

Hot Works Policy

SAMPLE

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Purpose

This Hot Works Policy sets out how [Company Name] will identify, plan, authorise and control all hot work activities to eliminate or minimise the risk of fire, explosion, burns, inhalation of fumes and other injuries. It applies to all workers, contractors and visitors involved in hot work, including welding, cutting, grinding, soldering, brazing and any other activity that generates heat, sparks or open flames.

This policy supports [Company Name]'s obligations under relevant Work Health and Safety (WHS) legislation, Australian Standards and industry best practice, and is particularly relevant to operations in metal fabrication and welding, plumbing and gasfitting, building and construction, and automotive and mechanical workshops.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All workplaces, sites, depots, workshops, yards and temporary work areas controlled by [Company Name]
- All workers, including employees, labour hire workers, apprentices, trainees and volunteers
- All contractors and subcontractors performing hot work on [Company Name] sites or on client sites where [Company Name] has management or control of the work
- All hot work activities, including but not limited to:
 - Welding (arc, MIG, TIG, oxy-acetylene, spot welding)
 - Thermal cutting and gouging
 - Grinding, finishing and abrasive cutting that generates sparks
 - Soldering and brazing (including copper pipework in plumbing and gasfitting)
 - Use of gas torches, heat guns and bitumen boilers
 - Any other work that produces an ignition source in a flammable or combustible environment

This policy covers hot work performed:

- In designated welding bays and workshops
- On construction sites and building refurbishments
- In plant rooms, roof spaces, underfloors and service risers
- In and around vehicles, machinery and fuel systems
- In confined spaces, pits, trenches and shafts
- In operational facilities where normal processes continue during hot work

Definitions

Hot Work

Any work activity that involves open flames, sparks, or heat sufficient to ignite flammable or combustible materials. This includes welding, cutting, grinding, soldering, brazing, thawing pipes with heat, and using gas torches.

Hot Work Permit

A formal written authorisation that specifies the exact location, time, scope and controls required for hot work to be carried out safely. It confirms that hazards have been identified, controls implemented and fire watch arrangements in place.

Fire Watch

A competent person assigned to continuously monitor the hot work area and adjacent areas for signs of fire during hot work and for a specified period after completion. The fire watch must have no other duties that could distract from this role.

Competent Person

A person who has acquired through training, qualification or experience, the knowledge and skills to carry out the task safely. For hot work, this includes understanding of fire risks, use of equipment, and control measures.

Designated Hot Work Area

A permanent, purpose-designed area (such as a welding bay) that is constructed and maintained to safely contain sparks, heat and fumes generated by hot work.

Non-Designated Area

Any location that is not specifically designed or permanently set up for hot work, such as a construction site, roof, plant room, vehicle bay or client premises.

Flammable Atmosphere

An atmosphere that contains flammable gases, vapours, mists or dusts in concentrations that could ignite if exposed to a suitable source of ignition.

Isolation

The process of physically preventing the release of energy or hazardous substances, such as through lock out/tag out (LOTO), blanking, disconnecting, or purging lines and equipment.

Legislative and Standards Framework

[Company Name] will manage hot work in accordance with, but not limited to, the following (as applicable in each jurisdiction):

- Work Health and Safety Act and Regulations (relevant State/Territory)
- Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Chemicals legislation (State/Territory)

- Building fire safety regulations and codes
- Relevant Australian Standards, including but not limited to:
 - AS 1674.1 Safety in welding and allied processes – Fire precautions
 - AS 1674.2 Safety in welding and allied processes – Electrical
 - AS/NZS 4836 Safe working on or near low-voltage electrical installations and equipment
 - AS 1940 The storage and handling of flammable and combustible liquids
 - AS/NZS 5601 Gas installations (for plumbing and gasfitting hot work)
 - AS/NZS 60079 Explosive atmospheres (where applicable)

Where client or site-specific requirements exceed this policy, the higher standard will apply.

Roles and Responsibilities

Officers (e.g. Directors, Senior Managers)

Officers of [Company Name] must exercise due diligence to ensure that the organisation complies with its WHS duties relating to hot work by:

- Ensuring that Hot Works Policy is implemented, resourced and reviewed
- Providing adequate resources for fire protection equipment, training and supervision
- Ensuring hot work risks are considered in business planning and project management
- Monitoring compliance through audits, inspections and incident reviews

Managers and Supervisors

Managers and supervisors are responsible for day-to-day implementation of this policy and must:

- Ensure a hot work risk assessment is completed for all relevant tasks
- Confirm that hot work permits are issued and authorised before work starts
- Verify that workers are competent and have appropriate licences/tickets where required
- Ensure fire protection equipment and PPE are available, maintained and used
- Coordinate with building owners, principal contractors and other duty holders
- Stop work if unsafe conditions are observed or permit conditions are not followed
- Ensure incidents, near misses and non-compliances are reported and investigated