



Australian Government

AHCARB303 Perform pruning operations

Release: 2

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Modification History

Release	Comments
Release 2	This version released with AHC Agriculture, Horticulture, Conservation and Land Management Training Package Version 2.0.
Release 1	This version released with AHC Agriculture, Horticulture, Conservation and Land Management Training Package Version 1.0.

Application

This unit of competency describes the skills and knowledge required to perform corrective and remedial pruning operations. The application of this unit of competency can occur on the ground or in aerial locations, once the candidate is situated in position to perform work. This unit of competency is independent of where the pruning occurs and the method of accessing the work location.

This unit applies to individuals who have a range of skills to select and apply a specialised range of methods, tools, materials and information to complete routine activities and provide and transmit solutions to predictable and sometimes unpredictable problems. Work is implemented with low risk work procedures and to comply with Safe Work Method Statement documentation.

Licensing, legislative, regulatory, or certification requirements apply to this unit in some states and territories at the time of publication, and may differ according to jurisdiction. Specific determination should be sought through the relevant State or Territory. Works involving this unit of competency may be subject to local tree protection and preservation laws, and the relevant content of applicable current versions of Australian Standards such as AS 4373 Pruning of amenity trees.

Pre-requisite Unit

FWPCOT2237 Maintain chainsaws

FWPCOT2239 Trim and cut felled trees

OR

FWPCOT3238 Operate a pole saw

Unit Sector

Arboriculture (ARB)

Elements and Performance Criteria

Element	Performance criteria
Elements describe the essential outcomes.	Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.
1. Prepare for pruning operations	1.1 Determine location of above-and-below-ground services 1.2 Undertake a site-specific risk assessment by identifying work health and safety hazards and assessing risk 1.3 Receive pruning instructions from supervisor and clarify prior to undertaking work 1.4 Confirm first aid, rescue personnel, equipment and procedures 1.5 Communicate with work team during operations using voice, hand and whistle signals
2. Determine requirements of pruning work	2.1 Identify and confirm location of tree to be pruned 2.2 Inspect trees for access and work 2.3 Determine type, extent and limit of pruning work in accordance with specifications, scope of works and client brief 2.4 Maintain awareness of power line proximity, safe approach distances and clearances
3. Select and prepare tools and equipment	3.1 Select appropriate tools and equipment for pruning 3.2 Consider access and impact value of secateurs, handsaws, chainsaws and polesaws 3.3 Carry out pre-operational and safety checks on pruning tools and equipment 3.4 Select and use personal protective equipment 3.5 Sterilise pruning equipment in between individual tree work in accordance with hygiene and biosecurity considerations 3.6 Record and implement work health, safety, site, environmental and traffic control measures
4. Determine tree part to be removed	4.1 Investigate stem bark ridge, old cuts, dead branches and occluded and occluding branches 4.2 Determine separate parts to be a branch or co-dominant stem in relation to tree anatomy and branch attachment 4.3 Determine the part requiring removal to be a branch or co-dominant stem to select the appropriate pruning procedure
5. Carry out branch pruning operations	5.1 Use sharp pruning tools to make clean cuts 5.2 Operate chainsaws and polesaws as required to implement pruning cuts to the standards required by AS 4373 5.3 Apply compartmentalisation of decay in tree (CODIT) principles 5.4 Pre-cut or undercut branches to avoid splitting or tearing

Element	Performance criteria
	5.5 Remove remaining stub with final cut 5.6 Observe final cut procedure for branch removal cutting as close as possible to the branch collar without cutting into the branch collar or leaving a protruding stub. 5.7 Use branch bark ridge to determine angle of cut when removing a branch in the absence of a visible collar 5.8 Ensure bark at edge of all branch pruning cuts remains firmly attached
6. Carry out reduction pruning	6.1 Use branch bark ridge as guide to angle and position of final cut when making reduction cuts 6.2 Ensure lateral branch to which the final cut is made, is at least one third of diameter of branch being reduced at point of final cut.
7. Carry out stem pruning operations	7.1 Use stem bark ridge to determine angle of cut when removing a co-dominant stem 7.2 Be guided to position and angle of final cut, by positions and angles of joins between tissue of declining or dead stems and those of healthy stems elsewhere in tree 7.3 Ensure bark at edge of all stem pruning cuts remains firmly attached
8. Improve pruning quality	8.1 Inspect past pruning cuts to determine tree response 8.2 Use tree response to assess the quality of past pruning cuts 8.3 Seek feedback on pruning from other arborists 8.4 Identify and rectify incorrect pruning cuts 8.5 Modify future pruning cuts based on tree responses and feedback from others
9. Complete pruning operations	9.1 Drop pruning material into designated drop zone 9.2 Clean, maintain and store tools and equipment 9.3 Collect and dispose of, or recycle pruned material in a manner that causes minimal environmental damage 9.4 Maintain workplace records

Foundation Skills

Foundation Skills essential to performance are explicit in the performance criteria of this unit of competency.

Range of Conditions

Unit Mapping Information

Code and title current version	Code and title previous version	Comments	Equivalence status
AHCARB303 Perform pruning operations Release 2	AHCARB303 Perform pruning operations Release 1	Corrected prerequisite codes	Equivalent unit

Links

Companion Volume implementation guides are found in VETNet -

<https://vetnet.gov.au/Pages/TrainingDocs.aspx?q=c6399549-9c62-4a5e-bf1a-524b2322cf72>

Assessment Requirements for AHCARB303 Perform pruning operations

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Performance Evidence

The candidate must perform the remedial and corrective pruning operations involved in branch pruning, reduction pruning and stem pruning. The candidate must be assessed on their ability to integrate and apply the performance requirements of this unit in a workplace setting. Performance must be demonstrated consistently over time and in a suitable range of contexts.

The candidate must provide evidence for and demonstrate:

- determining location of above-and-below-ground services
- undertaking a site-specific risk assessment by identifying work health and safety hazards and assessing risk
- receiving pruning instructions from supervisor and clarifying prior to undertaking work
- communicating with work team during operations using voice, hand and whistle signals
- confirming first aid, rescue equipment and rescue procedures applicable to tree work
- identifying location of tree to be pruned
- inspecting trees for access and work
- determining type extent and limit of pruning work in accordance with the specifications, scope of works or client brief
- maintaining awareness of power line proximity, safe approach distances and clearances
- selecting appropriate tools and equipment for pruning
- considering access and impact value of secateurs, handsaws, chainsaws and polesaws
- selecting, preparing, and carrying out pre-operational and safety checks, on tools, equipment and machinery
- selecting and using personal protective equipment
- sterilising pruning equipment in between work on individual trees in accordance with hygiene and biosecurity considerations
- recording and implementing work health, safety, site, environmental and traffic control measures

- investigating stem bark ridge, old cuts, dead branches and occluded and occluding branches
- determining the separate parts to be a branch or co-dominant stem in relation to the tree anatomy and branch attachment
- determining the part requiring removal to be a branch or a co-dominant stem
- using sharp pruning tools to make clean cuts
- operating chainsaws and polesaws
- implementing pruning cuts to the standards required by AS 4373
- applying compartmentalisation of decay in tree (CODIT) principles
- pre-cutting or undercutting branches to avoid splitting or tearing
- removing remaining stub with final cut
- observing final cut procedure for branch removal for cutting as close as possible to the branch collar without cutting into the branch collar or leaving a protruding stub.
- using branch bark ridge to determine angle of cut when removing a branch in the absence of a visible collar
- ensuring bark at edge of all branch pruning cuts remains firmly attached
- using the branch bark ridge as a guide to the angle and position of the final cut when making reduction cuts
- ensuring the lateral branch to which the final cut is made, is at least one third of the diameter of the branch being reduced at the point of the final cut.
- using the stem bark ridge to determine the angle of cut when removing a co-dominant stem
- being guided to the position and angle of the final cut, by positions and angles of joins between tissue of declining or dead stems and those of healthy stems elsewhere in tree
- ensuring bark at edge of all stem pruning cuts remains firmly attached
- inspecting past pruning cuts to determine tree response
- using tree response to assess the quality of past pruning cuts
- seeking feedback on pruning from other arborists
- identifying and rectifying incorrect pruning cuts
- modifying future pruning cuts based on tree responses and feedback from others
- dropping pruning material into designated drop zone
- cleaning, maintaining and storing tools and equipment
- collecting and disposing of, or recycling pruned material in a manner that causes minimal environmental damage
- maintaining workplace records
- use of industry-standard terminology to describe arboriculture and the work environment.

Knowledge Evidence

The candidate must demonstrate knowledge of:

- risk assessment
- visual tree assessment
- tree health, growth habit, structure, stability and growing environment

- first aid
- operation of chainsaws and polesaws
- tree and branch anatomy and attachments: lateral branch collars, branch bark ridges, stem bark ridges
- pruning cuts to the standards required by AS 4373
- reduction cuts
- tree response to pruning
- correct and incorrect pruning cuts
- rectifying cuts
- pruning hygiene
- biosecurity
- communications using voice, hand and whistle signals
- power line proximity, safe approach distances and clearances
- rescue personnel, equipment and procedures applicable to tree work
- interpreting specifications
- maintaining workplace records
- disposal of plant debris in environmentally aware and sensitive manner
- work health and safety procedures for pruning operations.

Assessment Conditions

Assessment must be demonstrated consistently over time in a suitable range of contexts and have a productivity-based outcome. No single assessment event or report is sufficient to achieve competency in this unit.

Assessment may be conducted in a simulated or real work environment; however determination of competency requires the application of work practices under work conditions.

The mandatory equipment and materials used to gather evidence for assessment include:

- equipment:
 - chainsaws - climbing saw
 - pole saw
 - pruning handsaws
 - high decibel whistle
 - personal protective equipment (PPE)
 - first aid and emergency kit
 - traffic management kit
 - signage - work zone
 - trees and tree parts
- materials:
 - pruning operations form
 - hazard identification and risk control form

- equipment and PPE check form
- emergency preparation form
- work communications form
- work site operations form
- work records form

Assessors must satisfy current standards for RTOs in the assessment of arboriculture units of competency.

Assessment must be conducted only by persons who have:

- arboriculture vocational competencies at least to the level being assessed
- current arboriculture industry skills directly relevant to the unit of competency being assessed

Links

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