

Confined Space

Safety@Optus – Hazard Standard



What you need to know

Places such as manholes, pits, crawl spaces, roof cavities, equipment housings, tunnels etc are difficult to exit in the event of an emergency.

Working in a confined space requires diligent planning and the right risk management of hazards. It also requires using the correct PPE and equipment to minimise risks and harm

What makes a confined a confined Space

Safework Australia's [Confined Spaces Code of Practice](#) defines a confined space as an **"enclosed or partially enclosed space that is not designed or intended primarily to be occupied by a person."**

As a general rule a 'confined space' means an enclosed or partially enclosed space that: the entry into a space where a person's head or upper body is in the space or within the boundary of the space.

However, In reality confined spaces are determined by risk assessment with specific hazards associated with a set of specific circumstances. It is not just because work is performed in a small space.

Some of the life-threatening hazards that confirm the space as a confined space and must be controlled when working are:

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| • Temperature Extremes | Explosive atmospheres |
| • Reactive or Corrosive residues | Asphyxiation – low oxygen levels |
| • Hazardous / toxic liquids and vapours | Venomous snakes and spiders |
| • Contaminated atmospheres – dust & gases | Electrical hazards |

This Standard "at times" will need be read and used in parallel with other WHS standards to ensure that all concurrent duty holders are aware of its WHS obligations, and all legislative requirements are being met.

All necessary site safety documentation related to working in a confined space to facilitate the works must be kept and submitted to Optus as part of the site final phase handover pack.

The requirements listed in this standard will be used by Optus as part of the contractor audit assurance framework to verify the management of the WHS contractual and legislative obligations

Australian Standards & Industry Codes

It is the responsibility of the Contractor working on behalf of Optus to be aware of and have documented a process of how it meets the relevant Australian standards for assessing a confined space, the equipment used and working in a confined space



Confined Space

Safety@Optus – Contractor Requirements



1. The Supplier must have a process of risk assessment to identify a confined space where necessary .
2. Where it is already identified as a confined space, the Supplier must have a process to determine what controls that need to be in place, prior to the work commencing
3. The Supplier must be able to demonstrate how it uses "HIRAC" to establish the most effective layers of risk control for all identified and foreseeable hazards present at the site / work location. This must extend to any deviations to the planned works
4. The Contractor must have a process and be able to demonstrate how it factors this information into developing safe systems of work for all workers and pedestrians
5. The control measures used to manage the different types of hazards associated with the confined space must be clearly be communicated and consulted to all workers for input, the controls then documented on the site-specific SWMS and the project risk register if applicable to other sites.
6. Where applicable, conduct inspections of works to ensure compliance with the control measures put in place to ensure safe systems of work.
7. The Contractor must have a process and be able to demonstrate the mechanisms used of it how it consults with workers and communicates all site requirements –
8. A site specific SWMS is to be available at all sites where work in a confined space is being undertaken and required to perform work on behalf of Optus
9. If the confined space is in a public area, the site assessment must include details of site set up, the marking and placement of barriers and exclusion zones , pedestrian walk ways, additional safe access / exit or work areas
10. The Supplier must ensure that all devices such atmospheric testing - detectors, are calibrated, rescue equipment, PPE is regularly inspected, in date and fit for purpose.
11. A Supplier must be able to verify that any entry and exit plans developed are by an appropriately trained certified personal and the site supervision of the tasks are performed by appropriately trained and certified personal
12. The Supplier is to ensure that any Council or local authority permits that are required are on site and available upon request
13. There is to be accountable personal on site that can demonstrate the risk controls that are in place are fit for purpose and effective in preventing harm
14. There must be an emergency preparedness and response plan In place, this can be included as part of the site-specific plan or as stand-alone process. it must be communicated to all workers on site at the start of each workday.

