FREE 13-PAGE EMPLOYER ACTION PACK

RISK ASSESSMENT & HIRA

Fillable forms | Hazard register | Control verification | Rescue readiness

CONFINED SPACE
RISK ASSESSMENT
SOUTH AFRICA

A professional, reusable workbook for employers, supervisors, contractors and H&S teams preparing task-specific confined-space risk assessments.

IMPORTANT: THIS PACK IS A BLANK PLANNING AID. It does NOT authorise entry, replace a competent-person atmospheric evaluation or replace the written certification required by General Safety Regulation 5(1).

INSIDE THE PACK

- Job and space scoping
- 12-hazard HIRA inventory
- Risk-rating and residual-risk worksheet
- Control and isolation verification
- Atmospheric and rescue readiness
- Hold/stop-work decisions and action register

READ THE SSA CONFINED-SPACE HIRA GUIDE

INSTRUCTIONS

How to use this employer pack

Controlled record: print a blank master or fill using a compatible PDF reader

01 SCOPE

Identify the space, task, interfaces and potentially exposed people.

02 IDENTIFY

Screen each hazard. Include abnormal conditions and changes caused by the work.

03 ASSESS

Use the employer-approved risk matrix; note why ratings were selected.

04 CONTROL

Choose elimination and engineering options before relying on administrative or PPE measures.

05 VERIFY

Record evidence of isolation, atmosphere assessment and rescue readiness.

06 DECIDE

Mark HOLD/NO ENTRY whenever mandatory evidence or controls are missing.

07 REVIEW

Reassess changing work, personnel, materials, plant or conditions.

Legal safeguard: A risk score, signed HIRA or entry permit is not the competent-person written atmospheric certificate contemplated in Regulation 5(1). Where other provisions apply, seek appropriate competent advice.

GENERAL SAFETY REGULATIONS — REGULATION 5

WORKSHEET 01

Site, space and job definition

Assign one record to one defined space and work scope

Company / site

Site contact

Space / asset ID

Location / plant

Proposed task

Work date / window

Assessor / role

Employer / contractor

Assessment reference

Potentially exposed people

- [ ] Entrants
- [ ] Standby / attendant
- [ ] Contractors
- [ ] Nearby workers
- [ ] Potential rescuers

Stop and define the task: cleaning, inspection, coating, hot work and repairs can create very different hazard profiles inside the same asset.

WORKSHEET 02

Twelve-hazard assessment register

Mark hazards for further task-specific evaluation

01 Oxygen deficiency / displacement	☐ Yes	☐ No
02 Toxic gas / vapour / fumes	☐ Yes	☐ No
03 Flammable gas / dust / mist	☐ Yes	☐ No
04 Work-generated contaminants	☐ Yes	☐ No
05 Liquid or loose-material engulfment	☐ Yes	☐ No
06 Electrical sources	☐ Yes	☐ No
07 Mechanical movement	☐ Yes	☐ No
08 Stored energy / pressure	☐ Yes	☐ No
09 Heat / cold / surfaces	☐ Yes	☐ No
10 Restricted access / falls	☐ Yes	☐ No
11 Communication / monitoring loss	☐ Yes	☐ No
12 Rescue and recovery limits	☐ Yes	☐ No

“No” must follow a credible evaluation, not an assumption. Use the HIRA register on the following pages to record consequences, controls, owners and evidence.

METHOD 03

Risk matrix and decision rules

Use your organisation's approved scoring method — values below are illustrative

Illustrative 5 x 5 screening: assign likelihood 1 (rare) to 5 (almost certain), and severity 1 (minor) to 5 (catastrophic). Score = likelihood x severity. Organisations must define their own thresholds, escalation and acceptance rules.

Severity	Example impact	Likelihood	Example occurrence
1	Minor first-aid outcome	1	Rare
2	Medical treatment	2	Unlikely
3	Serious injury	3	Possible
4	Permanent harm	4	Likely
5	Fatality / multiple harm	5	Almost certain

WORKSHEET RISK SCORING

Initial severity (1–5)

Initial likelihood (1–5)

Initial score

Residual severity (1–5)

Residual likelihood (1–5)

Residual score

A low numerical score NEVER overrides missing legal certification, unacceptable atmosphere, defective isolation or an unavailable rescue arrangement. Mark HOLD / NO ENTRY when critical controls fail.

WORKSHEET 04

Task-specific HIRA register

Use additional copies of this page as necessary

HAZARD / TASK STEP 01

Hazard and foreseeable event

Potential consequence

Initial S x L score

Controls / verification evidence

Residual score

HAZARD / TASK STEP 02

Hazard and foreseeable event

Potential consequence

Initial S x L score

Controls / verification evidence

Residual score

HAZARD / TASK STEP 03

Hazard and foreseeable event

Potential consequence

Initial S x L score

Controls / verification evidence

Residual score

HAZARD / TASK STEP 04

Hazard and foreseeable event

Potential consequence

Initial S x L score

Controls / verification evidence

Residual score

WORKSHEET 05

Control selection and verification

Evidence beats tick boxes — record who verified and when

- [ ] Entry avoided / remote method considered

Evidence / reference

- [ ] Task and area isolated from operations
- [ ] Electrical and mechanical energy controlled

Evidence / reference

- [ ] Unexpected inflow / engulfment managed
- [ ] Ventilation chosen and verified as relevant

Evidence / reference

- [ ] Qualified atmospheric evaluation arranged
- [ ] Required written certificate identified

Evidence / reference

- [ ] Continuous / repeat monitoring defined
- [ ] Communication and standby arrangements verified

Evidence / reference

- [ ] PPE and breathing protection assessed appropriately
- [ ] Rescue method, team and equipment verified

Evidence / reference

- [ ] New-task and stop-work triggers communicated

Control verification owner

Date / time

WORKSHEET 06

Atmospheric assessment evidence log

Do not use readings as a substitute for written competent certification

Competent assessor

Assessment / certificate ID

Detector / sensor ID

Calibration / function evidence

Test locations / depth

Known substances and test scope

Results record reference

Readings date / time

Work duration covered

Reassessment / stop triggers

Regulation 5(1): atmosphere evaluation must be done by a competent person who certifies in writing that the space is safe for the nature and duration of the work. Assess every relevant gas/vapour/dust/fume, not only channels on a generic meter.

WORKSHEET 07

Isolation and hazardous-energy register

Document exact plant identifiers and independent verification

ISOLATION POINT 01

Asset / line / energy source

Control / lock / blank reference

Applied by

Verified by

Verification time

ISOLATION POINT 02

Asset / line / energy source

Control / lock / blank reference

Applied by

Verified by

Verification time

ISOLATION POINT 03

Asset / line / energy source

Control / lock / blank reference

Applied by

Verified by

Verification time

ISOLATION POINT 04

Asset / line / energy source

Control / lock / blank reference

Applied by

Verified by

Verification time

WORKSHEET 08

Rescue readiness and communications

Rescue must be credible for this specific space and work

- [ ] Space-specific rescue method established
- [ ] Rescue access and lifting geometry checked
- [ ] Rescue equipment inspection completed
- [ ] Rescuers trained for planned method
- [ ] Standby attendance and communications verified
- [ ] Emergency response contacts tested
- [ ] Atmospheric alarms and evacuation triggers understood
- [ ] Non-entry retrieval feasibility assessed
- [ ] First-aid/resuscitation provision assessed
- [ ] Entry-personnel accountability system ready

Rescue arrangement / plan ID

Rescue leader / contact

Communication check / time

Response readiness verified by

WORKSHEET 09

Go / Hold / No-entry decision

A completed HIRA is NOT itself an authorisation to enter

- [ ] Space and work scope matched to assessment
- [ ] Competent evaluation / written certificate checked
- [ ] Required isolations verified
- [ ] Atmosphere monitoring conditions established
- [ ] Standby and communication arrangements verified
- [ ] Emergency rescue requirements in place
- [ ] Changes and stop-work triggers explained

SCREENING DECISION (NOT ENTRY AUTHORISATION)

- [ ] HOLD / NO ENTRY
- [ ] REFER FOR COMPETENT REVIEW

HIRA reviewer / role

Review date / time

Do not tick “safe to enter” on this HIRA. Only the complete applicable legal requirements and the site entry-authorisation procedure can support actual entry.

WORKSHEET 10

Corrective-action and reassessment tracker

Assign owners and verify close-out before considering a hold resolved

ACTION 01

Required correction / evidence

Owner

Due date

Verified by

Closure date

ACTION 02

Required correction / evidence

Owner

Due date

Verified by

Closure date

ACTION 03

Required correction / evidence

Owner

Due date

Verified by

Closure date

ACTION 04

Required correction / evidence

Owner

Due date

Verified by

Closure date

ACTION 05

Required correction / evidence

Owner

Due date

Verified by

Closure date

REFERENCES AND NEXT ACTIONS

Authoritative sources & employer resources

Tap links in this PDF to open source documents and SSA training enquiries

South African Government — Occupational Health and Safety Act

General Safety Regulations — Regulation 5 (consolidated text)

HSE (UK) — Confined Spaces technical guidance (non-SA law)

READ MORE — SSA GUIDES

Confined Space Risk Assessment: HIRA Employer Guide

Confined Space Hazards South Africa

Confined Space Entry Permit South Africa

TRAINING & EMPLOYER ENQUIRIES

Help me choose a confined-space programme

Request on-site team training quote

Enquire about confined-space training

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