

CONFINED SPACE RISK MANAGEMENT STANDARD

SCOPE

This standard applies to any activities under the management and control of Monash University in Australia and applies to affected workers; including staff, students, contractors and visitors.

The purpose of this document is to provide an overarching framework for the effective management of Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HSW) associated with confined spaces and confined space entry at Monash University.

1. Identification of a Confined Space

The Contractor Responsible Person (CRP) or Monash Supervisor must ensure that any suspected confined space that is not present in the Confined Space Register is reported to the Health, Safety and wellbeing team (HS&W).

It is the responsibility of the CRP or Monash Supervisor and HS&W to ensure that:

- Any suspected confined spaces meet the definition of a confined space as per this document;
- All confined spaces are recorded in the Confined Space Register; and
- Appropriate signage is placed at all entry points to a confined space prior to the space being entered.

2. Identification of a new Temporary Confined Space

The CRP or Monash Supervisor must ensure that any works that have the potential to temporarily create a confined space must be brought to the attention of HS&W.

It is the responsibility of the CRP or Monash Supervisor and HS&W to ensure that:

- A determination is made on whether the space meets the criteria of a confined space consistent with the OHS Regulations 2017 and as detailed in the definition section of this standard;
- Appropriate signage is placed at all entry points to a confined space prior to the space being entered.

3. Activities Involving Confined Space Entry

3.1 Risk Management

The Contractor Responsible Person (CRP) or Monash Supervisor must ensure that any risks associated with entry to a confined space are identified, so far as is reasonable, before work commences. If there is an element of doubt, HS&W must be consulted.

Risk management can be undertaken by completing a risk assessment or a Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS).

3.1.1 SWMS will be completed by contractors undertaking the works.

3.1.2 Risk assessments will be completed by Monash staff.

3.1.3 Risk assessments and SWMS must be conducted by the party who will perform the works. The SWMS and risk assessment must be documented and should be specific to the work being undertaken.

3.1.4 Risks that may arise include:

- Becoming trapped as a result of exit points becoming inaccessible (e.g. accidentally externally locking exit door).
- Dangerous atmospheres that have a risk of:
 - Ignition or explosion of flammable gases;
 - Inhalation of toxic gases (e.g. Carbon monoxide, Carbon dioxide) or harmful airborne contaminants; or
 - Insufficient oxygen in the atmosphere.
- Presence of a material that may significantly limit mobility of a person (e.g. water, powders, granular materials).
- Exposure to pathogens.

4. Confined space permit-to-work

- 4.1 A confined space entry permit must be obtained when the nature of works includes work within an area that meets all aspects of the definition of a confined space that is intended to be entered.
- 4.2 Permits are requested through [Buildings and Property](#) by the Contractor Responsible Person (CRP) where applicable or a Monash Supervisor overseeing the works.

The CRP and Monash Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that:

- The party conducting the work has completed certified Confined Space Entry training and can demonstrate suitable competency to perform work of this nature;
 - Hazards associated with the work appear to have been identified and risks assessed;
 - The intended work methods appear to be safe and without risk to health; and
 - A Permit-to-work is in place before any works commence.
- 4.3 The permit approver or delegate must verify the identified controls are in place and the atmosphere within the confined space has been determined to be safe prior to entry. This may be done in person, remotely or with the use of photo evidence and must be verified on the day the confined space is to be entered.

5. Conditions

- 5.1 The CRP or Monash Supervisor must ensure that:
 - 5.1.1 Equipment necessary to safely enter, work and exit the confined space is available, including:
 - Means of delivering and retrieving a person (e.g. life line);
 - Means of delivering and retrieving equipment (e.g. tripod, davit); and/or
 - Means to safely operate within the work area (e.g. lighting, communications devices)
 - 5.1.2 Isolations are performed on services where warranted;
 - 5.1.3 Equipment used to monitor conditions is calibrated;
 - 5.1.4 Measurement of atmospheric conditions within any confined space being entered is conducted at the top, middle, and bottom of the breathable zone and that hazardous gases or other contaminants are at safe levels as follows:
 - Oxygen concentrations within of 19.5 and 23.5%;
 - Combustible gases are below 5% LEL (e.g. 10ppm is LEL, 5% is 0.05ppm);
 - Hydrogen sulphide is less than 25 ppm;
 - Carbon monoxide is less than 400 ppm; and/or
 - Any other gases or contaminants are at safe levels.
 - 5.1.5 Any unsafe atmosphere within a confined space being entered is purged or ventilated until the levels are safe. If purging or ventilating the atmosphere is not practicable, that workers wear appropriate breathing apparatus;
 - 5.1.6 The work area is isolated from other persons (e.g. signage and barricades) as far practicable; and
 - 5.1.7 Emergency retrieval occupational health & safety.

6. Monitoring

The CRP or Monash Supervisor must monitor works, as far as practicable, to ensure that controls identified are in place.

The CRP, Monash Supervisor or the Director, Health, Safety & Wellbeing, or their representative, may review any work activities relating to confined space entry without notice.

7. Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the Director, Health Safety & Wellbeing to ensure that this standard is implemented.

8. Records

For HSW Records document retention please refer to the University's: [Information Governance and Recordkeeping Procedure](#)

9. Definitions

Definitions specific to this standard are provided below.

Key word	Definition
Contractor	Any person or business engaged by Monash University who enters into a contractual arrangement to conduct work for Monash University, but whose primary employer is not Monash University.
Contractor Management	The process of managing work that is being/has been outsourced by Monash University. In the context of this standard 'contractor management' relates to HSW.
Confined Space	A space (other than shaft, trench or tunnel that is a mine or is part of the workings of a mine) that is enclosed or partially enclosed by a structure (e.g. any vat, tank, pit, pipe, duct, flue, oven, chimney, silo, reaction vessel, container, receptacle, underground sewer or well, or any shaft, trench), or, where the impact of work could create a work environment that: 1. Is, or is intended to be, or is likely to be, entered by any person; and 2. Has a limited or restricted means for entry or exit that makes it physically difficult for a person to enter or exit the space; and 3. Is, or is intended to be, at normal atmospheric pressure while any person is in the space; and 4. Contains, or is intended to contain, or is likely to contain: • An atmosphere that has a harmful level of any contaminant; or • An atmosphere that does not have a safe oxygen level; or • Any stored substance, except liquids, that could cause engulfment.
Contractor Responsible Person (CRP)	The Monash University staff member/s responsible for engaging and/or supervising a contractor to complete works at Monash University sites.
Designated Mapping Tool	The tool used to map spatial information for the University. Currently assigned as SiSFM.
Permit-to-work certificate	Documented evidence of the issuing of a permit-to-work.
Permit Approver	The Buildings and Property authorised person who will review and approve a Permit for Work.
Permit holder	A person who is authorised by both an approved person and the authorised person to supervise activities involving prescribed activities as documented in a permit-to-work certificate.

Suitably Qualified Person	Person who can demonstrate that, through their experience, knowledge, qualifications and/or skills, they are competent to safely enter a confined space.
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GOVERNANCE

Parent policy	HS&W Policy
Supporting documents	Monash University HSW documents Confined Space Register HSW Records Management standard HSW Risk Management standard
Supporting schedules	N/A
Associated documents	Australian and International Standards ISO 45001:2018 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems WorkSafe Guidance documents Compliance Code 'Confined Spaces', WorkSafe Victoria September 2008
Related Legislation	Occupational Health and Safety Act (2004), Victoria Occupational Health and Safety Regulations (2017) Victoria
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DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version	Date Approved	Changes made to document
1.0	2026	Administrative changes due to: ● Conversion of Procedure to a HSW Standard ● Transition Procedure out of University Policy Bank on to HSW website