



Australian Government

**Seafarers Safety, Rehabilitation
and Compensation Authority**

Guidance on Confined Spaces Training



25 August 2011
Approved by the Seacare Authority
Meeting 93—25 August 2011

DISCLAIMER: This publication is intended to provide only a summary and general guide on management of Seacare claims. It is not intended to be comprehensive and is not a substitute for reference to the Seafarers Act and independent professional advice. Please contact an appropriately qualified professional before relying on the contents of this publication. The Seacare Authority, Comcare and the Commonwealth and their officers, servants and agents expressly disclaim liability and responsibility with respect to, and accept no responsibility for, the consequences of anything done or omitted to be done in reliance, whether wholly or partly, upon this publication: including but not limited to the results of any action taken on the basis of information in this publication or the accuracy, reliability, currency, or completeness of any material contained in this publication.

Contents

1.	Definitions	4
2.	Confined Spaces Regulations	5
3.	Operator and employee duties	5
4.	The requirement for confined spaces training	6
5.	Best practice confined spaces training	7
6.	Further information	7

1. Definitions

AQTF	Means Australian Quality Training Framework. It is the national set of standards which assures nationally consistent, high-quality training and assessment services for the clients of Australia's vocational education and training system.
Australian Standard	Means Australian Standard AS 2865-2009, Confined Spaces.
Competent person	Means a person who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) has, by a combination of training, education and experience, acquired knowledge and skills to enable him or her to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) make an informed assessment of the likelihood of an airborne contaminant being present or subsequently arising in a confined space; or (ii) correctly perform a specific task associated with a confined space; and (b) meets any specific requirements imposed by a State or Territory law in relation to making the assessment or performing the specific task.
Permit to work	Means a document, issued by the operator of a prescribed ship or prescribed unit, that identifies a number of key issues including the location of the confined space, the work to be conducted in the confined space and the hazards in the confined space.
Prescribed ship	Means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a ship registered in Australia; or (b) a ship (other than a ship registered in Australia) engaged in the coasting trade; or (c) a ship (other than a ship registered in Australia or engaged in the coasting trade) of which majority of the crew are residents of Australia and which is operated by any of the following (whether or not in association with any other person, firm or company, being a person, firm or company of any description) namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) a person who is a resident of, or has his principal place of business in Australia; or (ii) a firm that has its principal place of business in Australia; or (iii) a company that is incorporated, or has its principal place of business, in Australia.
Prescribed unit	Means an off-shore industry mobile unit that is not self-propelled and is under tow.
Exposure standard	In relation to exposure to a substance, means an airborne concentration of the substance in a person's breathing zone identified in accordance with the Exposure Standards for Atmospheric Contaminants in the Occupational Environment [NOHSC:1003 (1995)].
Registered or accredited	Means a training course that is registered or accredited by a statutory body, government department, educational institution or other organisation.
Regulations	Means the <i>Occupational Health and Safety (Maritime Industry) (National Standards) Regulations 2003</i> .
Risk assessment	Means the process of evaluating the possibility and consequences of injury or illness arising from exposure to an identified hazard or identified hazards.
RTO	Means Registered Training Organisation. It is a vocational education organisation registered, in accordance with the AQTF Standards for Registered Training Organisations, to deliver nationally recognised training.
Stand-by role	Means a competent person who, if a risk assessment identifies a risk to health or safety arising from entry to or work in a confined space, is near the confined space when it is occupied for work.

2. Confined Spaces Regulations

In the Seacare scheme, occupational health and safety in confined spaces is regulated by the *Occupational Health and Safety (Maritime Industry) (National Standards) Regulations 2003* (the Regulations).

On 20 April 2010, the Regulations were amended to insert Part 4 which introduced confined spaces provisions. These provisions implement the Australian Standard relating to confined spaces with adaptations relevant to conditions in the maritime industry.

3. Operator and employee duties

The Regulations place a variety of duties on operators of prescribed ships or units and on their employees in order to protect the occupational health and safety of those who are required to enter or work in confined spaces in the maritime industry.

Under the Regulations, entry points to a confined space must be secured against unauthorised entry and an operator must design work practices to minimise the need to enter confined spaces.

Before any work is undertaken in a confined space the operator of a prescribed ship or units must ensure that a competent person identifies hazards associated with entry to, exit from or work in the confined space. The operator must also ensure that the atmosphere in and near the confined space is tested by a competent person.

The Regulations prescribe that an employee must not enter or work in a confined space unless they are identified to do so on a valid permit to work issued by an operator.

A permit to work in a confined space cannot be issued by an operator until a competent person has:

- undertaken a risk assessment for the work in the confined space; and
- prepared a written report of the risk assessment.

4. The requirement for confined spaces training

The Regulations require an operator to provide both general and specific training to persons working on a prescribed ship.

General training

An operator of a prescribed ship must provide general training to all persons who are required to work in or on a prescribed ship. General training must cover:

- the nature of confined spaces;
- hazard identification and risk assessment procedures for confined spaces;
- the requirements of a permit to work;
- the stand-by role.

Specific training

An operator must provide specific training to persons who might enter or work in a confined space or are responsible for direct control of work in the confined space. Specific training must cover:

- safety equipment;
- risk control measures;
- emergency response procedures

An operator must also ensure that each person who performs any of the following roles in relation to a confined space receives specific training in the performance of that role:

- hazard identification;
- risk assessment;
- atmospheric testing and monitoring;
- the stand-by role.

5. Best practice confined spaces training

By virtue of the provisions in 4.28(4) of the Regulations, an operator can either provide confined spaces training that is registered or accredited or an operator can provide confined spaces training that is not registered or accredited.

The Seacare Authority recommends that all confined spaces training courses be registered or accredited. That is, all general and specific confined spaces training should be conducted by an RTO or an organisation otherwise registered in accordance with the AQTF. This will ensure that all confined spaces training in the Seacare jurisdiction is nationally consistent and of a high standard.

In the event that an operator provides confined spaced training that is not registered or accredited by a statutory body, government department, educational institution or other organisation, such training must provide employees with the knowledge and competency to comply with their legislative responsibilities and to manage confined spaces on board a prescribed ship.

Where confined spaces training is not provided by an RTO, an operator must ensure that the following components are incorporated in the course to effectively train employees:

- It satisfactorily addresses the core training elements and performance criteria established in the Australian Standard;
- It is conducted by a trainer with a sound knowledge of the legislative requirements and relevant experience and skills in confined spaces;
- It is of an adequate duration to effectively address the key competencies identified in the Australian Standard;
- It addresses any workplace specific needs identified in a risk assessment of the prescribed ship or unit;
- It include practical components, particularly in relation to safety and emergency procedures; and
- It ensures participants are competent at managing confined spaces.

6. Further information

Further information relation to the Regulations and confined spaces in the Maritime Industry is available from:

The Seacare Authority

GPO Box 9905

CANBERRA ACT 2601

Telephone: (02) 6275 0070

Email: seacare@comcare.gov.au

Website: www.seacare.gov.au

Australian Maritime Safety Authority

Telephone: 1800 641 792

Website: www.amsa.gov.au

