



# Health and Safety

## Permit to Work

### Minimum Standard

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## 1 Aims and Principles

The aim of this Government of Jersey (GoJ) Minimum Standard is to provide guidance on the steps which should be taken to ensure that suitable Permit to Work Systems are developed and implemented for managing high risk activities undertaken by GoJ employees or its contractors.

Departments carrying out works which require a Permit to Work System should develop their own procedures detailing the process to be followed.

The procedures must include the standards set out in this document or be of an equivalent or higher standard.

## 2 Legislation and Guidance

### a) Applicable Legislation

[Health and Safety at Work \(Jersey\) Law, 1989](#)

### b) Guidance

[Guidance on permit-to-work systems: A guide for the petroleum, chemical and allied industries \(UK HSE\)](#)

## 3 Definitions

### Safe System of Work

A formal procedure which results from a risk assessment of the task, which fully documents the safe working methods and control measures to be implemented to ensure that the hazards are eliminated or risks minimised.

A safe system of work may specify the requirement for a Permit to Work to be used.

### Permit to Work System (PTW System)

A Permit to Work System is the overall arrangements which an organisation has in place for ensuring Permits to Work are issued where required and that the persons issuing or working to those permits are competent to do so. See section 8 for further details.

### Permit to Work (PTW)

A Permit to Work forms is a formal written (paper or electronic) document which details

and authorises certain persons to carry out specific work and is intended to provide protection to employees working in hazardous situations. A PTW alone is not considered to be a full safe system of work for the task. Ref section 9 for further details.

### Authorised Person

The Authorised Person is any person identified in the Department's procedures who is given the authority to issue a Permit to Work.

They will have sufficient training, skills, knowledge and experience to enable them to determine whether the person the Permit to Work is issued to (the Responsible Person), has the competence to assess, control and manage the work being undertaken. Whilst this person may not have personally assessed the competency of the Responsible Person, they must be satisfied that an assessment has been made e.g. by the authorising manager or the contractor is on the Approved Contractors List etc.

An Authorised Person will also have the necessary experience and knowledge to identify the hazards associated with the work being undertaken and assess the precautions and procedures to be adopted to ensure the safety of those involved or those who may be affected by the work.

### Responsible Person

The person to whom the Permit to Work is issued and who carries out the task. This person must be able to accept the responsibilities involved, have the necessary knowledge, sufficient experience and practical expertise, together with the appropriate training necessary to ensure the job is carried out safely.

The Responsible Person could be a GoJ employee or an external contractor.

## 4 Who this Minimum Standard Applies to

Applies to:

- Government of Jersey (GoJ) employees who are responsible for managing Permit to Work systems
- Government of Jersey (GoJ) employees who use a Permit to Work system
- Government of Jersey (GoJ) departments which engage contractors to carry out works which operate under a GoJ Permit to Work system

## **5 Links to other GoJ Policies, Minimum Standards and Guidance**

### **a) Policies**

Government of Jersey - Health and Safety Policy

### **b) GoJ Minimum Standards**

Risk Assessment  
Control of Contractors  
Confined Spaces  
Working at Height  
Electricity at Work  
HFL/LPG/Explosives/Gas Systems  
Pressure Systems  
Ionising Radiation

### **c) Other Internal Guidance**

Further guidance may be available from other departments carrying out this type of work.

For assistance with preparing internal procedures, contact should be made with your departmental Health and Safety Manager/Adviser "Professional".

## **6 Roles and Responsibilities**

The department's procedures for carrying out or contracting works which operate under a GoJ Permit to Work system must clearly set out the roles and responsibilities of all those individuals involved with the work.

Reference should be made to the Government of Jersey Health and Safety Policy for general responsibilities.

## **7 What is a Permit to Work?**

A Permit to Work (PTW) is a formal written means of communication between the relevant parties involved with very high-risk tasks to make sure that all risks are properly assessed and the work is carried out using appropriate safety procedures.

It is a document which authorises competent people with the appropriate skills, experience and knowledge to carry out specific work, limited to a specific area and within

a specified time period.

It provides an effective way of reinforcing control over the high-risk activities and is a method of documenting the task being undertaken including the:

- Identification of the hazards involved
- Personnel and equipment being employed
- System of work to be adopted
- Location of the work
- Safety precautions to be applied
- Time limit for completion of the activity.

The correct operation of a PTW will ensure that:

- The work being undertaken is clearly defined and closely controlled
- All potential hazards are identified and appropriate safety precautions are applied before and during the work as required
- Everyone associated with the work being undertaken is aware of the safety measures required and all the factors involved
- The area affected by the work is clearly defined
  
- The period of time during which the work may take place is clearly defined
- The correct personal protective equipment is provided and used
- All affected parties are aware of the status of any equipment involved
- The appropriate local managers are aware of the work in progress
- All persons working within or visiting the premises are not exposed to hazardous conditions
- All legal requirements are complied with

A PTW is not simply permission to carry out the work. It is an essential part of a system which determines how that task can be carried out safely, and is a means of communicating this to those doing the task.

It should not be regarded as an easy way to eliminate hazard or reduce risk as the issue of a Permit-to-Work does not, by itself, make a job safe. It is not a replacement for robust risk assessment, but can help bring the risk assessment 'to life', at the sharp end, where it matters.

A PTW System will only be successful if those planning, supervising and carrying out the work are competent and understand the requirements of the Permit-To-Work.

## 8 When is a Permit to Work System Required?

The introduction of a Permit to-Work System should be considered whenever it is intended to carry out work which may have serious adverse effects on the safety of personnel, plant or the environment.

However, a Permit-to-Work System should not be applied to all activities, as experience has shown that the overall effectiveness is likely to be reduced if over-used.

Permits-to-Work are not normally required for controlling general visitors to site or routine maintenance tasks in non-hazardous areas.

Permit-to-Work Systems (PTWS) are normally considered most appropriate when applied to:

- Non-production work (e.g. maintenance, repair, inspection, testing, alteration, construction, dismantling, adaptation, modification, cleaning etc);
- Non-routine operations
- Tasks where two or more individuals or groups need to co-ordinate activities to ensure the job is completed safely
- Tasks where there is a transfer of work and responsibilities from one group to another during the work.

Example of types of work which could be subject to a Permit to Work and therefore require a PTWS to be in place are:

- Hot Works
- Confined Spaces
- Working at Height
- Demolition
- Pressure Systems
- Electrical Low Voltage LV
- Electrical High Voltage HV
- Medical Gases Pipeline Systems (MGPS)
- Excavation
- Asbestos
- Fire Alarm Isolation
- Water Systems
- Use of Specific High-Risk Equipment e.g. ionising radiation
- Flammable, toxic or otherwise dangerous substances

## 9 Developing a Permit to Work System

For Permits to Work to be an effective control of particularly hazardous operations, a comprehensive Permit to Work System must be developed and implemented by the department.

Essential features of a PTW System are:

- Clear identification of the types of work requiring a Permit to Work
- Clear and standardised identification of tasks, risk assessments, permitted task duration and supplemental or simultaneous activity and control measures
- Clear identification of who may authorise particular jobs including any limits to their authority
- Details of who is responsible for specifying the necessary precautions
- Training and instruction to be provided on the issue of Permits-to-Work
- Use and closure of Permits-to-Work
- Monitoring and auditing to ensure that the system works as intended, usually at least annually

The objectives and functions of a Permit to Work System can be summarised as:

- Ensuring the proper authorisation of designated work. This may be work of certain types, or work of any type within certain designated areas other than normal operations
- Making clear to people carrying out the work the exact identity, nature and extent of the job and the hazards involved, and any limitations on the extent of the work and the time during which the job may be carried out
- Specifying the precautions to be taken, including safe isolation from potential risks such as hazardous substances, electricity and other energy forms (for details of isolation procedures and when they are appropriate see [HSE guidance on “The safe isolation of plant and equipment”](#))
- Ensuring that the person in direct charge of a unit, plant or installation is aware of all hazardous work which is taking place
- Providing not only a system of continuous control, but also a record showing that the nature of the work and the precautions needed have been checked by an appropriate person or people
- Providing for the suitable display of Permits-to-Work
- Providing a procedure for times when work has to be suspended, i.e. stopped for

a period before it is complete

- Providing for the control of work activities that may interact or affect one another
- Providing a formal handover procedure for use when a Permit-to-Work is issued for a period longer than one shift
- Providing a formal hand-back procedure to ensure that the part of the plant affected by the work is in a safe condition and ready for reinstatement
- Providing a process for change, including the evaluation of change on other planned activity, a determination of when hazards need to be reassessed, and a means for controlled communication of any change.

The PTW System will be more effective if site management and other personnel have been consulted as imposing systems without consultation can lead to procedures that do not reflect the needs of the persons involved. A failure to consult significantly increases the risk of procedural violations occurring.

In addition to the Permit-to-Work System, other precautions may need to be adopted e.g. process or electrical isolation. These will need to be identified in task risk assessments before any work is undertaken.

## 10 Issuing a Permit to Work

Any task requiring a Permit-to-Work (PTW) should be risk assessed and the PTW should be issued by the Authorised Person to the Responsible Person.

The Authorised Person issuing the PTW must ensure that:

- They have reviewed the Risk Assessment and Method Statement for the work
- The Responsible Person fully understands the requirements of the PTW
- The Responsible Person fully understands the precautions and procedures to be followed
- They acknowledge any concerns the receiver of the permit (Responsible Person) has, and acts immediately to resolve the situation.

Before a Permit can be issued, several factors need to be considered:

### **The nature of the work being carried out**

A specific risk assessment and safe system of work needs to be available for the activity which requires a PTW.

All employees and contractors should be made aware of potential dangers that could arise through their work.

The task should be discussed between the Authorised Person, the person receiving the PTW (Responsible Person) and any other involved parties.

### The location

Consideration should be given to the following:

- The area is clearly visible to all persons
- Suitable barriers and signage are displayed and will remain in place for the duration of the works
- All persons involved or who could potentially be affected by the works are made aware of any risks and control measures.

### Equipment being used

All machinery and equipment that presents a significant risk must be isolated **BEFORE** THE PTW is issued. Multi-hasp locking systems and interlocking systems require careful monitoring and key security.

Area demarcation that prevents mobile plant and unauthorised personnel accessing the area must also be considered.

All other tools and equipment used must be fit for purpose and in good condition.

### Persons involved

The most significant factor in the occurrence of accidents and incidents is the participation of people.

It is imperative that only competent persons undertake any task or activity.

An individual should never undertake a task if they have not received training or authorisation to do so.

### Personal protective equipment (PPE)

All personal protective equipment required to undertake the task safely must be made available to those involved and be used.

Personnel not working in the area, but who may possibly be affected, must also be considered, e.g. in the vicinity of arc welding or noise.

PPE must be suitable for the task and be specified in the PTW.

Test certificates of PPE e.g. respiratory protective equipment must be inspected by authorised personnel. All PPE must be inspected by users prior to use. Any person using specific PPE must be adequately trained in its correct use.

The process for issuing a Permit to Work is shown in the flowchart in Appendix A

## 11 Receiving a Permit-to-Work

The Responsible Person receiving the PTW must:

- Ensure that only the task specified on the PTW is undertaken and that no work which requires a PTW is carried out until it is authorised and the permit issued
- Abide by the safe system of work
- Report back to the Authorised Person if any changes take place which result in the PTW becoming invalid (e.g. the receiver of the permit leaving site).
- Ensure that all parties involved with the work sign the PTW to confirm that they have read and understood the conditions of the PTW and any precautions e.g. isolation which have been taken to ensure the safety of the system to be worked on.

## 12 Supervision of a Permit-to-Work

Any person responsible for directly supervising works which are subject to a PTW should ensure that: -

- They and the people working with them understand the operation of (and the consequences of non-compliance with) the permit-to-work systems applicable to the areas in which they are responsible for work
- Any necessary information, instruction or training is given to users to ensure that they understand the permit-to-work systems and the specific precautions required for their work
- That the performing authority and permit users fully understand their responsibilities under the permit-to-work system
- The conditions and precautions specified in the permits are fully understood, implemented and effectively monitored
- The issuing authority is informed when a job has been completed, suspended, if conditions alter or if the task needs to be altered.

## 13 Displaying the Permit-to-Work

A copy of the PTW must be displayed in a prominent position in the work location or be readily available. The isolation certificate should also be displayed where applicable.

The Authorised Person should also ensure that a copy of the PTW is readily available.

## **14 Additional Work Following the Issue of a Permit-to Work**

If additional work is required for a task for which a PTW has already been issued, but is not covered in the original PTW, a relevant Authorised Person must assess the implications of the additional work.

If the additional work can be carried out safely within the existing isolations the Authorised Person must specify the additional work permitted and sign the relevant authorisation on the PTW. All copies of the PTW must be amended.

The revised PTW must be re-issued to the Responsible Person by the Authorised Person, to the same standards as the original issue. The Responsible Person must sign and date to acknowledge receipt of the amended PTW.

The validity period of the PTW must be checked and confirmed as being appropriate to enable the additional work to be carried out.

The authorisation of additional work on an existing PTW must only be allowed if:

- The additional work is covered by the existing risk assessment and method statement
- Any existing isolations will enable the additional work to be carried out safely.

If either of the above requirements are not met, then any existing PTWs and isolation certificates must be cancelled and the new documents issued for the additional work.

## **15 Handover of a Permit to Work**

If work is carried over to another shift, e.g. the job takes longer than expected, then a shift handover procedure should be in place.

This handover procedure should ensure that the incoming shift is aware of any outstanding permit-controlled jobs, the status of those jobs, and the status of the plant.

Work-in-progress should be left in a condition that can be reliably communicated to, and understood by, the incoming shift.

A permit log, permit file or display boards are ways of recording ongoing permits.

It is essential that there is good communication between incoming and outgoing shifts and it is recommended that the incoming issuing shift signs to accept receipt of the continuing permit.

## 16 Suspension of a Permit to Work

Where it is foreseeable that a PTW may need to be suspended, arrangements for dealing with this should be included in the procedures set out in the PTW System

If it is found necessary to temporarily discontinue work, a PTW may be suspended by transferring it, together with all documents e.g. isolation certificate, keys and other appropriate items to an Authorised Person who will retain them in safe custody.

When work is to be resumed, the safety precautions for achieving safety from the system must first be confirmed by the Authorised Person who is to re-issue the Permit-To-Work.

The Permit-To-Work can then be re-issued by the Authorised Person to the Responsible Person together with all keys and other appropriate items.

A means of recording the following must be included in the PTW System:

- Suspension of the PTW
- Items handed over to the Authorised Person when suspended e.g. isolation certificates, keys etc.
- Re-issue of the PTW including items handed over to the Responsible Person when re-issued e.g. isolation certificates, keys etc.

The Authorised Person carrying out the re-issue must discharge the same responsibilities to the Responsible Person as if the Permit-To-Work was being issued initially. See section 10.

## 17 Interaction between Permits-to-Work

It is important to make sure that one activity under a PTW does not create danger for another, even if the other work does not require a PTW. Those involved with the issue of PTWs should be aware of potential interaction between works and should ensure that when a PTW is prepared, the work to be carried out takes account of other activities currently planned or underway in the adjacent area.

## 18 Closing Permits-to-Work (Hand-back)

To enable a PTW to be closed or handed back, the following questions should be answered.

- *Has the work been completed?*  
This should be confirmed by the person to whom the permit was issued i.e. the Responsible Person

- *Has any plant or equipment involved been returned to a safe condition, in particular by removing isolations?*  
This should be verified by the person responsible for signing off the permit i.e. the Authorised Person.

It should be acknowledged on the PTW that the plant/equipment/area has been returned to the relevant party.

## 19 Monitoring

To ensure the Permit to Work System is operating correctly and that safety is always being maintained during any hazardous activity, the Authorised Person or any other person nominated by them to act on their behalf must monitor the system on a periodic basis.

This can be achieved by carrying out:-

- Spot-checks on the use of Permits-to-Work, such as the start and completion of the task, with interim checks depending on hazard, complexity and duration of task
- Checks on permits which operate for more than 24 hrs to ensure they remain valid and the required controls are in place
- Questions or tests to establish contractors/staff “competence;”
- Analysis of RAMS
- Investigation in detail of any untoward incidents under PTW conditions

Some of the items that could be checked during a spot check include:

- The persons doing the work are aware of the existence of the PTW
- The equipment on site is safe, in good condition and is being used correctly
- All specified precautions are being taken
- Work is not continuing outside the time limits specified
- Work is not extending outside the area covered by the PTW
- Work is being restricted to only that which is specified
- The original PTW is available at the work area along with any isolation certificates if relevant
- Persons not involved in the work are being kept away from the area
- Where relevant, regular monitoring is being undertaken throughout the duration of the PTW

## 20 Training and Competence

Effective training is essential to achieve quality and consistency in the use of the Permit-to-Work System (PTW System). There should be successive levels of training for those involved. Training provides the foundation for effective implementation of a permit-to-work system and supports user competence. Training is the first step for PTW users and the continued participation of all relevant people is necessary to improve understanding and system ownership.

### Training should be carried out to:

- Ensure that all relevant people are able to become competent and sufficiently involved in the permit-to-work system
- Ensure understanding of the hazards associated with the working environment and the necessary controls
- Drive awareness and increase personal levels of risk perception which influence behaviour
- Communicate work site hazards and risks through participation

### Persons who should receive training include:

- All workers (at every level of each organisation involved) who actively take part in and contribute towards the permit-to-work system
- New and transient personnel who may be required to participate in PTW activities

### Training should include:

- The principles of the PTW System
- When PTWs are required
- An understanding of the types of PTWs, supporting certificates e.g. isolation and other documentation e.g. risk assessments and method statements required
- Responsibilities and competence requirements for signatories or authorised and responsible persons within the PTW System.
  - An assessment of competency should cover practical and thinking skills as well as knowledge.
  - Training should focus on use of the PTW system, but must also ensure that the individual understands the working environment, the hazards associated with it, and more importantly, the controls required to appropriately manage the risks presented by those hazards. These elements of competency need to be demonstrated PRIOR to permit-to-work training for Authorised Persons
- Responsibilities of permit users
- Lessons from incidents associated with PTWs
- Findings from audit and review.

### Training can be carried out:

- As part of an induction and prior to undertaking any work authorised under a PTW, to ensure an understanding for the system and enable participation

- Prior to becoming an Authorised Person for PTW signatures

Once training has been given, competence should be tested to ensure that satisfactory standards have been achieved by the trainees.

It is common practice for authorised issuers who are undergoing training to have their PTWs countersigned by an experienced issuer for a period of time after training, and for a trainee issuer to be asked to demonstrate an appropriate level of competence to a Line Manager.

Records of training and competence assessments should be kept, as they will be of benefit for recording whether individuals are competent to perform particular roles within permit-to-work system

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## Appendix A

Flow diagram illustrating work planning and risk assessment procedures

