

The Permit to Work System

The “Permit to Work” or Integrated Safe System of work., (ISSOW) refers to management systems that ensure work is done safely and efficiently. These are used offshore and involve procedures to request, review, authorise, document and de-conflict tasks to be carried out.

The permit to work system is a formal system stating exactly what work should be done, where, and when. A responsible, approved, person will assess the work and check safety at each stage.

The people doing the job sign the permit to show that they understand the risks and necessary precautions. The permit to work is a core element of integrated safe system of work (ISSOW) that, along with risk assessment and isolation planning, enable reduction of unsafe activities to as low as reasonably practicable (ALARP).

In practical terms, permits are drafted in advance of the construction activity for identifying the scope, hazards and mitigation actions. These are submitted to the permit controller at least one day before the activity is scheduled to start.

The permits are then reviewed by the platform management team with any additional controls and precautions added that are then approved and issued for use at the start of the next workshift. The permit must be visibly displayed at the worksite.

The following main types of permits are used by all operators:

- **Category 1 Hot Work:** Work involving an ignition source within an operational area
- **Category 2 Hot Work:** Work involving a potential source of ignition within an operational area

- **Breaking Containment:** Work involving the breaking of containment of systems or equipment containing produced-hydrocarbons or other high-pressure, high temperature or hazardous materials
- **Cold Work:** Any non-routine work within the operational area where it does not fall under Hot Work or Breaking Containment Permits.

It is important to note that the quantity of each type of permit that can be issued will depend on the current platform status, whether producing, shutdown, etc., and the physical locations of the activities with respect to one other.