



GROUP HEALTH & SAFETY STANDARDS

Life-Critical Activities Handbook

CONTECH Group

Activity-specific standards and life-saving rules for our highest-risk work

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1. Introduction and Purpose

CONTECH Group (“CONTECH”, “the Group”, “we”) is committed to the goal that everyone goes home safe, every day. A small number of activities carry the greatest potential to cause death or life-changing injury. This Handbook identifies those life-critical activities, sets out the Group’s Life-Saving Rules, and defines the mandatory, activity-specific standards that must be met whenever such work is carried out.

This Handbook gives practical effect to our Health and Safety Policy for our highest-risk work. It is informed by our legal obligations and by recognised life-saving-rules frameworks used across the construction and heavy-industry sectors.

2. Scope and Application

This Handbook applies across the entire Group, including CONTECH GROUP Ltd (United Kingdom) and CONTECH GROUP sh.p.k. (Kosovo), and any subsidiary, branch or controlled joint-venture operation. It applies to all our projects and sites and to everyone working for or on behalf of the Group, including employees, workers, subcontractors and their personnel.

The standards in this Handbook are the Group minimum. Project-specific arrangements may add to them but must never weaken them. Where applicable law or a client requirement sets a higher standard, the higher standard applies.

3. How This Handbook Works

Our control of life-critical activities works in three layers:

- **Life-Saving Rules** — simple, non-negotiable rules that everyone on our sites must follow (Section 4).
- **Activity-specific standards** — the mandatory controls for each life-critical activity (Section 9).
- **Task-level RAMS and permits** — risk assessments, method statements and permits-to-work prepared for each specific task, consistent with these standards.

This Handbook sits beneath the Health and Safety Policy and above the task-level risk assessments, method statements and permits produced for each project.

4. Our Life-Saving Rules

These rules apply to everyone, on every site, at all times. Breaking a Life-Saving Rule is treated as a serious matter.

CONTECH Life-Saving Rules

- Work only with a valid permit and authorisation for high-risk work.
- Protect yourself against a fall when working at height.
- Do not enter an excavation unless it is supported, battered or confirmed safe — and know where buried services are.
- Never stand under a suspended load or in the line of fire.
- Operate only the plant, cranes and equipment you are trained and authorised to use.
- Verify isolation of energy before you work, and never bypass safety controls without authorisation.
- Get authorisation and test the atmosphere before entering a confined space.
- Keep people and moving plant and vehicles apart.
- Control ignition sources and obtain a permit before hot work.
- **Stop work if it is unsafe — everyone has the authority and the duty to stop.**

5. Permits to Work and High-Risk Authorisation

Life-critical activities are controlled through a permit-to-work and authorisation system. Permits are issued by authorised, competent persons; they define the safe system of work and the controls that must be in place, are communicated to those doing the work, and are formally closed out on completion. Activities that typically require a permit include confined-space entry, hot works, energy isolation and live electrical work, excavation, and work that affects temporary works.

6. Competence, Training and Supervision

Only competent, trained and authorised persons carry out or supervise life-critical activities. We verify competence through training, qualifications and experience; we brief teams before high-risk work; and we provide a level of supervision appropriate to the risk. Certain roles — such as the Temporary Works Coordinator, the Appointed Person for lifting, and authorised persons for permits and isolations — must be formally appointed and competent.

7. Stop-Work Authority and Reporting

Everyone on a CONTECH site has both the authority and the duty to stop work that is, or may be, unsafe, without fear of reprisal. Unsafe conditions, near-misses and incidents involving life-critical activities must be reported promptly and investigated so that we learn and prevent recurrence. Wider concerns may also be raised through the Group's Whistleblowing Policy.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

- **The Board and Group CEO** set the expectation that life-critical work is controlled to these standards and provide the necessary resources.
- **Executive and project management** ensure the standards, competent persons and permit systems are in place and complied with.
- **Project and site managers and supervisors** plan, control and supervise life-critical activities and enforce the Life-Saving Rules.
- **Competent and appointed persons** discharge their specific duties (for example temporary works, lifting, permits and isolations).
- **All personnel** follow the Life-Saving Rules and activity standards, and stop and report unsafe work.
- **Subcontractors** meet these standards as a condition of working with us.

9. The Life-Critical Activity Standards

The following standards set the mandatory minimum controls for each life-critical activity. They must be reflected in the risk assessments, method statements and permits prepared for each task.

9.1 Working at Height

The risk: Falls from height are among the leading causes of death in construction.

Mandatory controls

- avoid work at height where reasonably practicable; where it cannot be avoided, plan and risk-assess it and select suitable access equipment;
- prevent falls using collective protection first (guardrails, working platforms, scaffolds, MEWPs) before relying on personal fall protection;
- where a fall cannot be prevented, minimise the distance and consequences and, as a last resort, use fall-arrest systems with suitable anchors and a rescue plan;
- use only scaffolds, ladders, towers and MEWPs that are suitable, inspected, tagged, erected by competent persons and used correctly;

- protect people below from falling materials and objects using edge protection, toe boards and exclusion zones.

Never

- work at height without fall protection appropriate to the task;
- use damaged, uninspected or unsuitable access equipment, or throw or drop materials from height.

References: Work at Height Regulations 2005; CDM Regulations 2015; PUWER 1998.

9.2 Excavations and Underground Services

The risk: Collapse of unsupported ground, and contact with buried electricity or gas services, can kill in an instant.

Mandatory controls

- locate and identify buried services before digging, using service drawings and cable/pipe location equipment, and apply safe-digging practices;
- prevent collapse by battering, benching or supporting excavations as determined by a competent person;
- prevent people, vehicles, plant and materials from falling in, using barriers, edge protection and stop blocks;
- provide safe access and egress, and control loading on the ground around the excavation;
- inspect excavations by a competent person before each shift and after any event that may affect stability.

Never

- enter an excavation that is not supported, battered or confirmed safe by a competent person;
- dig without first checking for, and locating, buried services.

References: CDM Regulations 2015; Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974; Electricity at Work Regulations 1989.

9.3 Lifting Operations

The risk: Dropped loads, overturning cranes and failure of lifting equipment cause fatal crushing injuries.

Mandatory controls

- plan every lift; complex or unusual lifts are planned and supervised by an appointed, competent person;
- use lifting equipment and accessories that are suitable, within their safe working load, and thoroughly examined and certified;
- establish exclusion zones and keep people clear of, and never under, suspended loads;
- use trained and authorised crane operators, slingers/signallers and lift supervisors;
- assess ground conditions, outrigger loading and proximity hazards such as overhead lines, structures and other cranes.

Never

- exceed the safe working load of any lifting equipment, or lift loads over people;
- use lifting equipment that is uncertified, damaged or overdue for thorough examination.

References: Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER); PUWER 1998.

9.4 Vehicles, Mobile Plant and Pedestrian Interface

The risk: People being struck by moving vehicles and plant is a leading cause of site fatalities.

Mandatory controls

- implement a traffic management plan that separates pedestrians from vehicles and plant;
- control reversing — avoid it where possible and use banksmen, cameras and sensors where needed;
- use only trained, competent and authorised operators, and keep plant maintained and in safe condition;
- fit and wear seatbelts in vehicles and plant, and wear high-visibility clothing;
- establish and respect exclusion zones around operating plant.

Never

- work or stand in the path or blind spot of moving plant or vehicles;
- operate plant or vehicles without training and authorisation, or ride other than in a designated seat.

References: PUWER 1998; CDM Regulations 2015; Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

9.5 Temporary Works and Structural Stability

The risk: Collapse of falsework, formwork, propping, excavation support or partly built structures can cause multiple fatalities.

Mandatory controls

- appoint a Temporary Works Coordinator and manage temporary works through a defined procedure;
- ensure temporary works are designed and independently checked to the appropriate category by competent designers;
- control loading through a permit-to-load and permit-to-strike regime;
- inspect temporary works before use and monitor them while in use;
- maintain structural stability at every stage of construction, alteration and demolition.

Never

- load or strike temporary works without authorisation;
- deviate from the temporary works design without a properly checked revision.

References: CDM Regulations 2015; BS 5975 (temporary works procedures and falsework).

9.6 Working with Electricity

The risk: Contact with overhead power lines, buried cables or live equipment causes electrocution, burns and arc-flash fatalities.

Mandatory controls

- identify overhead lines and buried cables during planning; maintain safe clearances and use barriers, goalposts and exclusion zones near overhead lines;
- apply safe-digging practices near buried cables;
- work dead wherever possible; treat live working as an exception requiring justification, a permit and specific controls;
- ensure electrical work and temporary site electricity are designed, installed, inspected and maintained by competent persons;
- use appropriately rated, inspected equipment with residual current protection.

Never

- approach or work near overhead lines within the exclusion distances without control measures;
- work on or near live conductors without authorisation and control, or use damaged electrical equipment.

References: Electricity at Work Regulations 1989; PUWER 1998; CDM Regulations 2015.

9.7 Confined Spaces

The risk: Confined spaces can contain, or develop, atmospheres that kill in seconds through lack of oxygen, toxic gas or fire.

Mandatory controls

- avoid entry into confined spaces wherever possible by designing the work out;
- where entry is unavoidable, work to a safe system of work and a confined-space entry permit;
- test and monitor the atmosphere before and during entry, and provide ventilation;
- ensure entrants and attendants are trained and competent, and maintain communication;
- put suitable and sufficient emergency and rescue arrangements in place before entry begins.

Never

- enter a confined space without a permit, atmospheric testing and rescue arrangements;
- rely on the emergency services alone for rescue.

References: Confined Spaces Regulations 1997 (SI 1997/1713).

9.8 Energy Isolation and Hazardous Energy

The risk: Unexpected release of stored or live energy — electrical, mechanical, hydraulic, pneumatic, gravitational or process — causes fatal injuries during maintenance and intervention.

Mandatory controls

- identify all energy sources before work, and isolate, lock and tag them (lock-out / tag-out);
- verify a zero-energy state — test for dead, discharge stored energy and restrain gravity — before work begins;
- control the work through a permit-to-work where required;
- obtain authorisation before overriding, bypassing or disabling any safety-critical control or device.

Never

- work on equipment that has not been isolated and verified;
- bypass or disable safety controls without authorisation.

References: PUWER 1998; Electricity at Work Regulations 1989; Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

9.9 Hot Works and Fire

The risk: Welding, cutting, grinding and other hot works can ignite fires and explosions, including in flammable or explosive atmospheres.

Mandatory controls

- eliminate hot work where possible, for example by using cold-cutting alternatives;
- control hot work through a hot-work permit; remove or protect combustible materials and screen the work area;
- test for flammable or explosive atmospheres where these may be present, and control them;
- provide fire extinguishers and a trained fire watch during the work and for an adequate period afterwards;
- maintain and inspect gas equipment, hoses, regulators and flashback arrestors.

Never

- carry out hot work without a permit where one is required;
- leave the area before completing the post-work fire watch.

References: Hot-work permit system; Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002 (DSEAR); applicable fire safety legislation.

9.10 Demolition

The risk: Uncontrolled collapse, falling debris and hidden hazards such as asbestos and live services make demolition one of the highest-risk activities.

Mandatory controls

- carry out surveys before demolition, including a refurbishment/demolition asbestos survey, and identify hazardous materials;
- plan and supervise demolition to a method and sequence prepared by a competent person, with structural engineering input;
- disconnect or isolate services before demolition begins;
- establish exclusion zones and control access, debris, dust and falling materials;
- use competent demolition contractors and appropriate techniques and plant.

Never

- begin demolition without surveys and an agreed method statement;
- demolish with services live or with people inside the exclusion zone.

References: CDM Regulations 2015; Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012; BS 6187 (code of practice for demolition).

10. Assurance, Monitoring and Continual Improvement

We monitor compliance with these standards through supervision, inspections and audits, and we act on the findings. We investigate incidents and high-potential near-misses involving life-critical activities, share the lessons, and use them to improve. We review the list of life-critical activities and the standards in this Handbook as our work, our plant and our lessons learned evolve.

11. Legal and Standards Framework

This Handbook is underpinned by, and must be applied consistently with, the following (as applicable to the work and jurisdiction):

- **United Kingdom** — the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974; the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999; the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015; the Work at Height Regulations 2005; PUWER 1998; LOLER 1998; the Confined Spaces Regulations 1997; the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989; COSHH 2002; DSEAR 2002; the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012; RIDDOR 2013; and standards including BS 5975 and BS 6187.
- **Kosovo** — Law No. 04/L-161 on Safety and Health at Work and applicable technical regulations, enforced by the Labour Inspectorate. Where we operate elsewhere in the Western Balkans, applicable local law applies.
- **International good practice** — recognised life-saving-rules frameworks, such as the IOGP Life-Saving Rules, inform this Handbook, and our management of health and safety is aligned with ISO 45001.

12. Related Documents and Review

This Handbook should be read together with the Group's Health and Safety Policy, Quality Policy and Environmental Policy, the Subcontractor Code of Conduct, and the project-level construction phase plans, risk assessments, method statements and permits that apply to each task.

This Handbook is approved by the Group Chief Executive Officer on behalf of the Board and is owned by Group Executive Management. It will be reviewed at least annually, and sooner following a significant incident or a change in our activities, plant or legal obligations.

Approved on behalf of CONTECH Group

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Date of approval	11 May 2026

Contact

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