



Guide to isolation and tag out HIF audit 2008

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Introduction

The scope of this audit tool is confined to the general use and application of personal 'DANGER' tags and 'OUT OF SERVICE' tags.

Isolation of plant to facilitate activities such as maintenance, installation, inspection, testing or cleaning is a normal everyday event carried out by mining industry employees. Isolation will necessarily involve the de-activation of all relevant energy sources, and is also likely to require the implementation of other safeguards. Having correctly identified and operated the appropriate isolating devices, and where a person may be injured if the devices do not remain in the safe position, it is paramount that a personal 'DANGER' accident prevention tag be attached to each isolating device.

Similarly, equipment 'OUT OF SERVICE' accident prevention tags are a recognised means of preventing the use of plant that is unsafe or which may be damaged if operated.

Use of accident prevention tags in this manner is an essential practice, and commonly forms an integral part of other more specific safe systems of work.

Reference is made to other systems of work including those which may involve permit systems and common tagging points. Caution should be exercised to ensure that where electrical and other hazards are present only appropriately trained and authorised persons carry out that work, including test work.

Further guidance material is provided at:

http://www.docep.wa.gov.au/resourcessafety/PDF/Guidelines/MS_GMP_Guide_tagout.pdf

1. Written procedures

Point	Standard	Guideline
1.1	There is a written isolation and tag out procedure that describes all aspects of the system of work in use.	<p>Intent: To confirm that a documented and standardised system of work is provided to minimise the risk of injury or harm. The procedures should define the responsibilities of all persons involved.</p> <p>Personnel: Manager.</p> <p>Method: View the written procedure and verify it is in accordance with MSIR 6.21(c).</p>
1.2	The procedure is authorised by the Registered Manager or delegated person.	<p>Intent: To ensure the Registered Manager has appropriately authorised the Isolation and Tag Out procedure.</p> <p>Personnel: Manager, Permit Officer (if applicable).</p> <p>Method: View procedure to ensure that the employer has authorised the procedure as the system of work to be adhered to at the site. (e.g. signature on the procedure or similar).</p>
1.3	The documented procedure is dated with the date of issue.	<p>Intent: To ensure the system of work is current.</p> <p>Personnel: Manager, Permit Officer (if applicable).</p> <p>Method: View the issue date on the procedure.</p>
1.4	The procedure states a date by which it must be reviewed.	<p>Intent: To ensure the employer's commitment to periodically review the system of work.</p> <p>Personnel: Manager, Permit Officer (if applicable).</p> <p>Method: View the review date on the procedure and review prompt mechanism.</p>
1.5	The documented procedure is consistent with and incorporates the key elements of the actual system of work being practised.	<p>Intent: To ensure that the details 'written' in the procedure reflect and are consistent with what is 'practised' at the site.</p> <p>Personnel: Mine employees and contractors.</p> <p>Method: Compare procedures with observed work practices. Interview employees as to usual practice.</p>

Point	Standard	Guideline
1.6	The procedure is readily accessible by all persons involved in the work undertaken.	<p>Intent: To verify that information describing the system of work is available to employees for reference.</p> <p>Personnel: Employees and contractors.</p> <p>Method: Employees must confirm possession of a copy of the procedure, or advise where a copy may conveniently be viewed in accordance with MSIA s 9(1)(b).</p>
1.7	The procedure has been developed in conjunction with employees.	<p>Intent: To verify the employer consults and cooperates with employees and Safety & Health Reps in regard to the system of work.</p> <p>Personnel: Employees and Safety & Health Reps.</p> <p>Method: Assess the level of acceptance and consultation, in discussion with employees as is required by MSIA s 9(1)(c).</p>

2. Review of written procedures

Point	Standard	Guideline
2.1	The procedure has provisions for amendments to reflect omissions, corrections or improvements identified prior to the review date.	<p>Intent: To ensure that there is provision for important amendments to be included in the procedure immediately.</p> <p>Personnel: N/A.</p> <p>Method: View the procedure.</p>
2.2	The procedure is amended to reflect omissions, corrections or improvements identified prior to the review date.	<p>Intent: To ensure that important amendments are included in the procedure immediately.</p> <p>Personnel: N/A.</p> <p>Method: View any amendment dates in the procedure.</p>
2.3	Amendments to the procedure are readily identifiable.	<p>Intent: To ensure that changes to and successive revisions of the procedure can be readily recognised.</p> <p>Personnel: N/A.</p> <p>Method: View the procedure and any amendments thereto.</p>
2.4	Amendments to the procedure are authorised by the Registered Manager or other authorised person.	<p>Intent: To make sure that any amendments are duly authorised in an effort to ensure due consideration has been given to the current version.</p> <p>Personnel: N/A.</p> <p>Method: View any amendments to the procedure to ensure that they are accompanied by suitable notation.</p>
2.5	The review date stated on the procedure has not expired.	<p>Intent: To ensure that review of the system of work is not overdue.</p> <p>Personnel: N/A.</p> <p>Method: View the review date on the procedure.</p>

3. Training in procedures

Point	Standard	Guideline
3.1	Employees are given instruction and trained in the system of work.	<p>Intent: To ensure employees are not at risk of injury or harm from their own or others people's actions.</p> <p>Personnel: Management, employees.</p> <p>Method: View training records to verify compliance with MSIR 4.13(1)(a).</p>
3.2	Employees are assessed before commencing work to ensure that the employee is competent in the system of work.	<p>Intent: To ensure employees are suitably proficient in their understanding of the system of work so as to not place themselves or others at risk of injury or harm.</p> <p>Personnel: Management, employees.</p> <p>Method: View training records for assessment method to verify compliance with MSIR 4.13(1)(b).</p>
3.3	Employees are retrained and reassessed whenever the system of work is changed.	<p>Intent: To ensure that employees undertaking work subject to the isolation and tagout system are not at risk of injury or harm as a result of changed or non uniform procedures.</p> <p>Personnel: Management, employees.</p> <p>Method: View training records to verify compliance with MSIR 4.13(1)(c).</p>
3.4	A record is made of the instruction, training, retraining, assessment or reassessment given to employees.	<p>Intent: To ensure adequate resources are allocated to the management and updating of the isolation and tagout programme.</p> <p>Personnel: Management.</p> <p>Method: View training records to verify compliance with MSIR 4.13(2)(a).</p>
3.5	Records of instruction, training, retraining, assessment or reassessment are kept for a minimum of two years.	<p>Intent: To verify training measures are documented and are able to be reviewed periodically.</p> <p>Personnel: Management.</p> <p>Method: View training records to verify compliance with MSIR 4.13(2)(b).</p>
3.6	Employees are adequately supervised and work practices are periodically audited.	<p>Intent: To ensure employees follow set down systems of work in an effort to minimise the risk of injury or harm occurring to any person.</p> <p>Personnel: Management, employees.</p> <p>Method: Review audit records and supervision systems.</p>

4. 'Danger' tag format

Point	Standard	Guideline
4.1	'DANGER' tags display a recognised 'DANGER' symbol on each side.	<p>Intent: To establish a standard 'DANGER' tag format is in use and that the intended meaning is not overlooked.</p> <p>Personnel: Permit Officer or equivalent.</p> <p>Method: Review format of 'DANGER' tags to verify use of 'DANGER' symbol is consistent with recommendations in clause 2.3.4 of AS1319.</p>
4.2	The background colour of 'DANGER' tags is white and all text is coloured black.	<p>Intent: To ensure a standard 'DANGER' tag format.</p> <p>Personnel: Permit Officer or equivalent.</p> <p>Method: Review format of 'DANGER' tags in use and verify their conformance of text/background colouring to recommendations in clause 5.2 and Table 3.1 of AS1319.</p>
4.3	'DANGER' tags display a bold DO NOT OPERATE message on both sides.	<p>Intent: To ensure an established standard 'DANGER' tag format is in use to minimise the risk of injury or harm to any person.</p> <p>Personnel: Permit Officer or equivalent.</p> <p>Method: Review format of 'DANGER' tags in use. Message implies that very similar wording is also acceptable.</p>
4.4	Disposable 'DANGER' tags are provided with adequate spaces for persons to enter the date, the time, their name, their department, and an equipment reference.	<p>Intent: To establish a standard disposable 'DANGER' tag format which readily identifies the person, the equipment, and when the tag was placed.</p> <p>Personnel: Permit Officer or equivalent.</p> <p>Method: Review format of disposable 'DANGER' tags.</p>
4.5	Non-disposable 'DANGER' tags clearly indicate the name and department of the owner of the tag.	<p>Intent: To establish a standard non-disposable 'DANGER' tag format that readily identifies the owner of the tag.</p> <p>Personnel: Permit Officer or equivalent.</p> <p>Method: Review format of any non-disposable 'DANGER' tags in use. It is not practicable to write on this style of tag and any that become forgotten, lost or fall-off will be evident.</p>

Point	Standard	Guideline
4.6	'DANGER' tags are provided with a reliable means for attaching to plant.	<p>Intent: To ensure that the means provided is reliable.</p> <p>Personnel: Permit Officer or equivalent.</p> <p>Method: Review the means provided for attaching tags, hooks, crocodile clips and the like are not acceptable.</p>
4.7	'DANGER' tag dimensions are not less than 120 mm x 60 mm, and the material is durable.	<p>Intent: To establish a minimum size and ensure that the tag material is appropriate for the environment.</p> <p>Personnel: Permit Officer or equivalent.</p> <p>Method: Review the construction and dimension of tags. Tags must be waterproof if used outdoors. The recommended minimum size of 80 mm x 50 mm in clause 5.2 of AS1319 is considered too small.</p>

5. Use of 'Danger' tags

Point	Standard	Guideline
5.1	'DANGER' tags are used to prohibit the use of plant on which an employee is undertaking work.	<p>Intent: To ensure that 'DANGER' tags are being used when and where required in accordance with the documented system of work.</p> <p>Personnel: Employees.</p> <p>Method: View procedures. Observe the presence of 'DANGER' tags in the workplace and ensure that any employees observed undertaking work have placed tags.</p>
5.2	'DANGER' tags are not used for purposes other than to prohibit the use of plant on which an employee is undertaking work.	<p>Intent: To ensure that 'DANGER' tags are not used inappropriately, and thereby diluting the tag's importance.</p> <p>Personnel: N/A.</p> <p>Method: View procedures. Check that the use of all 'DANGER' tags observed is relevant.</p>
5.3	'DANGER' tags are attached to isolation points that are in the 'off ' or 'safe position'.	<p>Intent: To emphasize that the placement of a 'DANGER' tag on either an isolating device or safeguard means 'de-energised' or 'safe' state.</p> <p>Personnel: Employees.</p> <p>Method: View procedures. Observe the status of devices tagged with 'DANGER' tags.</p>
5.4	Required details are indelibly entered onto 'DANGER' tags attached to plant.	<p>Intent: To ensure that required details on tags are consistently being entered.</p> <p>Personnel: N/A.</p> <p>Method: View procedures. Inspect tags attached to plant in the workplace (and in rubbish bins).</p>
5.5	'DANGER' tags are attached to plant in a secure and prominent manner.	<p>Intent: To ensure that tags can be readily seen and will remain in place.</p> <p>Personnel: N/A.</p> <p>Method: Observe the method used for attaching tags in the workplace.</p>
5.6	Plant fitted with a 'DANGER' tag is not switched, manipulated, used or operated while the tag is in place.	<p>Intent: To ensure plant is adequately isolated so as to minimise risk of injury or harm i.e. to reinforce the 'NOT TO BE OPERATED' principle.</p> <p>Personnel: N/A.</p> <p>Method: View procedures. Identify any plant being used while 'DANGER' tags are attached.</p>

Point	Standard	Guideline
5.7	Each employee undertaking work on plant attaches their own 'DANGER' tag to each isolation point prior to commencing work.	<p>Intent: To ensure that each employee places their own 'DANGER' tag.</p> <p>Personnel: Employees and authorised persons.</p> <p>Method: Employees undertaking work must show where tags are placed.</p>
5.8	Each employee removes their own 'DANGER' tag after completing the work and prior to leaving the worksite at the end of the shift.	<p>Intent: To emphasize that display of a 'DANGER' tag means that person is now working on the plant (and that their safety will be jeopardized).</p> <p>Personnel: N/A.</p> <p>Method: View procedures. Observe that the dates and times of tags placed in the workplace are current, and interview any person seen to remove more than one tag. Where possible check the current tag placement against workers present.</p>
5.9	When it is not practicable for an employee to remove their 'DANGER' tag, safe procedures are implemented which allows an authorised person to remove the tag after suitable checks have been made.	<p>Intent: Such situations arise and if the plant is required for use it is imperative that a formal pre-planned approach that will guarantee safety is implemented.</p> <p>Personnel: Management.</p> <p>Method: Review the procedure and ensure that it provides for an attempt to contact the employee and verification that the person is not in, on or about the equipment concerned prior to removal by an authorised person.</p>
5.10	'OUT OF SERVICE' tags are attached prior to removing 'DANGER' tags when work on plant is not completed.	<p>Intent: Employees are required to remove their 'DANGER' tag prior to leaving the worksite, and a mechanism is required to prevent the use of equipment which is unsafe. 'OUT OF SERVICE' tags are used for this purpose.</p> <p>Personnel: Management and employees.</p> <p>Method: Review the procedures and enquire practice adopted by employees. The significance of the words 'prior to' is to eliminate an unprotected period.</p>
5.11	Disposable 'DANGER' tags are destroyed immediately after use.	<p>Intent: To make evident any 'DANGER' tag that may have become unintentionally detached from an isolation point or safeguard.</p> <p>Personnel: N/A.</p> <p>Method: Observe the removal of any tags and check for the presence of any un-destroyed tags in the workplace (including those in the rubbish bins).</p>

6. 'Out of service' tag format

Point	Standard	Guideline
6.1	The words 'OUT OF SERVICE' are displayed boldly on both sides of 'OUT OF SERVICE' tags.	<p>Intent: To ensure a suitable 'OUT OF SERVICE' tag format is in use.</p> <p>Personnel: Permit Officer or equivalent, employees.</p> <p>Method: Review the format of 'OUT OF SERVICE' tags.</p>
6.2	'OUT OF SERVICE' tags display a bold DO NOT OPERATE message on both sides.	<p>Intent: To ensure a suitable 'OUT OF SERVICE' tag format is in use.</p> <p>Personnel: A Permit Officer or equivalent, employees.</p> <p>Method: Review format of 'OUT OF SERVICE' tags in use. Message implies that very similar wording is also acceptable.</p>
6.3	The background colour of 'OUT OF SERVICE' tags is yellow and all text is coloured black.	<p>Intent: To ensure a standard 'OUT OF SERVICE' tag format is in use and has text/background colouring that is consistent with recommendations in clause 5.2 and Table 3.1 of AS1319.</p> <p>Personnel: Permit Officer or equivalent, employees.</p> <p>Method: Review format of 'OUT OF SERVICE' tags.</p>
6.4	'OUT OF SERVICE' tags are provided with adequate spaces for persons to enter the date, the time, their name, their department, an equipment reference, and the reason why the plant must not be used.	<p>Intent: To ensure that the standard 'OUT OF SERVICE' tag format can readily identify the person, the equipment, the reason and when the tag was placed.</p> <p>Personnel: Permit Officer or equivalent, employees.</p> <p>Method: Review format of 'OUT OF SERVICE' tags.</p>
6.5	'OUT OF SERVICE' tags are provided with a reliable means for attaching to plant.	<p>Intent: To ensure that the means provided is reliable.</p> <p>Personnel: Permit Officer or equivalent, employees.</p> <p>Method: Review the means provided for attaching tags, hooks, crocodile clips and the like are not acceptable.</p>

Point	Standard	Guideline
6.6	'OUT OF SERVICE' tag dimensions are not less than 120 mm x 60 mm, and the material is durable.	<p>Intent: To establish a minimum size and ensure that the tag material is appropriate for the environment.</p> <p>Personnel: Permit Officer or equivalent.</p> <p>Method: Review the construction and dimension of tags. Tags must be waterproof if used outdoors or subject to liquids. The recommended minimum size of 80 mm x 50 mm in clause 5.2 of AS1319 is considered too small.</p>

7. Use of 'Out of service' tags

Point	Standard	Guideline
7.1	'OUT OF SERVICE' tags are used to warn against the use of plant which is unsafe to be used or which may be damaged if it is used.	<p>Intent: To ensure that 'OUT OF SERVICE' tags are being used when and where required in accordance with the documented system of work.</p> <p>Personnel: Employees.</p> <p>Method: Observe the presence of tags in the workplace and that any defective equipment found has been tagged. Rubbish bins can also reveal evidence.</p>
7.2	'OUT OF SERVICE' tags are not used for purposes other than to warn against the use of plant which is unsafe to be used or which may be damaged if it is used.	<p>Intent: To ensure that 'OUT OF SERVICE' tags are not used inappropriately, and thereby diluting the tag's importance.</p> <p>Personnel: N/A.</p> <p>Method: Check that the use of all tags observed is relevant.</p>
7.3	'OUT OF SERVICE' tags are attached to isolation points that are in the 'off' or 'safe' position by authorised and trained persons.	<p>Intent: To emphasize that the placement of an 'OUT OF SERVICE' tag on either an isolating device or safeguard means 'de-energised' or 'safe' state.</p> <p>Personnel: Employees.</p> <p>Method: Observe the status of devices tagged with 'OUT OF SERVICE' tags.</p>
7.4	Required details are indelibly entered onto 'OUT OF SERVICE' tags attached to plant.	<p>Intent: To ensure that required details on tags are entered in a consistent manner.</p> <p>Personnel: N/A.</p> <p>Method: Inspect tags attached to plant in the workplace (and in rubbish bins).</p>
7.5	'OUT OF SERVICE' tags are attached to plant in a secure and prominent manner.	<p>Intent: To ensure that tags can be readily seen and will remain in place.</p> <p>Personnel: N/A.</p> <p>Method: Observe the method used for attaching tags in the workplace.</p>
7.6	Plant fitted with an 'OUT OF SERVICE' tag is not switched, manipulated used or operated while the tag is in place.	<p>Intent: To ensure plant is adequately isolated so as to minimise risk of injury or harm i.e. to reinforce the 'NOT TO BE OPERATED' principle.</p> <p>Personnel: N/A.</p> <p>Method: Identify any plant being used while tags are attached.</p>

Point	Standard	Guideline
7.7	'OUT OF SERVICE' tags are removed only by the responsible person specified in the written procedures.	<p>Intent: To ensure that persons who remove tags are competent and have their area of responsibility designated.</p> <p>Personnel: Employees and authorised persons.</p> <p>Method: View the procedures and records. Ask a sample of individual employees to state who the authorised persons are and assess their knowledge and discuss safeguards adopted.</p>
7.8	'OUT OF SERVICE' tags are destroyed immediately after use.	<p>Intent: To make evident any tag that may have become unintentionally detached from an isolation point or safeguard.</p> <p>Personnel: N/A.</p> <p>Method: Observe the removal of any tags and check for the presence of any un-destroyed tags in the workplace (including those in the rubbish bins).</p>

8. Common tagging points

Point	Standard	Guideline
8.1	The plant is isolated in accordance with a documented isolation procedure.	<p>Intent: To ensure that 'common tagging points' are only used in conjunction with prepared written 'isolation' procedures detailing the method of isolation.</p> <p>Personnel: Permit Officer or equivalent, employees.</p> <p>Method: Confirm whether 'common tagging points' are used and review any 'isolation' procedures prepared for recurrent tasks.</p>
8.2	The isolation procedure accurately indicates the isolations to be effected.	<p>Intent: To ensure that 'isolation' procedures positively list each isolation and each safeguard to be effected in a clear 'step by step' checklist manner.</p> <p>Personnel: Permit Officer or equivalent, employees.</p> <p>Method: Review the format of 'isolation' procedures. It is not expected that the auditors have sufficient detailed knowledge to check content in every case.</p>
8.3	The isolation procedure requires a completed 'OUT OF SERVICE' tag to be attached to each isolation point.	<p>Intent: To ensure isolation points remain in the off or safe position. The audit addresses only two tags, and use of the 'OUT OF SERVICE' tag is appropriate in this case. 'DANGER' tags only protect the person named on that tag.</p> <p>Personnel: Permit Officer or equivalent, employees.</p> <p>Method: Review procedures for the use of 'Common Tagging Points'.</p>
8.4	The isolation procedure is signed by the person responsible for ensuring that the isolations have been carried out.	<p>Intent: To ensure that the isolations listed on the 'isolation' procedure have been carried out, and declare that the plant is now isolated 'for the purpose'.</p> <p>Personnel: Permit Officer or equivalent, employees.</p> <p>Method: Review procedures for the use of 'Common Tagging Points'.</p>

Point	Standard	Guideline
8.5	The isolation procedure is attached to the common tagging point.	<p>Intent: To authorise use of the 'Common Tagging Point'. Placement allows members of the work group to check the method of isolation attach their own 'DANGER' tags and commence work.</p> <p>Personnel: Permit Officer or equivalent, employees.</p> <p>Method: Review procedures for the use of 'Common Tagging Points'.</p>
8.6	The procedure requires that each person working on the plant attaches a 'DANGER' tag to the common tagging point.	<p>Intent: To protect each individual. Attachment of a 'DANGER' tag to the 'Common Tagging Point' indicates that the person named on the tag is currently working on the plant.</p> <p>Personnel: Employees.</p> <p>Method: Review procedures for the use of 'Common Tagging Points'. Check any current use of common tagging points. Consult with employees.</p>
8.7	The isolation procedure is not removed from the common tagging point prior to all 'DANGER' tags being removed.	<p>Intent: To ensure that all persons have finished work and are clear of the plant prior to the plant being de-isolated.</p> <p>Personnel: Permit Officer or equivalent, employees.</p> <p>Method: Review procedures for the use of 'Common Tagging Points'. Consult with employees.</p>
8.8	The isolation procedure is cancelled prior to de-isolating the plant.	<p>Intent: To ensure by cancellation of the 'isolation' procedure that the plant is no longer to be regarded as isolated.</p> <p>Personnel: Permit Officer or equivalent, employees.</p> <p>Method: Review procedures for the use of 'Common Tagging Points' and any records of previously used 'isolation' procedures.</p>

9. Effectiveness of isolation

Point	Standard	Guideline
9.1	A documented procedure sets out the necessary steps to correctly isolate each individual item of plant to ensure all sources of energy are adequately isolated.	<p>Intent: To ensure that the means selected to isolate plant are positive and can be relied upon including taking into account all energy sources including stored, potential and kinetic energy. For example a ball mill may require to be chocked to prevent rotation due to gravity as well a range of various isolations being implemented.</p> <p>In general, primary isolating devices such as circuit-breakers, decontactor plugs, double block and bleed of pipelines, pipe blinds or isolation valves must be used, and reliance on secondary devices such as lanyards emergency stops and solenoid valves avoided.</p> <p>Personnel: Employees.</p> <p>Method: Assess the means selected by employees observed to be currently under taking work.</p>
9.2	The effectiveness of devices used to isolate plant is proved prior to the commencement of attaching 'DANGER' or 'OUT OF SERVICE' tags.	<p>Intent: To ensure as far as is practicable that the plant is isolated from the respective energy sources by applying appropriate test means. Accidents have occurred as a result of switching the wrong isolating device, incorrect labelling, and isolating mechanism failures.</p> <p>Personnel: Employees.</p> <p>Method: Discuss with employees currently undertaking work, and assess the method adopted for proving that the isolation is effective. This may be accomplished by visual inspection, opening drain valves, attempting to start the equipment, observing indicators, use of test instruments or other appropriate means.</p>
9.3	Individual locks are used to achieve higher levels of safety.	<p>Intent: To minimise the individual's exposure to the risk of injury or harm. Lock Tag Try.</p> <p>Personnel: Employees.</p> <p>Method: Discuss with employees currently undertaking work effectiveness of locks as part of the system of work to achieve integrity.</p>

10. Accidental or unintentional removal of 'Danger' or 'Out of service' tags

Point	Standard	Guideline
10.1	Pre-planned procedures are implemented in the event that another person's 'DANGER' tag or 'OUT OF SERVICE' tag is either accidentally removed or becomes unintentionally detached from plant.	<p>Intent: To ensure that a procedure has been prepared for use in the event that a person accidentally removes the 'wrong' tag or finds an undestroyed 'whole' tag which may have become unintentionally detached.</p> <p>Personnel: Employees.</p> <p>Method: Review procedures and ask employees what action they would take upon finding or being presented with such a tag.</p>
10.2	The procedures provide for a substitute tag to be placed, and prompt notification to the person named on the tag or his/her supervisor.	<p>Intent: To ensure the likelihood of injury or harm to any person is minimised by following the documented standard procedure.</p> <p>Personnel: N/A.</p> <p>Method: Review the procedure.</p>