WORKSHEET 2.5

Permit to Work: Controlling the Dangerous Task

Subchapter 2.5 · case in the book: Arequipa

GUIDING QUESTION

Find your last permit for dangerous work. What time was it signed, where, and by whom, and were any of those people standing at the job when it started?

This worksheet turns the tools of the subchapter into a form you can fill in. The texts come from the book; the empty columns are for your own property. Adapt it before use: an unadapted checklist is exactly what the book warns against.

Practical application: what to do in your property

Step (from the book)	Done?	What we found / owner
Read your last ten permits for the time and place of signature. If they were issued in an office at the start of the day, you have found the same thing Arequipa found, and it takes ten minutes.		
Redesign the form so that it cannot be completed away from the job. If every field requires looking at something, the form enforces the rule by itself and no policy is needed.		
Decide the list of tasks that need this, from your own hazard identification, and keep it to the ones where the consequence is severe and immediate, the work is rare, and the worker cannot verify the building for themselves.		
Bind the attendance. Whoever verifies is present when the work starts, or the work moves to an hour when somebody can be. There is no third option that is not a fiction.		
Use the permit as the moment of coordination. What we have isolated, what we will not start while you are in there, who is outside, and how we find you if you do not come out. That conversation is the control; the paper is the evidence it happened.		
Say out loud that the permit is not the safety. It is the gate that checks the safety is in place, and a team that believes otherwise will take more risk than one with no permit at all.		

These steps are the book's method, not requirements of ISO 45001. Evidence can take whatever form suits the property; a separate document is needed only where an applicable requirement, or the property's own system, makes it necessary.

Verification Pact: what is believed, tested against the standard

What the property took to be true	What actually holds	Our position
"The standard requires a permit-to-work system."	It does not. Permits appear once in the guidance as an example of a method of recognising and controlling dangerous work. What is required is criteria and control against them.	
"The permit is the control for dangerous work."	It is an administrative control, at the fourth of five rungs. What makes the work safe sits above it: not doing it that way, different equipment, isolation, a second person.	

What the property took to be true	What actually holds	Our position
"The permit was issued and signed by the responsible persons."	A signature is a statement that somebody looked. Issued thirteen hours early, in an office, by people who would not be present, it records an imagined version of the work.	
"Isolation was verified: the box is ticked."	Verification is a moment, not a status. An isolation verified in the morning has been unverified since a few minutes afterwards, and only the person at the job immediately before entry can restore it.	
"The contractor is responsible for the safety of his own work."	The hazards that arise from the hotel's own operations (what is isolated, what runs automatically, who else is in the building) are the hotel's to declare, as 2.4 established.	
"The more tasks we cover with permits, the safer we are."	A permit is only as good as the verification it forces. Extended to routine work, it becomes a signature exercise and the verification disappears from the tasks that needed it.	

Common mistakes: a self-check

Mistake (from the book)	Present here?	Action / owner
Believing the standard requires permits. It names them once, in guidance, as an example. What it requires is criteria and verification against them.		
Treating the permit as the control. It is at the fourth rung of five, and the things that make the work safe are all above it.		
Issuing in the office at the start of the day. Everything a permit is for happens at the job in the minutes before the work.		
Naming people who will not be there. A signature is a statement that somebody looked, and a name on a form for a night spent elsewhere is the most damaging document a property can hold.		
Extending permits to routine work. Thirty categories produce a filing system and destroy the attention that the five real ones needed.		
Letting the permit carry authority the controls do not have. A team that believes the work has been made safe will take risks it would not have taken without the paper.		

Operative synthesis

- The standard does not require a permit to work; it requires criteria and control against them, and names permits once in guidance as one method among several. A permit is an administrative control at the fourth rung of the hierarchy, which means it makes nothing safe by itself. Its entire function is to be a gate: to force somebody to verify, immediately before the work starts, that the controls above it are actually in place.
- **From which everything follows.** It is issued at the job, not in an office; immediately before, not at the start of the day; by somebody present, because a signature says that a person looked. It is the moment at which contractor coordination becomes an event rather than an arrangement, and the hotel's half of that conversation (what is isolated, what will not be started, who is outside, how you will be found) is information only the hotel possesses. Keep the list of tasks short enough to be known by heart, and remember that a permit believed to be a guarantee is more dangerous than no permit at all.

- **Four years of permits, complete and tidy, every box ticked.** Eleven of them confirmed an isolation verified some hours before it was physically possible to verify it, and one of them carried the name of a man who was four hundred kilometres away.
- The men on that roof were working alone in a building where the nearest other person was four floors below, and the permit had a line for who would be watching. What a property does when something goes wrong at nine at night (and how it finds out that it has) is the subject of what comes next.

Action plan for our property

Action	Owner	Due	How we will know it worked

Source: Francesco Dore, The Helm and the Lens, Volume 3a «The Helm», subchapter 2.5. Edizioni Effedore, 2026. Clause references are paraphrased; this sheet does not reproduce the text of ISO 45001. It is not legal advice: health and safety law is that of the place where the property operates.