

NEW SOUTH WALES FIRE BRIGADES OPERATIONS BULLETIN 2005/7



Entry to trenches and other earthen complexes

This Operations Bulletin highlights precautions for NSWFB personnel when attending incidents where persons are trapped in unstable earthen environments such as trenches, holes and pits.

This Operations Bulletin *must* be read in conjunction with:

- ✓ **SOG 1 *Incident Control System***
- ✓ **SOG 11.3 *Confined Space Operations***.

The Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001 Clause 68, calls for implementation of control measures prior to entry into trenches and other earthen complexes. When attending an incident involving unstable earthen environment, fire fighters must be aware of the risks associated with secondary collapse.

Warning! NSWFB personnel must not enter an unsupported or unshored environment. Secondary collapse can lead to serious injury or death of entrapped persons and personnel attempting rescue.

Risk Management

In accordance with SOG 11.3 Confined Space Operations the Incident Controller/Commander must:

- ✓ Conduct a size up and risk assessment
- ✓ Establish exclusion zones
- ✓ Complete the NSWFB Written Authority/Confined Space Risk Assessment worksheet
- ✓ Send a sitrep requesting additional resources if required
- ✓ Brief crews on risks and control measures before entry
- ✓ Always shore and stabilise earthen environments/complexes prior to entry
- ✓ Establish a Rapid Intervention Team (SOG 18.2) and ensure appropriate rescue gear is available
- ✓ Establish BA Control and ICMS (SOG 18.1)
- ✓ Conduct atmospheric monitoring at multiple points if necessary
- ✓ Establish tactical and task communications (SOG 2.1)
- ✓ Ensure all personnel wear appropriate PPE
- ✓ Establish and implement a ventilation plan
- ✓ Establish rehabilitation area and rotate crews as required and
- ✓ Preserve any serious incident site (SOG 1.6).

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Rescue operations must not occur without adequate planning. To do so may further endanger those already trapped and the safety of firefighters and other emergency service personnel.

It is important to consider all means of extricating casualties before deploying personnel into dangerous situations. This may include:

- ✓ Assisting the casualty to self rescue
- ✓ Facilitating the rescue by remote means
- ✓ Using indirect or innovative methods
- ✓ Always minimise the number of people exposed to risk.

Specialised equipment and advice is available from the NSWFB Rescue Section and the Hazardous Materials Response Unit.

Noted, Station Commander	A	B	C	D	Other

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Previous Operations Bulletin: 2005/6: Police Special Operations