

Lessons Learnt

Category	Safety & Health
Division + BU	Northern Region
Project	Group Services SHE
ID + Version	NR-SHE-2014-032
Date Developed	31/03/14



Permit to Work

Background / What happened?

There have been a number of recent incidents in the Northern Region where failures in the Permit to Work ("PTW") process have contributed to events that could have resulted in harm to our people, including:

- Earth stakes installed within 750 mm of a service trench (22 000 power cable, fibre optic cable, sewer and water main) – **workers stated they did not know the underground services were present.**
- Fence posts holes dug within 777 mm of High Voltage underground live service – **holes dug in wrong location.**
- Auger stuck a high density polyethylene pipe during penetration works – **Known services locations not verified before the task being undertaken.**
- Excavation dug steeper than a 1:1 ratio without Geotechnical design or proper consideration of access and egress – **Permit did not include adequate specifications with respect to trench design.**
- A shipping container caught fire during welding – **failure to properly inspect the work area when identifying controls on Hot Work Permit.**



What are the Significant Learnings?

A review of the incident investigations has identified some common factors that contributed to the failings in the PTW process:

OVERVIEW	DESCRIPTION	WHO IS THIS RELEVANT TO?
<i>Work Area Inspections</i>	The PTW process requires that personnel involved in requesting and issuing permits must verify site conditions including the nature and scope of works, location, plant and equipment and potential interfaces. Adequate controls to mitigate the risk cannot not be determined unless all hazards are identified and known.	Permit Requestor and Permit Issuer
<i>Drawings, Plans and Specifications</i>	Accurate and current drawings and plans must be issued with the PTW and communicated to the Permit Acceptor and workers. Where appropriate this should include clear specifications for the works such as trench design (including access and egress).	Permit Requester and Permit Issuer
<i>Workers understanding of the Permit requirements</i>	PTW Training must be focused on ensuring workers understand the controls relevant to each permit. This must be reinforced and confirmed by supervisors when issue the task.	Supervisors
<i>Critical Controls</i>	Critical Controls for the activity must be identified in the planning process, clearly defined and communicated to workers before the task commences. When Critical Controls cannot be implemented, work is to be stopped and any risks are to be reassessed and managed. If the change relates to permit conditions, the Permit Issuer must be notified and be involved in the re-assessment of works.	Permit Requestor, Permit Issuer, Authorised Isolator, Permit Acceptor, Supervisors and Workers

Who needs to know?

The learnings identified are considered relevant to the following groups or personnel:

- Permit Requestor, Permit Issuer, Authorised Isolator, Permit Acceptor, Supervisors and Workers.

Key Phrases

- Permit to Work.

How can I find out more?

For more information, please contact:

Julie Ruttley

E: Julie.Ruttley@leicon.com.au

P: (07) 3845 2844

Document Information:

Date Prepared:	31/03/2014		
Prepared By:	Julie Ruttley	Position: Governance and Compliance Superintendent, NR	Email: Julie.Ruttley@leicon.com.au
Approved By:	Allan White	Position: Regional SHE Manager, NR	Email: Allan.White2@leicon.com.au