



Australian Government

DEFOH012B Identify confined space

Release 2

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Modification History

Release	TP Version	Comments
2	DEF12V2	Removal of repetitive Performance Criteria Statement Application added Minor change to Unit Descriptor and Range Statement Changes to Evidence Guide
1	DEF12V1	Primary release.

Unit Descriptor

This unit covers the competency required to identify actual or potential confined spaces prior to entering a confined space for work purposes.

The unit includes recognising actual and potential confined spaces in one's work environment and understanding the broad limitations they impose on work practices.

It also covers identifying potential work health and safety (WHS) concerns and seeking further advice and/or applying appropriate/relevant procedures when dealing with WHS issues.

In the context of this unit, a confined space is any compartment or area that has one of the following characteristics:

- limited opening for access
- no escape route or very restricted means of escape
- limited natural ventilation
- atmosphere containing more than 23.5% or less than 19.5% oxygen

and has the capability of accumulating a toxic, flammable or explosive atmosphere, or of being flooded.

No licensing, legislative, regulatory or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of publication. In a Defence context, this means that there is no civilian need to hold this unit in order to meet licensing, legislative, regulatory or certification requirements.

Application of the Unit

This unit was developed for Defence workers involved in the identification of confined spaces as a workplace responsibility, but is applicable to all individuals who work in this field.

Typically, these individuals must demonstrate the ability to work independently or as part of a team under indirect supervision. They must be able to use discretion and judgement and take responsibility for the quality of their outputs.

All activities are carried out in accordance with relevant legislation, organisational policies and procedures.

Licensing/Regulatory Information

Not applicable.

Pre-Requisites

Not applicable.

Employability Skills Information

This unit contains employability skills.

Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

Elements describe the essential outcomes of a Unit of Competency.

Performance Criteria describe the required performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element. Where ***bold italicised*** text is used, further information is detailed in the Required Skills and Knowledge and/or the Range Statement. Assessment of performance is to be consistent with the Evidence Guide.

Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
1. Recognise a confined space	1.1 <i>Personal protective equipment</i> (PPE) required to identify a confined space is donned. 1.2 <i>Nature of the possible work space and its characteristics</i> are reviewed. 1.3 Possible work space is <i>assessed for its potential to be a confined space</i>. 1.4 <i>Precautions to be taken in the presence of a harmful atmosphere</i> are determined in accordance with legislative and organisational requirements. 1.5 <i>Other hazards and factors</i> associated with the possible work space are identified and assessed to determine the level of risk associated with that space. 1.6 Where uncertainty exists about the possible work space's confined space potential, identification is referred to <i>appropriate personnel/authority</i> for further investigation and analysis in accordance with organisational procedures. 1.7 Safety of possible work space is <i>confirmed</i>.
2. Carry out appropriate action after identifying a confined space	2.1 <i>Organisational instructions</i> are reviewed for the appropriate action in relation to work activities involving confined spaces. 2.2 Potential work health and safety (WHS) issues are identified and documented. 2.3 Risk assessment is undertaken, documented and revised whenever there is evidence to indicate that it is no longer valid. 2.4 Broad limitations the confined space may impose on work practices are documented.

Required Skills and Knowledge

This describes the essential skills and knowledge and their level, required for this unit.

Required Skills

- access, read, interpret and apply information on confined spaces
- communicate effectively
- identify and report hazards

- implement workplace WHS procedures relevant to the work being undertaken

Required Knowledge

- appropriate signage, symbols, labels and warning devices
- legislation, organisational policies and procedures relevant to confined spaces
- location of applicable organisational procedures and documents
- preferred order of ways to control WHS risk - hierarchy of controls
- rights and responsibilities of workplace parties under WHS legislation

Evidence Guide

Critical aspects for assessment and evidence required to demonstrate competency in this unit

Assessment must confirm an understanding of the possible nature of the environment, and the ability to:

- prepare and plan for entry
- identify potential issues
- undertake a risk assessment
- identify the broad limitations the confined space may impose on activities therein
- apply knowledge of relevant work health and safety legislative frameworks
- apply principles and practices of work health and safety
- Identify intervention points for expert advice to assist work and to guide problem solving
- Identify principle risks and associated mitigation

Consistency in performance

Evidence for competency in this unit must be gathered over time and across a range of workplace or simulated situations.

Context of and specific resources for assessment

Context of assessment

Competency should be assessed in the workplace or under conditions that accurately simulate a realistic workplace in accordance with all relevant legislation and organisation requirements.

Evidence should be gathered while observing the individual conducting an actual or simulated workplace identification of a confined space. A record of all relevant research, interviews and reports should also be submitted as evidence for assessment.

Specific resources for assessment

Access to relevant legislation, codes of practice, guidance material, policies/procedures and relevant equipment (including PPE required to identify a confined space).

Range Statement

The Range Statement relates to the Unit of Competency as a whole. It allows for different work environments and situations that may affect performance. ***Bold italicised***

wording in the Performance Criteria is detailed below.	
<i>Personal protective equipment</i> may include:	• Breathing apparatus • Gloves • Helmet • Protective clothing • Protective footwear
<i>Nature of the possible work space and its characteristics</i> may include:	• Biological hazards (viruses and bacteria, insects, snakes and vermin) • Characteristics of the environment/atmosphere and its potential impact on equipment or the health of a worker operating in that space • Electrical hazards • Environmental hazards • Noise • Presence of hazardous substances, flammable contaminants • Presence of materials which may result in engulfment, mechanical hazards (augers, agitators, conveyors) • Ignition hazards (sources of heat, static or friction, non-intrinsically safe plant, welding and cutting, electronic equipment, activities such as grinding chipping and sandblasting) • Presence of unsafe oxygen levels • Radiation • Size of entry space, availability of exit route, size of space • Structure of the confined space and the limitations such a structure imposes on work practices
<i>Assessing a possible work space for its potential to be a confined space</i> may include:	• Continuous effective communication • Emergency response procedures • Hazards involved and associated risks involved with the actual method selected and equipment proposed to be used • Nature and inherent hazards of the confined space • Range of methods by which the work can be done • Work required to be undertaken including the need to enter the confined space • Provision of standby person/s where indicated by risk assessment • Revising risk assessments whenever there is evidence to indicate that they are no longer valid • Training and competence of the persons to

	undertake the work
<i>Precautions to be taken in the presence of a harmful atmosphere</i> may include:	• Appropriate signage warning of the dangers and special precautions to be taken when operating in that environment • Climbing equipment or ladders • Lifelines • Obstructions that limit access to or from areas within the confined space • Requirements for special breathing apparatus • Restrictions on activities that may be undertaken without specific action such as exhausting volatile gases before welding • Special clothing • Special equipment/clothing to counter slippery surfaces, protect exposed skin, hearing or sparks • Time limit on exposure necessitating rotation of personnel through confined space in order to complete the task that initiated the entry requirement
<i>Other hazards and factors</i> may include:	• Contaminants encountered such as in the manufacturing process, stored substances and their by-products and/or biological hazards such as bacteria, viruses, fungi • Excessive noise or other radiation levels when equipment is operated in the confined space environment or from adjacent activities • Falls, trips and slips • Inability to observe safe distance from some operating equipment • Inadequate lighting • Inappropriate manual handling • Restrictions on entry and egress which could also severely limit contingency planning • Restrictions on gas or electrical welding, use of pneumatic equipment • Restrictions on operating equipment in the confined space due to physical restrictions to the normal operation/manoeuvre of the equipment
<i>Appropriate personnel/authority</i> may include:	• WHS representative • Supervisor
<i>Confirming the safety of a possible work space</i> includes:	confirming that the work space is either: • Confirmed as not safe for work or • Confirmed as an actual confined space or

	• Confirmed as a potential confined space and monitored for any change in its status
Organisational instructions may include:	• Australian or international standards • Exposure standards • Job safety analysis (JSA) • Legislation, including state/territory/commonwealth • WHS Acts, regulations, codes of practice and guidance material relating to hazards present in the workplace and industry, and associated with entry to confined spaces including legislation specific to confined space work • Manufacturers' specifications • Organisational policies and procedures • Standing Operating Procedures (SOPs) • Task analysis

Unit Sector(s)

Not applicable.