

Minimum Requirements for an Arborist Report



After requests from local government representatives, the QAA has put together a list of minimum requirements that are expected by local authorities in the production of an Arborists Report. This information is made available in order to assist the general public in selecting an Arborist, and for Arborists who may be approaching Report Writing “in the field” for the first time.

Qualifications: The *minimum* Qualification for an Arborist who is writing a report is AQF Certificate 5 Diploma in Horticulture (Arboriculture) *or* AQF Certificate 5 in Arboriculture.

Insurance: An Arborist who is offering advice or consultancy for trees (whether written in the form of a report, or verbal) must have appropriate Professional Indemnity insurance.

Report Requirements:

- 1. Name, business address, qualifications and contact telephone number of the business /individual preparing the report.**
- 2. The address of the site containing the trees (street address and Lot on Plan if available).**
- 3. The date of the inspection, and the date that the report was prepared.**
- 4. The name and contact details of the person/business for whom the report was prepared.**
- 5. The methods or techniques used in the inspection.** E.g. Visual Tree Assessment, use of decay detection device, aerial inspection, etc.
- 6. Limitations of the Report: *What was not done?*** E.g. there were no aerial inspections performed; no below ground inspections were undertaken.
- 7. A table/spreadsheet that shows clearly for each tree the following information:**
 - Common and Scientific name of the tree
 - Age Class
 - Estimated Height
 - Canopy/Crown Spread
 - DBH (Diameter of the Trunk at Breast Height, usually measured at 1.4 metres above ground level)
 - Comments on the Vitality, Structure and Form of the tree
 - Tree number (to correspond with the site plan, see 10 below)
 - If required, inclusion of an assessment of value/significance/suitability

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8. **A Discussion of the data collected:** Expand on the information collated in the table/spreadsheet. E.g. if there is root damage noted in the spreadsheet, where is it? Is the disturbance on the surface or does it go deeper? How extensive is it? If the TPZ of the assessed tree were given, what percentage of the TPZ has been affected?
9. **Recommendations:** What, if anything, can be done to rectify any problems/hazards? Are there other options? If so, what are they, and which is the most suitable method? Why is it better than the others? E.g. if the report is for a proposed development, what engineering options can be employed to incorporate the tree/s into the proposed design?
10. **Site Plan:** Showing the location of the trees and numbered to correspond with the spreadsheet (see 7 above)
11. **Supporting Evidence:** As appropriate for the particular report: May include photographs, test results (e.g. soil samples, Resistograph readings etc) or laboratory results.
12. **References:** Any literature referred to, or quoted from, must be referenced using an accepted referencing method.

It is important to remember that the report must be **unbiased** and **objective**: The arborist is reporting on the tree/s; they are **not** attempting to affect an outcome on behalf of their client.

The requirements listed here are based upon similar documents produced by City of Sydney, Brisbane City Council, Lismore City Council and Port Macquarie Hastings Council.

Most Local Authorities recommend choosing an appropriately insured, qualified, experienced and independent arborist to prepare an arborist report to accompany a development application or tree application.