

At Vopak, HxGN EAM's Permit-to-Work Module Improves Safety, Compliance and Efficiency

Key Facts:

Company: Vopak

Website: www.vopak.com

Industry: Oil & gas, chemicals

Product Used: HxGN EAM

Key Benefits:

- Vopak has improved safety and transparency by integrating digital work permits directly into the HxGN EAM platform
- The system is actively used by over 5,000 staff across 25 terminals
- The solution enhances visibility, knowledge sharing and continuous performance alignment across sites
- Standardized processes and reduced waiting times have led to more hands-on-tool time
- Compliance processes are now streamlined, with built-in safety mechanisms, automated alerts, digital records and reporting features that support regulatory requirements



Vopak provides tank storage and transshipment services for liquid bulk goods, including chemicals, oil products and gases. The company operates 77 terminals across 23 countries.

Identifying Goals

The company has been using HxGN EAM since 2011. However, to issue work permits and manage related processes, such as Lockout-Tagout (LoTo) safety procedures, the company relied on a wide range of disconnected systems. *"It wasn't very efficient, and it wasn't connected to our EAM platform. There was a clear need for a unified, integrated solution,"* says Jos Hoefnagel, Product Manager at Vopak, who is responsible for IT systems related to asset management.

"We wanted to develop a solution that would work within our existing IT systems. Since safety often overlaps with maintenance, we turned to our HxGN EAM platform."

Implementing the Solution

In 2017, Vopak began developing the Permit-to-Work module in collaboration with Hexagon partner SPIE [Spectades](#). *"The collaboration went very smoothly,"* Hoefnagel says. *"We built the risk management modules together and then added many of our own functionalities."*

The first pilot deployments took place a year later at several terminals. In 2019, the module was approved as a global standard within Vopak, and the rollout has continued ever since. *"To me, it's a textbook win-win,"* adds Hoefnagel. *"Hexagon included the module in its EAM platform, and we've contributed—and continue to contribute—extensive expertise. In that sense, it's also become 'our' product. When we propose new ideas, Hexagon checks with other users of the module. If there's enough interest, they develop it further."*

“It's been great to see how well everything works. Hexagon has brought a strong solution to the market, and we get outstanding support for what feels like a tailor-made application. When we want to test or implement new features, we don't have to handle it ourselves—Hexagon does it for us.”

Jos Hoefnagel,
Product Manager, Vopak



Realizing Results

The Permit-to-Work system has become a core part of the HxGN EAM platform and is used to ensure safety and compliance during high-risk work. It helps ensure that work is carried out in a controlled manner and that all necessary safety measures are in place.

Key functions include issuing digital work permits, managing LoTo procedures and tracking isolation points. The system also handles gas test certificates for confined spaces and supports task risk analyses. It provides a site overview that constitutes a live digital map of a terminal showing all active permits.

Four Key Impacts On Operations

From the outset, the development of the Permit-to-Work module has delivered clear results in four key areas. Hear what Jos Hoefnagel has to say about each of these:

The first is **safety control**. Transparency has improved significantly, with permit details now accessible to everyone, both on-site and globally. The system also enforces strict separation of duties. *“It ensures that the person who creates a permit can never approve it themselves. It also has built-in safeguards such as gas test certificates and Lockout-Tagout procedures to prevent shortcuts.”*

The second area is **operational efficiency**. Permits-to-Work are fully integrated into the HxGN EAM platform, which has helped standardize processes and accelerate approvals.

“We’re seeing less waiting time and more hands-on-tool time as a result.” The third is **knowledge sharing and performance alignment**. Improvements made at one terminal are now quickly visible to others, enabling faster adoption of best practices across sites. *“We’re learning from each other more than ever. And now, we can better benchmark performance across different locations.”*

Lastly, digital work permits have **simplified compliance** by eliminating the need to maintain paper records. *“The efficiency of the entire process has improved. The system can, for example, automatically issue alerts when a work permit is about to expire or has been approved. It can also generate reports to document safety measures taken, which helps demonstrate compliance with laws and regulations.”*

Vopak now operates the Permit-to-Work system within HxGN EAM at 25 terminals. It is widely used by maintenance, operations, safety and projects teams alike.

Over 5,000 people rely on the module every day, ranging from work planners, to supervisors, operational staff, safety officers and contractors. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

Hoefnagel expects it will take another two to three years to fully roll out the system across Vopak worldwide. In the meantime, Vopak and Hexagon continue working together to improve and expand the application: *“Think integrations with other systems, but also better analytics capabilities powered by AI.”*

** This case study is based on information from the Dutch article published in NVDO's VAM Magazine #2, June 2025 and has been adapted into an English version.*

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