



# Supervision Guideline for Trainee Vegetation Management Workers

This Guideline has been developed by the Victorian Electricity Supply Industry (VESI) Vegetation Management Committee to provide guidance to employers and Trainees

*In the Victorian  
Electricity Supply  
Industry*

*August 2024*

DATE	VERSION	AMENDMENT	NAME
November 2013	1		VESI VMC
September 2014	2	Updated the Supervision level definitions	VESI VMC
August 2024	3	General review and expanded work types to align with industry practice. Updated supervision levels for work types.	VESI VMC

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This Guideline has been developed and established by the Victorian Electricity Supply Industry, (VESI) Vegetation Management Committee (VMC). Any changes to this Guideline can only be made with the agreement of the VESI VMC.

## 2. PURPOSE

This Guideline has been developed to assist both employers and Vegetation Management Worker Trainees to understand the obligations and expectations in regards to workplace supervision, taking into consideration the welfare of the Trainee in terms of safety and competency development.

## 3. SCOPE

This Guideline applies to the supervision of Trainee Vegetation Management Workers working in the VESI.

## 4. RESPONSIBILITIES

### 4.1. Employer

- Ensure that employees meet the requirements of this Guideline;
- Shall take all reasonable steps to ensure supervision of Trainees is carried out by a person that is competent to carry out the work;
- Establish effective coaching/mentoring practices for their Trainees; and
- Provide opportunities for the Trainee to develop their knowledge and skills.

### 4.2. Supervisors/Crew Leaders

- Ensure that Trainees and relevant employees meet the supervision requirements of this Guideline;
- Apply this Guideline when planning or allocating work functions and activities in the work place for Trainees;
- Take into consideration the kind of work being undertaken, especially with regard to working in the vicinity of live apparatus; and
- Have regard to the level of competence of the Trainee for the particular task, skill or activity to be performed.

### 4.3. Trainees

- Only undertake work or activity for which they have been trained and/or supervised in accordance with this Guideline.

## 5. SUPERVISION FRAMEWORK

The Supervision framework describes the criteria and supervision levels that the employer and Trainee shall follow when planning and undertaking work.

The following criteria shall be considered when determining the appropriate level of supervision to apply:

- Safety of the Trainee;
- The work to be carried out;
- The experience of the Trainee; and
- When the knowledge and skills are attained (including off job training).

Trainees should not undertake tasks unless they have received the relevant training.

At all times during the term of completing their qualification and/or units of competence, the Trainee shall be under Direct, General or Broad Supervision as defined below and in:

- Table 1 for Work Types; and
- Table 2 for Plant and Equipment Types.

The goal is for supervision to progressively diminish from direct to broad dependant on experience gained and the task.

**Note:** Where 'No' is indicated in Tables 1 and 2 this means the task is not permitted.

### 5.1. Direct Supervision

The onsite Crew Leader shall be in direct visual and audible contact with the trainee, providing constant instruction and inspection of tasks being performed.

### 5.2. General Supervision

The onsite Crew Leader shall make regular face to face contact with the trainee, delivering progressive instruction and inspection on tasks being performed.

### 5.3. Broad Supervision

The onsite Crew Leader shall provide instruction and inspection of tasks being performed by the trainee.

## 6. SAFETY OBSERVER ROLE

Trainees who are new entrants into the industry and who have not acquired relevant training, skills and knowledge are not to be used as safety observers.

Trainees may be utilised as a safety observer **only** if they have:

- a) Completed the relevant units of competence to the trainee's role:
  - a. UETDRVC006 Control vegetation in the vicinity of live electrical apparatus from within the tree (Tree Climber)
  - b. UETDRVC004 Control vegetation in the vicinity of live electrical apparatus from an elevated work platform (Cutter working from EWP)
  - c. UETDRVC005 Control vegetation in the vicinity of live electrical apparatus from ground level (Cutter working at Ground Level)
  - d. UETDRVC011 Use specialised plant to cut vegetation above ground in the vicinity of live electrical apparatus (Mechanical tree trimmer / Hedger)
- b) been suitably trained in aerial rescue and/or escape techniques (where required); and
- c) been suitably trained in Safe Approach Distances - Vegetation; and
- d) an understanding of the task being observed; and
- e) an understanding of the functions and movements of plant and equipment or tree climbing operations; and
- f) in the case of an EWP observer, hold a current WP High Risk Work Licence.

Under no circumstances shall a Trainee perform, assist or act as a Safety Observer for a person undertaking HV Live Line tree clearing work until they have completed all relevant training.

## 7. ACCESS AUTHORITIES

The Trainee shall be bracketed on to the Access Authority as an Instructed person with an Authorised Recipient.

## 8. DEFINITIONS

**Crew Leader** A person who holds the Certificate II in ESI - Powerline Vegetation Control and meets the VESI training requirements

## 9. WORK TYPES

The undertaking of these tasks **shall not commence** until the Trainee has successfully completed (where required) the related Unit of Competency from the Training Package.

**Table 1 – Supervision Levels for Work Types**

Type of Work		1 <sup>st</sup> 3 months	2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 months	Until completion
General	General work at job site	General	General	Broad
	Traffic Management – Traffic Control	General	General	Broad
	Traffic Management - Traffic Guidance	General	General	Broad
	Safety Observing near Live LV	General <sup>1</sup>	General <sup>1</sup>	General
	Safety Observing near Live HV	No	No	No
Cutter working at Ground Level	Chainsaw use – cross-cutting timber	General	General	Broad
	Chainsaw use – tree felling	Direct	General	Broad
	Daily chainsaw sharpening & maintenance	General	General	General
	Chemical (Herbicide) application	General	General	Broad
EWP Vegetation Control Operations	Cyclic Clearing adjacent to Live LV	Direct	General	Broad
	Cyclic Clearing adjacent to Live HV	No	Direct	Direct
	Complex clearing requiring rigging/scarfing techniques.	No	Direct	Direct
Tree Climbing Vegetation Control Operations	Cyclic Clearing adjacent to Live LV	Direct	General	Broad
	Cyclic Clearing adjacent to Live HV	No	Direct	Direct
	Complex clearing requiring rigging/scarfing techniques.	No	Direct	Direct
Mechanical Tree Trimmer / Hedger	Cyclic Clearing adjacent to Live LV	Direct	General	Broad
	Cyclic Clearing adjacent to Live HV	No	Direct	Direct
	Complex clearing requiring rigging/scarfing techniques.	No	Direct	Direct

## 10. PLANT AND EQUIPMENT TYPES

The undertaking of these tasks shall not commence until the Trainee has successfully completed the related Unit of Competency, and where relevant, the appropriate High Risk Work Licence issued.

**Table 2 – Supervision Levels for Plant and Equipment Types**

Type of Work	1 <sup>st</sup> 3 months	2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 months	Until completion
Chainsaw	General	General	Broad
EWP	Direct	General	Broad
Mechanical Tree Trimmer / Hedger	Direct	General	General
Slasher / Mulcher	Direct	General	Broad

<sup>1</sup> See Section 6 SAFETY OBSERVER ROLE