

Unauthorised Removal of Isolations

What happened?

During a planned shutdown, a worker was instructed to reinstate filters on a fuel gas line too which blind flanges had been fitted and tagged with Issuer Applied isolations to enable a fuel gas supply upgrade and other shutdown work to occur. The worker removed the IASM's and reinstated the filters without gaining approval of the Permit Issuer, breaching the provisions of the Work Control Procedure in place. No loss of containment occurred as additional isolations had been fitted upstream of the blind flanges.

Bay of Plenty

What did we learn?

Blind flanges or spades should be locked not just tagged. The blind flanges should have been Locked and Tagged with the use of a flange lockout device (pictured). The incident may not have occurred as the key to the lock would have had to be retrieved from a permit issuer controlled lockbox. The familiarity of other Work Control Procedures in place at the site may have contributed to the incident. Further training by way of toolbox talks took place to ensure workers understood the importance of adhering to the work control procedures.

