2.30.15 – WHS Permit to Work Procedure

What you need to know – key take outs

IRT maintains a formal system that controls both employees and contractors performing potentially dangerous work.

Always read this procedure in conjunction with the related policy identified below.

Related Policy	2.30 – WHS Policy
Scope	This procedure covers all IRT employees and contractors / associated providers performing potentially dangerous work where IRT has management and control of the workplace.
Related documents	• 2.30.01 – WHS Electrical Safety Procedure • 2.30.04 – Lock Out Tag Out (LOTO) Procedure • 2.30.05 – WHS Contractor Management Procedure • 2.30.08 – WHS Chemical Management Procedure • 2.30.17 – WHS Working at Heights Procedure • 2.30.19 – WHS Confined Spaces Procedure • 2.30.504 – WHS Contractor Compliance Breach Report • 2.30.509 – Form – WHS Risk Assessment Form – General • 2.30.515 – Form – WHS Permit to Work – Hot Work Permit • 2.30.516 – Form – WHS Permit to Work – Cold Work Permit • 2.30.517 – Form – WHS Permit to Work – Confined Spaces Permit • 2.30.520 – Form – WHS Permit to Work – Working at Heights / Roof Access Permit • 2.30.521 – Form – WHS Permit to Work – Excavation Permit and Surface Penetration Permit • 2.30.522 – Form – WHS Permit to Work – Electrical Work Permit • 2.30.523 – Form – WHS Permit to Work – Fire Isolation Permit • 2.30.524 – Form – WHS Permit to Work – Asbestos Work Area Permit • 2.30.545 – Form – WHS Permit to Work – Isolation Permit • 2.59 – Workplace Conduct Investigation Policy • 2.12 – Disciplinary Action Policy • 4.06 – Fire and Other Emergencies Policy • 5.04.03 – Risk Management Procedure

Compliance requirements	• Work Health & Safety Act 2011 – ACT, NSW & QLD • Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 – VIC • Work Health & Safety Act 2020 – WA • Work Health & Safety Regulation 2011 – ACT & QLD • Work Health & Safety Regulation 2025 – NSW • Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 – VIC • Work Health & Safety (General) Regulations 2022 – WA • Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standard 2 – The Organisation
Diversity Statement	IRT is committed to respecting, valuing and celebrating diversity in all its forms in our customer, older people and workforce population and catering for diverse needs through respectful, inclusive and equitable practices.
Procedure owner	Group Head – Work Health and Safety
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1 Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards and relevant legislation

This procedure has been written to align with the Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards and other relevant legislation and regulations. The following table explains the link between this procedure and the relevant external requirements.

Standard / legislation	What this means
Work Health & Safety Act 2011 (ACT, NSW & QLD) Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (VIC) Work Health & Safety Act 2020 (WA)	Provides the legislative framework setting out the requirements for employers to provide a safe workplace for workers and other persons.
Work Health & Safety Regulation 2011(ACT) Work Health & Safety Regulation 2025 (NSW) Work Health & Safety Regulation 2011 (QLD) Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (VIC) Work Health & Safety (General) Regulations 2022 (WA)	Sets out specific requirements for specific hazards and risks.
Strengthened Aged Care Standard 2 The organisation	Outcome 2.4 Risk management IRT must use a risk management system to identify, manage and continuously review risks to individuals, employees and other operations.

2 Procedure scope

The purpose of this procedure is to provide IRT a formal system to control both employees and contractors performing High Risk work.

IRT's permit to work system provides a systematic disciplined approach to assessing the risks of a job or task and specifying the precautions to be taken when performing High Risk work.

The permit to work system:

- Specifies the work to be done and the equipment to be used
- Specifies the precautions to be taken when performing the task

- Authorises permission for work to commence
- Advises occupants of IRT's premises that authorised work is being performed
- Provides a check to ensure that all safety considerations have been taken into account, including the validity of permits and certificates and compliance to IRT's policies and procedures
- Provides a checking mechanism that all work has been completed to IRT's satisfaction
- Ensures the safety of suitably qualified contractors performing work at an IRT site

Note: Where the term Contractor is used in this procedure it also includes those who are considered Associated Providers.

3 Procedure detail

3.1 Principal Contractors

IRT may engage a competent third party contractor to perform the role of Principal Contractor for a specified scope of works at an IRT workplace. Where a third party has been appointed Principal Contractor and the party has sufficient management and control of that workplace, IRT's permit to work system does not apply. It is important to note that IRT retains a level of responsibility with ensuring work health and safety regardless of whether a third party Principal Contractor has been contracted.

3.2 IRT's Contractor Management System – LinkSafe

IRT utilises LinkSafe, a contractor management system, to manage the pre-qualification, induction, site orientation, site management, issue of permits to work, and safety compliance for our external contractors.

3.3 Prior to commencing work

All IRT employees and contractors are to be inducted into IRT prior to commencing work. For contractors this involves the IRT General Induction, and Site-Specific Orientations within LinkSafe. Employees undertake induction when they commence employment with IRT and receive annual training on topics relevant to their role.

3.4 Work requiring a Permit to Work (PTW)

Work that is deemed high risk or is conducted in a hazardous area will require a PTW. IRT requires PTWs to be issued for the following tasks:

- Hot Work
- Cold Work
- Confined Spaces
- Working at Heights / Roof Access

- Excavation and Surface Penetration
- Electrical Work
- Fire Isolation
- Asbestos Work
- Isolation of Services

3.4.1 Hot Work Permit

Large fires within commercial business have resulted from inadequate hot works controls. As such IRT requires that a hot works permit should be used during use of equipment such as:

- Blow lamps
- Cutting and welding equipment
- Brazing and soldering equipment
- Bitumen boilers
- Temporary open flame heaters
- Any other equipment producing heat, flames, or sparks

It is preferable in all cases to conduct hot works either by a safe method not involving the application of heat, or take the work to a safe location, such as an open area or dedicated hot works area (i.e. maintenance workshop). When the hot works activity is completed, it is essential that a check is made after work is finished, to look for glowing embers, smoke, areas or residual heat etc.

A hot works permit will be needed whilst work is carried out within or on any part of IRT's premises except in dedicated hot work areas.

A hot works permit is only valid for 8 hours, or no more than one shift. If the work will take more than 8 hours or one shift, a separate permit is required for each period. An issued hot works permit must be prominently displayed at the work area.

In the event of disruption of IRT's LinkSafe system, IRT will use **2.30.515 – Form – WHS Permit to Work – Hot Work Permit.**

3.4.1.1 Fire Isolation and Fire Watch

A Fire Isolation Permit is required to be completed where the fire protection system is impaired / isolated.

During the process of hot work activities, the assigned fire watch and all other persons responsible for the safe operation of the hot works should ensure no condition arises, or action is taken, that would lead to a hazardous situation in the hot work area. Observation of safe practices and adjacent equipment checks are essential.

In the event of a fire, contact to the fire brigade on 000 or 0000 is required. All persons covered by this procedure are to adhere to IRT's **4.06 Fire and Other Emergencies Policy**.

3.4.1.2 Gas Monitoring

If there is any equipment which may produce flammable gas/vapours, including any gas piping, within the vicinity of the proposed hot works, and IRT deems this as an issue, monitoring of gasses is required prior to any hot works commencing. Works can only commence if the flammable gas/vapours are less than 5% Lower Explosive Limit (LEL) and IRT is satisfied the hot works may safely proceed.

If there is an expectation that the flammable gas/vapours from equipment are likely to increase above the 5% LEL during hot works, periodic checks for gasses/vapours are required. Works shall cease if the 5% LEL is met or exceeded.

If gas monitoring is required, the person undertaking the testing of gasses is considered the testing officer. The testing officer may be the person assigned to fire watch if they are suitably qualified in the usage of gas testing. Gas testing devices shall comply with the relevant Australian Standards. Testing shall take place as late as possible before the hot works is commenced (but not more than 2 hours before the works).

3.4.2 Cold Work Permit

Cold Work Permits are issued for hazardous maintenance work that does not involve the ignition hazards found in hot works. Cold work situations are determined by a risk assessment for the task and the work involved. Some examples of standard work that may require a cold work permit (and is not covered under permit) includes but is not limited to:

- Movement of heavy equipment within a location
- Work involving toxic substances
- Work involving radiation sources
- Work involving gas that is not covered within Hot Works and Confined Spaces
- Sandblasting
- Hydroblasting

In the event of a disruption of the LinkSafe system, IRT will use **2.30.516 – WHS Permit to Work – Cold Work Permit**.

3.4.3 Confined Spaces Permit

Confined spaces pose dangers because they are usually not designed to be areas where people work. Confined spaces often have poor ventilation which allows hazardous atmospheres to quickly develop, especially if the space is small.

Any work that requires entry into a confined space must be undertaken in accordance with IRT's **2.30.19 – WHS Confined Spaces Procedure** which includes the requirement of issuing of a Confined Spaces Permit from within IRT's LinkSafe system. In the event of a disruption of

the LinkSafe system, IRT will use **2.30.517 – Form – WHS Permit to Work – Confined Spaces Permit**.

3.4.4 Working at Heights / Roof Access Permit

Working at Heights and work requiring roof access can create hazards for both those working at height and others who may be below in the vicinity of where that work is being undertaken. Examples of work undertaken may involve general repairs and maintenance, fault-finding, and cleaning activities.

Any work that requires either working at heights or roof access must be undertaken in accordance with IRT's **2.30.17 – WHS Working at Heights Procedure** which includes the requirement of issuing of a Working at Heights / Roof Access Permit from within IRT's LinkSafe system. In the event of a disruption of the LinkSafe system, IRT will use **2.30.520 – WHS Permit to Work – Working at Heights / Roof Access Permit**.

3.4.5 Excavation and Surface Penetration Permit

Any work that involves the creation of holes, pits, or trenches in the ground require a permit to work prior to work commencing. This type of work may place people at risk through collapse, falling or contact with existing services. Excavation and Surface Penetration Permits must be issued via IRT's LinkSafe System for the following tasks:

- Mass excavation,
- Trenching,
- Demolition,
- Erection of any structure (temporary or permanent) which requires support from the group,
- Use of medical compaction equipment,
- Directional boring,
- Concreate cutting and drilling (including concrete slab cutting, concrete wall cutting, concrete pipe cutting, core drilling, chasing, and asphalt cutting)

In the event of a disruption of the LinkSafe system, IRT will use 2**.30.521 – WHS Permit to Work – Excavation and Surface Penetration Permit**.

3.4.6 Electrical Work Permit

IRT will take all reasonable steps to ensure that electrical work that is required to be undertaken by a licensed or registered electrical contractor is undertaken by a person that meets the relevant licensing or registration requirements. Refer to IRT's **2.30.01 – WHS – Electrical Safety Procedure** for guidelines. Electrical Work Permits must be issued for the following tasks:

- Electrical installations

- Access to electrical switchboards
- De-energised electrical work
- Low voltage isolation and access
- Energised electrical work

In the event of disruption of IRT's LinkSafe system, IRT will use **2.30.522 – Form – WHS Permit to Work – Electrical Work Permit.**

3.4.7 Fire Isolation Permit

It is preferable that all attempts are made to avoid the isolation and impairment of fire protection systems. Fire protection systems may only be isolated if an alternative means of conducting required works is not achievable. Isolation of IRT's fire protection system may occur in the following scenarios:

- During building works
- While repairs / works are being carried out on the fire protection system
- To prevent spurious alarms (this isolation period should be no more than 48hrs)

When there are to be fire protection system impairments, a Fire Isolation Permit is required to be issued from IRT's LinkSafe system where the fire protection system is impaired / isolated.

A copy of any completed Fire Isolation Permit is to be sent from the issuer to IRT's Insurance Team at insurance@irt.org.au. The Insurance Team will ensure that the insurer is notified of any impairments, whether planned or unplanned.

On completion of the works, the Contractor must ensure that all fire systems are restored to a fully-operational status.

In the event of disruption of IRT's LinkSafe system, IRT will use **2.30.523 – Form – WHS Permit to Work – Fire Isolation Permit**.

3.4.8 Asbestos Work Area Permit

Asbestos is a known carcinogen. Asbestos can pose a health risk when fibres of a respirable size become airborne, are inhaled in sufficient concentration and reach deep into the lungs in sufficient quantities.

IRT recognises that there may be known and unknown asbestos containing materials in its premises and maintains registers that identify the exact location of known asbestos related material.

Any work that has the potential to disturb asbestos containing materials must be undertaken in accordance with IRT's **2.30.08 – WHS Chemical Management Procedure** in addition to the requirement of issuing an Asbestos Work Area Permit from within IRT's LinkSafe system. In the event of a disruption of the LinkSafe system, IRT will use **2.30.524 – WHS Permit to Work – Asbestos Work Area Permit.**

3.4.9 Isolation Permit

Any work that involves isolating plant or equipment from its energy sources requires a permit to work prior to work commencing. Contractors are to follow the requirements set out in **2.30.04 – WHS – Lock Out, Tag Out (LOTO) Procedure.** This type of work may place people at risk through unexpected re-energisation, release of stored energy, or uncontrolled movement of plant. Isolation Permits must be issued via IRT's LinkSafe System for the following tasks:

- Maintenance, repair, or alteration of plant or equipment
- Installation or commissioning of plant or equipment
- Cleaning of plant or equipment where access to dangerous parts is required
- Any work where guards or covers are removed from plant or equipment
- Any work involving electrical isolation, including de-energising circuits at a switchboard

In the event of a disruption of the LinkSafe system, IRT will use **2.30.545 – WHS Permit to Work – Isolation Permit**.

3.5 Safe Work Method Statements (SWMS)

Any task that is identified within this procedure must have a Safe Work Method Statement attached to the permit. A Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) is a document that sets out the high-risk work activities to be carried out at IRT, the hazards arising from these activities, and the measures to be put in place to control the risks. It is the responsibility of the contractor who is engaged by IRT to provide a completed SWMS for IRT to review prior to the authorisation of a permit to work.

3.6 Authorisation of Permits to Work (PTW)

Permits shall only be issued by authorised persons within IRT, which includes the following roles:

Facilities Management:

- Head of Facilities Management
- Capital Works Project Manager
- Facilities Managers
- Facilities Coordinators

No person shall be both the Permit Authoriser and the Permit Recipient for a given piece of work.

The person authorising the issuing of the permit shall:

- Be familiar with the work being undertaken that is covered by the permit

- Check that the work does not conflict with other work being undertaken at the time and consult with the supervisor of adjacent work being conducted
- Review the work order requirements including permit requirements to ensure all required permits have been authorised
- Ensure the permit recipient(s) understand all requirements of the Permit to Work
- Authorise the permit, specifying when it expires

3.6.1 Central Production Kitchen Emergency Servicing and Repairs

In the event of a critical process within Central Production Kitchen (CPK) being impacted, that requires urgent servicing and/or repair, CPK management and its delegates have authority to issue permits if required.

3.7 Working under Permits to Work

Upon receipt of the PTW, the permit recipient must ensure that hard copy of the permits are displayed at the work area or available on hand on an electronic device like an electronic tablet.

Work may only proceed in the period identified in the PTW.

3.8 Returning Permits to Work

A job is not complete until all scrap, surplus material, and other work materials have been removed from the location. The permit recipient must then undertake the following (dependant on how the permit was issued):

- Sign off on the permit issued within the LinkSafe system, or
- Return the paper-based permit to work to the permit authoriser, if a physical permit was issued

IRT will arrange for a final inspection of the work site, and when satisfied, sign off of the PTW to this effect.

3.9 Validity of Permits to Work

PTW's are only valid for the period specified and only while conditions remain unchanged. If conditions change significantly, the start of work is delayed for more than 1 hour, or if work ceases for more than 1 hour, the PTW shall become invalid. In such cases, all tests and inspections must be required before work recommences.

When the PTW expires before the end of the work, the Permit Authoriser may extend it by altering the expiry time. If conditions have changed, or new precautions are required a new PTW shall be issued.

PTWs may be authorised for a maximum period of 12 hours, provided the work is continuous.

PTW's cannot be transferred to another Permit Recipient. In such cases, a new PTW must be generated.

All PTW's are invalidated in the event of an emergency announced by the emergency alarm. All work must cease immediately, and the work area be left in a safe condition. All PTW's must be rechecked and revalidated by the Permit Authoriser once the emergency is over and prior to recommencing work.

3.10 Withdrawal of Permits to Work

A breach of the PTW conditions shall be brought to the attention of the Permit Recipient by the person witnessing the breach. On receiving a verbal report of a breach, the Permit Recipient will immediately have work stopped until the situation can be discussed with the Permit Authoriser.

The Permit Authoriser will withdraw a PTW if there is failure to adhere to conditions set down in the permit.

3.11 Reporting Breaches of Permits to Work

The Permit Authoriser will report breaches to the PTW to IRT's Work Health and Safety Team via lodging an incident in the Incident Notification Register within Protecht, under the "Other" Type of Incident.

The Work Health and Safety Team will investigate the breach, and shall issue a non-compliance notification to the Permit Recipient.

3.12 Maintaining Records

The completed permit to work will be stored within IRT's LinkSafe System which will include any other associated documentation.

3.13 Breach of Procedure

IRT employees found to be completing work without a Permit to Work, or not in accordance with a completed Permit to Work where one is required may be subject to disciplinary action under IRT's **2.12 Disciplinary Action Policy**, and **2.59 Workplace Conduct Investigation**.

Any contractor found to be completing work without a Permit to Work, or not in accordance with a completed Permit to Work where one is required may be subject to action by IRT as set out in **2.30.05 – WHS Contractor Management Procedure**.

In practice example:

Mx Johnson, an external contracting company is required to undertake a task that involves generating heat. As the task is planned, the relevant Facilities Management Coordinator schedules the hot work permit and fire isolation permit within the LinkSafe system, identifying the date and time the permits require.

Mx Johnson receives the permits, and answers each of the questions identified in each of the permits, uploads their Safe Work Method Statement and any relevant supporting documents, and sends back to IRT.

The Facilities Management Coordinator reviews the information, ensuring that key risks are identified, and corrective actions are well documented and authorises the permits.

Mx Johnson attends the IRT facility at the date and time detailed in the permits, and undertakes the relevant works. When works have been completed, they undertake relevant post-work tasks such as reinstating the facilities fire safety system, and signs off the permits to work in the LinkSafe System.

Facilities Maintenance Coordinator undertakes a review of the work conducted, and ensures the contractor has undertaken all required works, and any post-work actions are completed, in the case of the fire isolation permit, this is the reinstating of the facilities fire system. The permit is then closed, and a copy is sent to the IRT Insurance Team.

4 Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Permit Authoriser Facilities Management Central Production Kitchen	• Be competent in the implement of the requirements of this procedure. This may be attained by reading and familiarising themselves with the requirements of the process and referenced documents • Be qualified as appropriate to issue permits • Ensure that the permit recipient has the correct qualifications and experience to undertake the works • Ensure that the permit to work form has been suitably completed by the permit recipient • Authorise approval to work to be undertaken once satisfied that the permit recipient can complete the task safely by ensuring all hazards associated with the proposed job has been identified, assessed, and controlled • Monitor the work undertaken by the permit recipient, ensure duration times are adhered to, and ensure risk assessments have been completed

Role	Responsibility
	• Sign off on the completion of work section of the permit after verifying that the work site has been left in a safe condition • Maintain records of work permits including associated documentation such as safe work method statements in the LinkSafe system • Ensure that the appropriate persons are notified of any changes to services, or additional services identified as the result of the works completed
Permit Recipient *i.e. external contractors, IRT employees undertaking high risk work*	• Ensure the details of the task that are documented in the permit are accurate and true • Undertake the task that has been approved by the permit safely and in accordance with the permit specifications • Provide the permit authoriser with a copy of any associated documentation including but not limited to qualifications, licenses, and safe work method statements • Seek immediate advice if circumstances or conditions change while undertaking work • Ensure the permit authoriser is notified of any changes to services, or additional services identified as a result of the works completed
IRT's Work Health and Safety Team	• Provide technical guidance on the application of the permit to work system • Evaluate and update the permit to work process at the review period or as procedures change • Provide expertise and regulatory guidance to responsible persons • Provide appropriate training to IRT representatives that will enable effective frontline application of this procedure
Insurance Team	• Notify the insurers of any fire system isolation events, whether planned or unplanned.

5 Definitions

In this procedure, words have the following meaning:

Term	Definition
Cold Work	Hazardous maintenance work that does not involve the ignition hazards found in hot works. Cold work situations are determined by a risk assessment for the task and the working environment.

Confined Space	A confined space is defined as an enclosed or partially enclosed space that:
	• Is not designed or intended primarily to be occupied by a person, and
	• Is, or is designed or intended to be, at normal atmospheric pressure while any person is in the space, and
	• Is or is likely to be a risk to health and safety from:
	  ○ An atmosphere that does not have a safe oxygen level, or
	  ○ Contaminants, including airborne gases, vapours and dusts, that may cause injury from fire or explosion, or
	  ○ Harmful concentrations of any airborne contaminants, or
	Engulfment

Contractor	An organisation or person contracted to provide works, goods or services to IRT, including those deemed as Associated Providers.
Electrical Work	Any work that involves electricity including (but not limited to) work that requires isolation of electrical services or installation of new services.
Excavation	Work that involves the creation of holes, pits, or trenches in the ground and which may place people at risk through collapse, falling or contact with existing services.
Gas Work	Work on consumer piping, fittings, components, flues, appliances, sub-meters, apparatus and other devices and associated requirements.
High Risk Work	High risk work includes: • work that involves a risk of a person falling more than two metres • work on a telecommunication tower • demolition of an element of a structure that is load-bearing or otherwise related to the physical integrity of the structure

Term	Definition
	• work that involves, or is likely to involve, the disturbance of asbestos • structural alterations or repairs that require temporary support to prevent collapse • work in or near a confined space • work in or near a shaft or trench with an excavated depth greater than 1.5 metres • work in or near a tunnel • use of explosives • work on or near pressurised gas distribution mains or piping • work on or near chemical, fuel or refrigerant lines • work on or near energised electrical installations or services • work in an area that may have a contaminated or flammable atmosphere • work involving tilt-up or precast concrete • work on, in or adjacent to a road, railway, shipping lane or other traffic corridor that is in use by traffic other than pedestrians • work in areas in which there is movement of powered mobile plant • work in areas in which there are artificial extremes of temperature • work in or near water or other liquid that involves a risk of drowning • work that involves diving work
Hot Work	Work involving electric or gas welding, thermal or oxygen cutting, heating and other fire producing or spark producing operations.
LEL	Lower Explosive Limit The minimum concentration (percentage) of a flammable gas that will propagate a flame in the presence of an ignition source. The more explosive the gas, the lower the LEL. A mixture below this level is considered too "lean" to burn. LEL is usually expressed as a percentage (from zero to 100% explosive).
Nominated Person	Are skilled, qualified, trained and competent to perform the work, including the use of any personnel protective equipment or rescue.

Term	Definition
Permit to Work	A risk assessment based approval to work issued by IRT.
Responsible Person	Ensure the job is performed safely by identifying hazards and have the correct controls in place. Ensure the nominated person is competent.
SWP	A Safe Work Procedure provides instruction on how to do a specific job safely.
SWMS	A Safe Work Method Statement provides instruction on how to do a specific job safely.
Working at Heights	Work conducted which is more than 2 metres from the ground.