

# 14 PERMIT TO WORK SYSTEMS

## 14.1 Introduction

**14.1.1** Based on the findings of the risk assessment, appropriate control measures should be put in place to protect those who may be affected. This chapter covers permits to work, which are formal records to confirm that control measures are in place when particular operations are being carried out.

**14.1.2** In this chapter and its annexes, any reference to a 'competent person' means a person designated and authorised for the task covered by a permit to work under the safety management system, and 'authorised officer' means a person designated and authorised for the purposes of issuing and closing permits to work under the safety management system.

## 14.2 Permit to work systems

**14.2.1** There are many types of operation on board ship when the routine actions of one person may inadvertently endanger another, or when a series of action steps needs to be taken to ensure the safety of those engaged in a specific operation. In all instances, it is necessary, before the work is done, to identify the hazards and then to ensure that they are eliminated or effectively controlled. Ultimate responsibility rests with the Company to see that this is done.

**14.2.2** The permit to work system consists of an organised and predefined safety procedure. A permit to work does not in itself make the job safe, but contributes to measures for safe working.

**14.2.3** The safety management system for individual ships will determine when permit to work systems should be used, and the form of the permit to work. In using a permit to work, the following principles apply:

- The permit should be relevant and as accurate as possible. It should state the location and details of the work to be done, the nature and results of any preliminary tests undertaken, the measures undertaken to make the job safe and the safeguards that need to be taken during the operation.

- The permit should specify the period of its validity (which should not exceed 24 hours) and any time limits applicable to the work that it authorises.
- Only the work specified on the permit should be undertaken.
- Before signing the permit, the authorised officer should ensure that all measures specified as necessary have in fact been taken, or procedures are in place.
- The authorised officer retains responsibility for the work until they have either closed the permit or formally transferred it to another authorised officer who should be made fully conversant with the situation. Anyone who takes over from the authorised officer, either as a matter of routine or in an emergency, should sign the permit to indicate transfer of full responsibility.
- The competent person responsible for carrying out the specified work should countersign the permit to indicate their understanding of the safety precautions to be observed.
- On completion of the work, the competent person should notify the authorised officer and get the permit closed.
- The competent person carrying out the specified work should not be the same person as the authorised officer.

14.2.4 Annex 14.1 gives examples of permits to work for various types of activity. The examples in this annex show different approaches: sections 14.1.1 and 14.1.2 show permits to work which record that safety measures have been put in place before the work commences (dangerous (enclosed) spaces and work at height); section 14.1.3 hands the site over to the competent person carrying out the work, and sets out the safety measures that need to be put in place. This second type should only be used when alternative safety procedures are in place to ensure that measures have been carried out before work begins. These examples may be adapted to the circumstances of the individual ship or the particular job to be carried out, in the light of the risk assessment.

### 14.3 Sanction to test systems

14.3.1 A sanction to test may be required when additional controls are needed for the testing of high-risk systems, such as high-voltage systems. Where required, a sanction to test should be issued in an identical manner to a permit to work. A sanction to test should not be issued on any apparatus on which a permit to work is still in force, or on which another sanction to test is in force.

14.3.2 A sanction to test should be issued when testing operations require the removal of the circuit main earth. Note: maintenance and repair cannot be carried out under a sanction to test.

14.3.3 Annex 14.2 gives an example of a sanction to test for testing work carried out on electrical high-voltage systems **over** 1000 volts. The example shows the headings for each section and each section's requirements. These should be adapted to the circumstances of the individual ship or ship's electrical high-voltage system, or the particular job to be carried out, in light of the risk assessment.

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## ANNEX 14.1 PERMITS TO WORK

Permits to work would normally be required for the following categories of work:

- entry into dangerous (enclosed) space;
- use of gas testing/equipment;
- hot work;
- working at height/over the side;
- general electrical (under 1000 volts);
- electrical high voltage (over 1000 volts);
- working on deck during adverse weather; and
- lifts, lift trunks and machinery.

This list is not exhaustive. Permits to work, following a similar format, may be required and developed for other categories of work.

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