdiction.

The Commonwealth Government and States and Territories are working towards a “harmonized” set of laws to ensure that there will be greater consistency of the WHS laws throughout Australia.

Through this process, a model WHS Bill and WHS Regulations have been created and have been adopted in a number of jurisdictions.

The Western Australian Government has said that it will delay the introduction of the new laws in order to deal with issues of implementation. At this stage the date of implementation for the model laws in WA has not been determined.

Western Australia is continuing to participate in the process of developing national Codes of Practice for various safety matters. WorkSafe has said that:

*... current WA Codes of Practice will remain relevant to Western Australian workplaces. The intention of the harmonisation process is that once there is a nationally agreed Code of Practice on a specific topic it will replace existing state codes on that topic.*

*WA will be a full participant in this process and in a number of instances it is possible that the existing WA code will provide the starting point, or the foundation, from which a nationally harmonised code of practice will be developed.<sup>4</sup>*

The DGAWA intends to update these Guidelines in response to legislative developments in this area.

## 6.2. General Duty of Care

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WorkSafe WA's Guidance Note, *General Duty of Care in Western Australian Workplaces*<sup>5</sup>, describes the requirements for employers, employees and other people involved in workplace health and safety.



### **In broad terms:**

- **an employer must, as far as practicable, provide a work environment in which employees are not exposed to hazards;**
- **employees must take reasonable care for their own safety and health, and that of others, at work; and**
- **self-employed persons must, as far as practicable, ensure their work does not adversely affect the safety and health of others.**

Examples of the general duties include:

- Employers must provide a workplace where employees are not exposed to hazards.
- Employers must provide a safe system of work.
- Employees must take reasonable care for their own safety and health and that of others affected by their work.
- Employers and self-employed people must, as far as practicable, look after their own safety and health and ensure that their work does not affect the safety and health of others.
- Designers, manufacturers, importers and suppliers must provide plant which is safe to install, maintain and use at workplaces.
- All plant must be installed or erected so it can be used safely.
- Safety and health information must be supplied with all plant and substances used at work.
- Employees and safety and health representatives must consult and co-operate in matters related to safety and health at work.
- Employers must provide employees with information, instruction, training and supervision to allow them to work in a safe manner.

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<sup>4</sup> Source: *Statement from the WorkSafe Western Australia Commissioner*, available online at [http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/Content/About\\_Us/Legislation/National\\_model\\_act\\_FAQs.html](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/Content/About_Us/Legislation/National_model_act_FAQs.html)

<sup>5</sup> Available online at [http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Guidance\\_notes/general\\_duty\\_of\\_care.pdf](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Guidance_notes/general_duty_of_care.pdf)

## 6.3. Three Step Approach to Safety at Work

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**Regulation 3.1 of the *Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996* makes it mandatory for employers to follow a 3-step process to identify hazards and assess and reduce risks.**

**The Regulation states:**

***A person who, at a workplace, is an employer, the main contractor, a self-employed person, a person having control of the workplace or a person having control of access to the workplace must, as far as practicable —***

- (a) identify each hazard to which a person at the workplace is likely to be exposed; and***
- (b) assess the risk of injury or harm to a person resulting from each hazard, if any, identified under paragraph (a); and***
- (c) consider the means by which the risk may be reduced.***

### 6.3.1. Identifying Hazards

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There are many different ways to identify hazards in the workplace, which include:

- Doing a physical inspection of the workplace.
- Listing all the tasks and work activities carried out and considering any hazards that could be associated with each step.
- Looking at the ways different tasks or work activities could interact and cause a hazard.
- Looking at past accidents and injuries that have happened.
- Looking at information from manufacturers or suppliers to see if they have safety instructions or warnings.
- Talking with people who do similar work.
- Checking the WorkSafe website (<http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/>) for information about particular safety topics.

### 6.3.2. Risk Assessment

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After identifying any hazards, the next step is to undertake a Risk Assessment. This involves assessing the risks of injury or harm from the hazards and working out which hazard to address first.

This can include:

- Gathering information about each hazard identified.
- Working out how likely it is that an accident or injury will happen and thinking about how many people could be affected.
- Considering the consequences of each hazard – in particular, could someone die, suffer major injuries with bad long term effects, suffer minor injuries requiring several days off work or get minor injuries, which maybe need some first aid.

### 6.3.3. Controlling Risks

After a risk assessment is conducted, the next step is to take action to control the risks.

Obviously, it is best to work out a list of priorities and first control the risks with the most serious consequences. This might mean addressing the most serious risks first and taking more time to address the minor risks, as time and budget allow.<sup>6</sup>



#### **Hierarchy of Control Measures<sup>7</sup>**

The hierarchy of control is a sequence of options which offer you a number of ways to approach the hazard control process. Here is a list, with typical examples. Work your way down the list, and implement the best measure(s) possible for your situation.

##### **Eliminate the hazard**

- remove hazardous electrical equipment from the workplace
- cease using hazardous chemicals
- cease in-house operations of hazardous work

*If this is not practical, then:*

##### **Substitute the hazard with a lesser risk**

- use low voltage electrical equipment
- use non-toxic chemicals

*If this is not practical, then:*

##### **Isolate the hazard**

- place hazardous chemicals in areas with restricted access

*If this is not practical, then:*

##### **Use engineering controls**

- use guards on machines
- use RCDs (safety switches) to protect socket outlets

*If this is not practical, then:*

##### **Use administrative controls**

- provide training in safe lifting techniques
- implement safe work practices, instruction and training.

*If this is not practical, then:*

##### **Use personal protective equipment**

- Use rubber gloves, eye protection, boots, and protective clothing (which can also be used in conjunction with above measures)

<sup>6</sup> Adapted from notes on Hazard identification and risk management from Worksafe, available online at [http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Events\\_and\\_activitie/TenAtTen/Take\\_10\\_Hazard\\_identification\\_and\\_r.pdf](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Events_and_activitie/TenAtTen/Take_10_Hazard_identification_and_r.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Adapted from material published by SafeWork SA and WorkSafe Victoria, available online at <http://www.safework.sa.gov.au/contentPages/EducationAndTraining/HazardManagement/Electricity/TheAnswer/elecAnswerHierarchy.htm> and [http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0012/13026/ws1101WEB.pdf](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0012/13026/ws1101WEB.pdf)



While the hierarchy of control measures are not specified in the OSH Regulations, some of the regulations require specific control measures for certain hazards. This means that some control measures (such as appropriate guarding of machinery) are mandatory regardless of the outcome of a risk assessment.

## 6.4. General Safety Requirements

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Employers and employees must observe all provisions of applicable Federal, State and Local government laws. Ultimately it is the employer's responsibility to find out which laws affect their operations.

Employers must provide information, instruction and training to, and supervision of their employees in the proper use of all equipment provided for them and must ensure that safe working practices are followed.

### 6.4.1. Personal Protective Equipment

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Personal protective equipment must be provided at no expense to employees, where there is a reasonable probability of injury or illness that can be prevented by such protection. Employees must use such protection.



There are Australian Standards and joint Standards (AS/NZS) relating to protective equipment. While Standards are not in themselves mandatory, the OSH Regulations specify some Standards that must be followed regardless of whether the need to do so has been indicated in a risk assessment. For example, *AS/NZS 216110.1:2005 Occupational protective gloves – Protective gloves against chemicals and micro-organisms – Terminology and performance requirements* is required by Regulation 3.33 of the OSH Regulations and must be followed.

Even where the relevant Standard is not mandatory, employers and employees should observe all the provisions relating to the applicable standards, including ensuring that safety equipment and devices conform to appropriate Australian or joint (AS/NZS) Standards and are maintained in safe condition.

All equipment upon which the worker must rely for his/her safety, must be inspected by the worker each day before use. The employer is also required to inspect and maintain all equipment on a regular basis. Safe working procedures must be developed and implemented for all operational tasks.

## 6.5. Specific hazards associated with Dog Grooming

Dog grooming operations involve a number of particular hazards.

These include:

- bites
- blood-borne diseases
- contact with pet hair/chemicals
- electrical hazards
- inhalation of fumes, airborne particles etc.
- lifting
- noise from dryers etc.
- scratches
- sharp objects
- temperature/lighting
- trips and slips
- zoonotic diseases

In order to effectively identify hazards and develop suitable risk management measures, it can be useful to consider the range of hazards at work in terms of broad categories. The following table<sup>88</sup> shows some common hazard categories, the potential for harm, and some specific examples that can apply in grooming work.

Hazard	Potential harm	Examples
Manual tasks	Overexertion or repetitive movement can cause muscular strain	Use of grooming equipment Lifting animals
Gravity	Falling objects, falls, slips and trips of people can cause fractures, bruises, lacerations, dislocations, concussion, permanent injuries or death	Slips due to shampoo, etc on floors Trips due to electrical cords
Electricity	Potential ignition source. Exposure to live electrical wires can cause shock, burns or death from electrocution	Shocks due to malfunctioning equipment, water coming into contact with live parts of equipment
Machinery and equipment	Being hit by moving vehicles, or being caught by moving parts of machinery can cause fractures, bruises, lacerations, dislocations, permanent injuries or death	Lacerations from clippers

<sup>88</sup> Based on the Safe Work Australia Code of Practice, *How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks* ([http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/SWA/about/Publications/Documents/633/How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks.pdf](http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/SWA/about/Publications/Documents/633/How_to_Manage_Work_Health_and_Safety_Risks.pdf))

Hazard	Potential harm	Examples
Hazardous chemicals	Chemicals (such as acids, hydrocarbons, heavy metals) and dusts (such as asbestos and silica) can cause respiratory illnesses, cancers or dermatitis	Skin irritation from cleaning chemicals
Extreme temperatures	Heat can cause burns, heat stroke or fatigue Cold can cause hypothermia or frost bite	Heat from dryers
Noise	Exposure to loud noise can cause permanent hearing damage	Noise from dryers and other equipment
Radiation	Ultra violet, welding arc flashes, micro waves and lasers can cause burns, cancer or blindness	Leading radiation from damaged microwave oven
Biological	Micro-organisms can cause hepatitis, legionnaires' disease, Q fever, HIV/AIDS or allergies	Diseases from animals
Psychosocial hazards	Effects of work-related stress, bullying, violence and work-related fatigue	Stress arising from dealing with threatening animals Inappropriate behaviour by customers

The following sections deal with each hazard category and provides examples of measures that should or could be taken to deal with the hazards.

### 6.5.1. *Manual tasks*

The most common hazards from manual tasks in dog grooming involve:

- Back and muscle injuries from lifting animals;
- Strain injuries from repetitive movements associated with grooming equipment such as clippers.



**WorkSafe WA has published a *Code of Practice for Manual Tasks*<sup>9</sup>. The Code of Practice provides practical guidance for managing risks associated with those manual tasks that have the potential to cause or contribute to injury or illness.**



**The use of appropriate mechanical aids and equipment can significantly reduce some risks associated with manual handling.**

<sup>9</sup> Available online at [http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Codes\\_of\\_Practice/Code\\_manual\\_handling.pdf](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Codes_of_Practice/Code_manual_handling.pdf)

**Hoists can be used to lift animals to and from tables.**

**The use of appropriate cages when grooming helps to restrain the dog in a humane way, while allowing the groomer access to wash and groom the dog.**

### 6.5.2. Gravity

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Spills on hard floors from shampoos and other chemicals used in grooming operations create a serious risk of slips which can result in serious injury. Slips, trips and falls can also occur as a result of:

- Water spills;
- Animal hair on floors;
- Animals not being properly contained; and
- Poor housekeeping.

Electrical cables, containers and equipment lying in walkways and working areas create a risk of trips, as do unrestrained animals.



**The *Slips, Trips and Falls Risk Management Tool* developed by WorkSafe WA provides a convenient checklist that can be used to do a basic risk assessment as well as record actions taken to manage risks<sup>10</sup>**

### 6.5.3. Electricity

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Dog grooming operations involve the use of mains-powered grooming equipment in an environment where water can be present. This creates a serious risk of electrocution unless proper safety procedures are followed.



**The *Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996 (WA)* set out requirements for electrical safety, including provisions related to Residual Current Devices (RCDs) as well as testing and tagging of electrical equipment. A useful guide to compliance requirements, *Guide to testing and tagging portable electrical equipment and residual current devices at workplaces*, is available from WorkSafe WA<sup>11</sup>**

### 6.5.4. Machinery and equipment

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Machinery and equipment used in dog grooming can present numerous risks, particularly if the equipment is not properly maintained or is not used correctly.

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<sup>10</sup> Available online at [http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Hazard\\_identification/slips\\_trips\\_and\\_falls.pdf](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Hazard_identification/slips_trips_and_falls.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Available online at [http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Guides/guide\\_to\\_testing\\_and\\_tagging.pdf](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Guides/guide_to_testing_and_tagging.pdf)



Persons using plant at the workplace must be provided with information and be trained and supervised so that they can work safely.



The safety of plant in should be managed in accordance with the WorkSafe Guidance Note, *Plant in the Workplace: Making it Safe*<sup>12</sup>.

Members must observe the relevant provisions of the WorkSafe *Code of Practice: Safeguarding of Machinery and Plant*<sup>13</sup> to ensure that, as far as practicable, machinery and plant in the workplace are designed safely and adequately guarded so they do not pose a risk of injuries or harm.

### 6.5.5. Hazardous chemicals

Chemicals in the workplace, including cleaning chemicals, shampoos and lotions, may be toxic in some circumstances and might require special handling to avoid the risk of injury to workers and animals.



Employers and self employed persons have a legal responsibility to obtain adequate information about the hazardous substances used in their workplaces. This information is contained in Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) which can be obtained from the manufacturer, importer or wholesale supplier.



WorkSafe WA outlines the following responsibilities for employers<sup>14</sup> when there are chemicals in the workplace:

- Exercise your "right to know" by requesting MSDS for all the hazardous substances used in your workplace from the manufacturer, importer or wholesale supplier. Ensure these are kept in a register, together with the list of substances and reference to risk assessments.
- Ensure all substances have either their original label, or (if decanted and not used immediately) an adequate label to identify the substance and the risks associated with it.

<sup>12</sup> Available online at [http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Guidance\\_notes/Guide-plant\\_hazards.pdf](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Guidance_notes/Guide-plant_hazards.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Available online at [http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Codes\\_of\\_Practice/Safeguarding\\_of\\_machinery\\_and\\_plant.pdf](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Codes_of_Practice/Safeguarding_of_machinery_and_plant.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> See [http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/Content/Safety\\_Topics/Hazardous\\_substances/Additional\\_resources/Chemical\\_control.html](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/Content/Safety_Topics/Hazardous_substances/Additional_resources/Chemical_control.html)

- Conduct a risk assessment on the use of hazardous substances (in consultation with employees) to ensure your controls are adequate to minimise risks. Seek expert assistance if the risk is complex or you are concerned exposures are high. Keep a record of the risk assessment.
- Make sure hazardous substances are stored correctly and access to them is controlled if needed, according to guidance in the MSDS.
- Implement safe handling, transportation and emergency procedures, in consultation with your employees. Follow the guidelines in the MSDS and take into account any other information obtained from the manufacturers, importer, wholesale supplier or other relevant organisations.
- Provide employees with training in the hazards and safe handling of hazardous substances they use. Supervise employees so they follow safe handling procedures. Keep records of training provided.
- Provide adequate safety equipment for your employees as indicated in the MSDS.
- Take advantage of training schemes offered by manufacturers, importers or suppliers of hazardous substances, or by the Fire and Emergency Services Authority or other safety training organisations.



Certain chemicals used in grooming operations may be subject to the *Health Act 1911* and the *Poisons Act 1964* and associated regulations. Further information about the safe application, handling and licencing of chemicals and pesticides is available from the Department of Health website at [http://www.public.health.wa.gov.au/2/1136/2/pesticides\\_and\\_chemicals.pm](http://www.public.health.wa.gov.au/2/1136/2/pesticides_and_chemicals.pm)



WorkSafe WA has free resources to help you manage chemicals in the workplace, including proformas you can use to create a register of hazardous substances and keep a record of your risk assessments<sup>15</sup>.

#### 6.5.6. *Extreme temperatures*

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Premises used for dog grooming operations need to be set up and maintained in order to ensure that temperatures are within safe and comfortable limits. Insulation, ventilation and/or air conditioning systems may be required.

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<sup>15</sup> Available online at

[http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/Content/Safety\\_Topics/Hazardous\\_substances/Additional\\_resources/Proformas\\_for\\_hazardous\\_substa.html](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/Content/Safety_Topics/Hazardous_substances/Additional_resources/Proformas_for_hazardous_substa.html)



The *Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996* (WA) state that employers must ensure that work practices are arranged so that employees are protected from extremes of heat and cold. When work is carried out in a building or other structure the employer must ensure that, as far as practicable, heating and cooling are provided to enable employees to work in a comfortable environment. (Reg 3.15).

#### 6.5.7. Noise

Noise from dryers, other equipment and barking dogs can present a hazard to workers.

One of the main effects of noise at work is noise-induced hearing loss. Noise at very high peak levels (more than about 135-140 decibels) can cause immediate damage to the inner ear, but noise of a lower level over an extended period of time can still cause damage (Source: WorkSafe WA<sup>16</sup>).



Requirements about noise control and hearing protection, including exposure standards, are contained in Regulations 3.45-3.47 of the OSH Regulations.



WorkSafe WA has published a Code of Practice, *Managing Noise at Workplaces*<sup>17</sup>. The Code of Practice provides practical guidance for the management of noise which may be damaging to the hearing of people in workplaces.

#### 6.5.8. Radiation

While radiation hazards are not normally associated with dog grooming operations, the hazard cannot be ignored. Microwave ovens are often located in lunch rooms, and if damaged, may leak radiation that could be a hazard to health. Persons working outside are exposed to ultraviolet (UV) radiation, which can be a cause of skin cancer and eye damage.

#### 6.5.9. Biological

The principal biological risks in dog grooming operations arises from zoonotic diseases, or zoonoses, which are diseases in animals that may be transmitted to humans through contact with saliva, blood, urine or faeces.

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<sup>16</sup> See [http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/Content/Safety\\_Topics/Noise/Questions.html](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/Content/Safety_Topics/Noise/Questions.html)

<sup>17</sup> Available online at [http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Codes\\_of\\_Practice/code\\_noise\\_workplace.pdf](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Codes_of_Practice/code_noise_workplace.pdf)



Under the OSH Regulations (2.5), it is mandatory to notify WorkSafe WA if any of the following zoonoses are found:

- Q fever
- Anthrax
- Leptospiroses
- Brucellosis



Further information about zoonoses, including measures that may be taken to reduce risk, is available from the WorkSafe WA website<sup>18</sup>.

#### 6.5.10. Psychosocial hazards

Although they are often harder to detect than physical hazards, psychosocial hazards must still be identified and the risk managed appropriately.



Individuals can have different responses to psychosocial hazards, which can include aggression in the workplace, fatigue, or stress. Employers need to be aware of the hazards and be alert to signs that a person may be adversely affected.

#### 6.5.11. Working Alone

Some dog groomers will be working alone on occasions, when they cannot be seen or heard by another person, and are not expecting a visit from another worker or member of the public. The WorkSafe WA Guidance Note, *Working Alone*, states:

*The risk of injury or harm for people who work alone may be increased because of difficulty contacting emergency services when they are required. Emergency situations may arise because of the sudden onset of a medical condition, accidental work-related injury or disease, attack by an animal, exposure to the elements, or by becoming stranded without food or water. The consequences may be very serious and the injury or disease may be fatal.*



The WorkSafe Guidance Note: *Working Alone* explains a number of the obligations that employers have in relation to workers working alone, and also provides guidance about how the risks can be assessed and measures put in place to minimize the risks to such workers. The Guidance Note is available online at:

[http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Guidance\\_notes/working\\_alone.pdf](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Guidance_notes/working_alone.pdf)

<sup>1818</sup> See [http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/Content/Safety\\_Topics/Diseases\\_and\\_health/More\\_information/Zoonoses.html](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/Content/Safety_Topics/Diseases_and_health/More_information/Zoonoses.html)

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### 6.5.12. *Animal Personality and Behaviour*

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Animals can be unpredictable and might, without warning, engaged in behaviours that are dangerous to workers.

Adequate training for staff, and the establishment of work procedures to minimise the risk associated with such behaviours, is essential.

## 6.6. First Aid

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**A First Aid Kit adequately stocked and maintained with supplies appropriate to the types of injuries likely to occur must be provided by the employer when and where work is being carried out.**<sup>19</sup>



**Regulation 3.12(2) of the OSH Regulations requires that, as far as practicable, there are sufficient persons trained in First Aid available at a workplace to provide First Aid.**

**This means, wherever practicable, at least one person on site must have a current First Aid Certificate. Arrangements need to be put in place to cover absences on leave.**

## 6.7. Codes of Practice

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A number of Codes of Practice exist in relation to occupational safety and health. A Code of Practice can have a different status depending on whether it was issued by WorkSafe WA or by another body (e.g. Safe Work Australia).

### *WorkSafe WA Codes of Practice*

Codes of Practice issued by WorkSafe WA under the OSH Act do not have the same legal force as the OSH Act or OSH Regulations (except where the OSH Regulations specify that all or part of the particular Code of

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<sup>19</sup> Guidance on specific requirements is provided in the WorkSafe WA Codes of Practice, *First Aid Facilities and Services; Workplace Amenities and Facilities; Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment*, available online at [http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Codes\\_of\\_Practice/Code\\_first\\_aid.pdf](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/PDF/Codes_of_Practice/Code_first_aid.pdf)

Practice must be followed) and non-compliance with a code will not in itself result in prosecution under the OSH Act.

However, during a prosecution case, codes may be used by the courts as the standard when assessing methods or practices used at a workplace. This means that if there is a WorkSafe WA Code of Practice applying to a particular situation, you should either:

- Follow the Code of Practice; or
- Identify and implement an approach that gives at least the same level of protection against the risk(s) involved.

### *Safe Work Australia Codes of Practice*

Safe Work Australia (the national workplace health and safety authority) has developed a number of national Codes of Practice. Currently, Western Australia has not adopted the national (harmonized) health and safety system, and therefore Safe Work Australia Codes are not mandatory unless they are specifically referenced in the Western Australian OSH legislation. However, these Codes still provide useful guidance to members.



**Members should familiarize themselves with and, where applicable, follow these Codes of Practice:**

#### *WorkSafe (Western Australia)<sup>20</sup>*

- **First aid-workplace amenities-personal protective clothing**
- **Labelling of Workplace Substances**
- **Managing noise at workplaces**
- **Manual tasks**
- **Safeguarding of machinery and plant**

#### *Safe Work Australia (National)<sup>21</sup>*

- **First Aid in the Workplace**
- **How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks**
- **Labelling of Workplace Hazardous Chemicals**
- **Managing Electrical Risks at the Workplace**
- **Managing Noise and Preventing Hearing Loss at Work**
- **Managing Risks of Hazardous Chemicals in the Workplace**
- **Managing the Risks of Plant in the Workplace**
- **Managing the Work Environment and Facilities**

<sup>20</sup> Available for download from [http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/PDF/Codes\\_of\\_Practice/index.htm](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/PDF/Codes_of_Practice/index.htm)

<sup>21</sup> Safe Work Australia Codes of Practice are available for download from <http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/swa/model-whs-laws/model-cop/a-z-cop/pages/a-z>

– **Preparation of Safety Data Sheets for Hazardous Chemicals**



**The requirements of some Codes of Practice are specified in the OSH Regulations and must be followed regardless of whether it is considered that an effective risk management approach is already in place.**

## 7. Animal Welfare

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Dog grooming professionals should develop and implement policies and procedures to ensure that:

- Animal welfare is given critical importance in the workplace;
- Everyone working with animals understand the importance of ensuring that only safe, approved chemicals are used and they are prepared and used in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications; and
- All tools and equipment are properly maintained and used in a safe manner.

Animal welfare risks can be managed using a similar approach to the management of safety risks. The 3-step approach discussed in Section 6.3 of this document provides a sound approach.

Some of the key animal welfare hazards associated with dog grooming operations include:

- abrasions
- broken limbs from jumping/falling off tables
- burns
- burns/heatstroke due to inappropriate methods and/or lack of supervision during cage-drying
- cuts and nicks
- dehydration
- drowning
- effects of pre-existing medical conditions (known or unknown)
- hanging/strangulation
- strains due to incorrect handling



**Dog groomers should be alert to signs of stress in an animal, which can be an indicator of injury or distress. Signs of stress can include licking, drooling, panting or urination/defecation while being groomed.**

### *Legislation*

There are no regulations or Codes of Practice in Western Australia specifically covering dog grooming operations. However, Members must observe general animal welfare legislation.



**While there is no specific regulation of animal welfare in dog grooming operations in Western Australia, members are still bound by the general animal welfare provisions in the *Animal Welfare Act 2002*<sup>22</sup>. Members also have responsibilities for the control of dogs under the *Dog Act 1976*<sup>23</sup>. Members should ensure they are familiar with their legal obligations in this area.**

The NSW Government has established a Code of Practice that provides detailed guidance concerning the welfare of animals in grooming establishments (*NSW Animal Welfare Code of Practice No 8 - Animals in Pet Grooming Establishments*<sup>24</sup>).

The Code of Practice provides that the manager of the establishment is responsible for:

- provision of accommodation for each dog held on the premises at any given time
- the protection of animals from people, other animals or adverse environmental conditions
- provision of sufficient space for animals to stand, move around freely, stretch fully and rest
- provision of water for animals
- protection of animals from distress and injury
- provision of prompt veterinary or other appropriate treatment in cases of illness or injury
- maintenance of hygiene of the premises
- supervision of all staff, whether working full or part-time and whether or not working for fee or reward
- collation and maintenance of relevant records; and
- ensuring that there is a responsible person present while animals are held.

The Code of Practice provides practical guidance in the following areas:

- Animal housing – Location, Construction, Size, Temperature, Noise, Lighting, Ventilation, and Security
- Bathing facilities – Design and Maintenance
- Hygiene – Cleaning and Disinfection, Pest Control and Waste Disposal
- Management – Facilities, Care of Animals, Record Keeping, Staff
- Transport of Animals



**Although it is not mandatory in Western Australia, the NSW Code of Practice contains practical guidance that will be of great benefit to Members in establishing and maintaining good animal welfare practices. Members should follow the NSW Code unless they have a better system in place.**

<sup>22</sup> The *Animal Welfare Act 2002* is available online at [http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/wa/consol\\_act/awa2002128/](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/wa/consol_act/awa2002128/)

<sup>23</sup> The *Dog Act 1976* is available online at [http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/wa/consol\\_act/da197644/](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/wa/consol_act/da197644/)

<sup>24</sup> Available online at <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/animal-welfare/codes/aw-code-8>



Other States and Territories have produced a range of guidance material to assist those working with animals to understand and manage their welfare responsibilities. While not necessarily binding on people and organisations in Western Australia, these guidelines can be a very good source of information about good practices. For instance, Tasmania has produced detailed guidelines for the care of Breeding Dogs, which contain useful information for Dog Grooming establishments. These guidelines are freely available online at <http://www.dpiw.tas.gov.au/inter.nsf/Attachments/LBUN-8SM6EG?open>



RSPCA Australia publishes policy papers concerning animal welfare, with a number specifically dealing with companion animals. These policies are available to view online and download at <http://kb.rspca.org.au/?CategoryID=77>



The *Australian Animal Welfare Strategy* has been jointly developed by the Australian Government, state and territory governments, industry and the community. Under the strategy, a range of working groups have been created to undertake work particular areas. The *Companion Animals Working Group* is currently developing draft national guidelines to provide information about responsibilities concerning the health and well-being of dogs and cats kept as companion animals. When released for comment, the draft guidelines will be available from the *Australian Animal Welfare Strategy* website at <http://www.australiananimalwelfare.com.au/pets-and-companion-animals>

## 8. Environmental Management

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Owners and managers of dog grooming establishments and personnel involved in grooming operations all have a responsibility to take measures to minimise the environmental impact of the operation and work in a sustainable way.

As well as the environmental risk associated with incorrect disposal of chemicals, the hazards associated with zoonotic diseases also need to be carefully controlled.

Responsibility for much of the environmental regulation applicable to grooming operations rests with Local Government. Different Local Government Authorities have their own requirements, and members should contact their Council directly to make themselves aware of the Local Government regulations that apply in their area.

There are also strict requirements in relation to disposal of waste into the public sewerage system, and you may need to apply for an Industrial Waste Permit from the Water Corporation. Further information is available from the Water Corporation website at <http://www.watercorporation.com.au/Home/Business/Trade%20waste/Industrial%20waste%20in%20your%20business>, or by telephoning the Water Corporation on 131395.



**Members must familiarize themselves with, and comply with, all applicable Local Government regulations and other environmental regulations applicable to their operations.**



**Members should consider developing an Environmental Management Plan for their grooming operations. Such a plan might include:**

- **Identification of environmental hazards, which are recorded in a register and monitored regularly**
- **Assessment of risks**
- **A written list of measures to be taken to manage significant risks, with allocation of tasks and deadlines clearly identified**
- **A process for regularly reviewing the effectiveness of the Environmental Management Plan**



**Members should ensure they are fully aware of all hazards associated with the particular nature of their operations. For instance, Hydrobath services often involve the use of chemicals that can be a hazard to wildlife (e.g. flea control shampoos). Members should ensure that they are aware of all the hazards associated with the chemicals used and adopt appropriate control measures, such as:**

- **Substituting a non-toxic alternative, where available;**

- **Ensuring that disposal of used substances is done strictly in line with the requirements of the relevant Local Government and/or other regulatory authorities.**