



Rethinking safety through
INCLUSION
+
WELLBEING

HEALTH + SAFETY

PRIMARY STANDARD

30/03/2026

CONFINED SPACE

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Primary Standard details the FSR controls and minimum requirements to eliminate or minimise risks from work in and around confined spaces at Laing O'Rourke workplaces.

This document is Mandatory and must be achieved across all Laing O'Rourke Workplaces. Where alternative controls are implemented, these must be approved through the FSR/HSEMS Requirement Dispensation process.

1.0 FSR CONTROLS

- Identify potential *confined spaces* during Safety in Design, constructability assessments and work planning, eliminating or engineering out the risk where possible.
- Conduct a *confined space* risk assessment for each area that may meet the definition of a confined space before starting work.
- Atmospheric testing equipment must be within calibration and tested before use.
- Inspect breathing apparatus before each use and maintain it at defined intervals.
- *Confined space* work must only be carried out by personnel trained and competent for their specific roles.
- Obtain a Confined Space Entry Permit for all *confined space* entry work and verify all required controls are in place before work commences.
- *Confined spaces* must be secured against entry and clearly signed.
- Conduct initial and ongoing atmospheric testing and record results on the *Confined Space* Entry Permit.
- A dedicated standby person must be present at all times while workers are inside the *confined space*.
- An emergency plan is in place, equipment available, and entry team trained in the response process.

2.0 REQUIREMENTS

- The first step must be to review if work in a confined space can be eliminated, and where it is not possible then a review if work can be completed without people entering the space.
- At the site design stage, risks including confined spaces must be eliminated and minimised as much as possible. Safety in Design (SiD) Register must be followed and completed outlining how:
 - Confined spaces at the design stage are eliminated wherever possible
 - The need to enter a confined space is minimised
 - Risks to persons working in a confined space are minimised
 - Access points are of adequate size to permit rescue of persons.
- Entry into a space to risk assess, if determined as a confined space it must be treated as a confined space and the permit system implemented.



- A specific risk assessment is conducted for each confined space – See Guidance Section Risk Assessment & Confined Space Inherent Hazards Risk Assessment template.
- The Risk Assessment should cross reference the Project Risk Assessment and must consider:
 - If the space may become a confined space by the generation of harmful concentrations of airborne contaminants
 - whether the work can be carried out without the need to enter the confined space
 - the type of a confined space (i.e pipe, pit, excavation, vessel)
 - the environmental conditions (such as physical stress, temperature)
 - if the hazard is associated with any airborne contaminant or unsafe level of oxygen
 - the method for monitoring atmospheric condition is assessed
 - Isolation hazards have been identified i.e piping, electrical
 - the work to be carried out in the confined space, the range of methods by which the work can be carried out, and the proposed method - the type of emergency and rescue procedures required.
- A competent person must undertake the risk assessment and be approved by the Project Leader or delegate.
- Confined spaces are identified on a register and warning signs are displayed and entered onto a confined space register with a unique number. Refer to Confined Space Register template.
- Detail the work to be carried out and the nature of the confined space.
- Potentially hazardous systems and services are isolated and de-energised prior to entry.
- Adjacent work or any other work in the vicinity has been assessed to ensure it cannot adversely affect the confined space work, including contaminants, condition through piping, ducts, vents, drains, conveyors, service pipes and fire protection equipment. In addition, the following needs to be considered:
 - The activation or energising of machinery, plant or services that can adversely affect the space
 - The release of stored or potential energy from sources of plant
 - The inadvertent use of electrical equipment.
- Should there be a flammable atmosphere or risk of fire or explosion, then all ignition sources in the vicinity must be eliminated.
- All workers involved in the Confined Space work, including supervision, stand by worker and anyone involved in rescue arrangements must be briefed on the Permit controls, understand their role, and agree the arrangements are suitable prior to work commencing.
- Work must commence within one hour of testing of atmospheric testing or the test repeated, and the permit re-validated on site by a competent person.
- PPE and emergency equipment is available and has been checked prior to work commencing.
- Prohibit smoking, naked flames, plant and or equipment within the vicinity of work.
- Eliminate hot works where possible, where not practicable then other suitable controls are to be implemented to reduce risk of fire or explosion and a Hot Works Permit is required.
- Ensure suitable access and egress controls are in place including rescue requirements.
- Purging or ventilation of any containment in the atmosphere of the space is carried out - Pure oxygen or gas mixtures with oxygen concentration exceeding 21% by volume are not used for purging or ventilation of any airborne containment in the space.



- Oxygen levels must be between 19.5 and 23.5%, atmospheric testing must be conducted in remote areas and different levels of the confined space, and atmospheric testing to be recorded on the permit.
- Ensure whilst work is being carried out that the concentration of any flammable gas, vapor or mist in the atmosphere of the space is less than 5% of its LEL (Lower Exposure Limit).
- If the LEL is 5% or greater at any time the workers must be removed immediately, and a further risk assessment undertaken to either reduce airborne concentration levels or provide suitable controls to ensure continuous monitoring to maintain airborne levels at all times whilst people are in the space below 10% of the LEL.
- Confined space signage must be displayed while work is set up, and through to completion. Other signage will need to be considered appropriate to the work activity for example plant & people, exclusion zones.
- Confined Spaces are to be barricaded, locked or suitable means of restricting access is in place when not in use.
- Emergency and rescue arrangements must be checked for adequacy prior to work commencing, preferably on site by the workers involved in the work, including checking that communication method with standby person can be maintained at all times.

3.0 CONFINED SPACE ENTRY PERMITS

Before anyone can enter a confined space, a Confined Space Permit must be completed which identifies the location of the work and a description of the type of work to be undertaken.

Refer to **Primary Standards Permits to Work**.

4.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITIES
PROJECT/WORKPLACE LEADER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint Permit Authorities and Issuers for Confined Spaces • Undertake Fatal and Severe Risk Reviews for Confined Spaces
CONFINED SPACE WORKERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure you are competent to work in a Confined Space and your competency is valid • Ensure you are briefed on the Permit to Work arrangements, and fully understand the controls, and sign onto the permit • Check all equipment prior to use • Check communications and rescue arrangements are understood and in place • Check rescue equipment is at the workplace

5.0 REGULATIONS AND CODES

Key Regulations, Codes of Practice and Guidelines are as follows:

- Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (QLD, ACT); 2012 (SA) 2017 (NSW, NT) and 2022 (WA): Part 4.3 Confined Space
- Vic OHS Regulations 2017 Part 3.4 – Confined Spaces
- SafeWork Australia Confined Spaces Code of Practice
- AS 2865 Confined Spaces
- Code of Practice – Confined Spaces.



6.0 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information about working in confined spaces see:

- HSE Information Sheet – Determining a Confined Space.

7.0 PLANS, FORMS AND TEMPLATES

For relevant plans, forms and templates see the Laing O'Rourke HSEMS at <https://lorhsems.com/>.