

# Working Alone/Working in Isolation Practice

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## 1.0 Purpose

The purpose of the Working Alone/ Working in Isolation Practice is to provide guidance to Business Units/ Asset Teams to assess and manage the risk to Cenovus employees and contractors who work alone or in isolation at a worksite, in circumstances where assistance is not readily available if there is an emergency or the worker is injured or ill.

**Note:** Working alone as referenced in this practice also includes working in isolation.

## 2.0 Principles

- a) All Business Unit (BU)/ Asset Teams will comply with this practice by developing appropriate plans for situations where workers are working alone or in isolation.
- b) This practice supports corporate and regulatory requirements in the following three areas:
  1. **Foreseeability** – Use hazard assessments principles to identify situations where workers are working alone and the hazards and risks associated with the specific work. This is accomplished through the engagement of workers and Supervisors familiar with the work.
  2. **Preventability** – By defining specific tools/equipment, procedures, plans, training and monitoring for working alone situations, Business Unit (BU)/ Asset Teams can effectively provide direction to prevent losses based on the hazards present.
  3. **Control** – Specific plans, procedures and accountabilities will define the methods of control for work alone situations to effectively manage risk pursuing an As Low as Reasonably Practical (ALARP) level objective.

## 3.0 Scope / Application

The Working Alone Practice applies to all Cenovus employees and contractors in any situation where a worker is working by themselves or in an isolated situation where assistance in an emergency is not readily available. Emergency can include but is not limited to vehicle incident, equipment or process failure, third party influence, or environmental conditions such as adverse weather.

## 4.0 Minimum Requirements

Business Unit (BU)/ Asset Team working alone plans will meet the following minimum requirements in order to align with corporate and legislative standards as well as address area/ site specific needs.

### 4.1 Hazard Assessment

- a) Working alone is considered a hazard and the Business Unit (BU)/ Asset Team must conduct hazard assessments of the working alone situations that exist in the business unit. This assessment should use Cenovus's hazard assessment process and Risk Assessment Matrix and Risk Assessment Worksheet encompassing:
  - 1) Identification of working alone situations, and
  - 2) Risk analysis/rating of identified situations.
- b) A template to aide in developing a working alone/ work in isolation hazard assessment and control plan is found in the following link.

c) In the case of multiple worksites that are similar:

- 1) If the person who is working alone faces the same hazards at multiple worksites, and the safe work practices to be followed are identical (i.e., meter reading), then a single hazard assessment and control plan applicable to all the worksites is acceptable.
- 2) The worker is, however, still expected to follow the Cenovus **Well Site and Facility (Process Building) Entry Practice** and monitor their surroundings at all times for unexpected hazards.

## 4.2 Hazard Controls

Specific hazard controls must be defined for the risks presented in the working alone hazard assessment. In determining the appropriate controls, consideration must be given to:

- a) **Viability** – Should this task or work activity be conducted alone?
- b) **Tools and Equipment** – What specific tools or equipment would assist in managing working alone? This may include specific vehicles, communication devices, winter survival, etc.
- c) **Call-in/Communication Procedure** – Specific procedures for communication between the affected workers and parties that can identify a “non-responsive worker” and facilitate investigation and response defining:
  - Call-in frequency,
  - Known work locations or pattern,
  - Confirmation of worker safety at end of work period/day, and
  - Communication of overdue worker to local management.
- d) **Alternative Controls** – If a call-in process is not practical or technologically feasible, what other worker contact or communications methods will be used?

## 4.3 Emergency Response

The Business Unit (BU) / Asset Team must develop working alone procedures and resources must be in place to affect a response to an overdue worker, including:

- a) Maximum timeline for attempting to establish contact
- b) Search and rescue procedure
- c) Search escalation:
  - Management communication
  - Engaging additional resources

## 4.4 Training

All affected personnel and contractors will be trained in this practice and business unit (BU) procedures relating to working alone. The training will at a minimum include:

- a) Review Cenovus and legislative requirements in the jurisdiction in which the work is being conducted.
- b) Communicate known hazards, control methods, and communication and response procedures in the event of a “non-response” from a worker.

Training may be included in the scope of orientations, stand-alone instruction or web/computer-based instruction such as the Learning Management System (LMS). All training will be recorded or logged in the individual worker’s training file.

## 5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities for safety documents are described in the link below:

Cenovus CEN-EHS234, Roles and Responsibilities Standard

Roles and responsibilities specific to the Working Alone/ Working in Isolation Practice are described below:

## 6.0 References

### 6.1 Internal References

- 1. Cenovus CEN-EHS131, *Well Site and Facility (Process Building) Entry Practice*
- 2. Cenovus CEN-EHS117, *Working Alone Procedure Template*

### 7.0 External References

- 1. Alberta Employment and Immigration, *Working Safely Alone, A Guide for Employers or Employees (2000)*
- 2. Alberta Employment and Immigration, *An Explanation of the Working Alone Requirements (2009)*

## 8.0 Change Management

Proposed changes to this practice can be directed to EH&S Development and MOC; email EH&S Document Management.

## 9.0 Definitions and Acronyms

Definitions and acronyms for safety documents are described in the link below:

Cenovus CEN-EHS243, Definitions and Acronyms

The following definitions and acronyms are specific to the Working Alone/ Working in Isolation Practice.

**BU**.....means business unit

**EH&SMS** .....means Environment, Health & Safety Management System

**Hazard Assessment** is a process for managing risk by recognizing, evaluating, and eliminating or effectively controlling hazards in the workplace.

**LMS means** Learning Management System

**Practices** means a set of processes or procedures developed by industry, government, or Cenovus that are used in meeting requirements (p. 5 EH&S Management System). Cenovus develops safety practices only for those topics required by the EH&S Management System or by regulation.

**Note:** Individual Divisions may develop or maintain safety practices that are not required by regulation or the EH&SMS.

**Procedure** means a documented series of steps, carried out in a logical order to perform a task at a site.

**Working Alone** means a situation where a worker is working on their own and where access to health and safety assistance is not readily available should the worker become injured or ill, or another form of emergency.

**Note:** This Alberta definition of **working alone** is similar and consistent with the definition found in Section 35 of the Saskatchewan Occupational Health and Safety Regulation.

## Appendix A – Applicable Legislation

The Working Alone/ Working in Isolation Practice encompasses requirements of the following legislation.

### 1. Alberta OHS Act (2006)

- Section 2 – *Obligations of Employers, Workers, etc.*

### 2. Alberta OHS Code (2009)

#### a) Part 2 – Hazard Assessment, Elimination and Control

- Section 7 – *Hazard Assessment*
- Section 8 – *Worker Participation*
- Section 9 – *Hazard Elimination and Control*
- Section 10 – *Emergency Control of Hazard*

#### b) Part 28 – Working Alone

- Section 393 – *Application*
- Section 394 – *Precautions Required*

### 3. Saskatchewan OH&S Regulations (amended to 2009)

#### a) Part III – General Duties

- Section 35 – *Working Alone or at Isolated Place of Employment*