

H&S | UK

HEALTH AND SAFETY Managing Manual Handling

DBE Ltd – Birkenhead

INTRODUCTION

Manual handling operations currently account for approximately 35 % percent of all reported industrial accidents. Common types of injuries such as hernias and prolapsed discs can cause considerable pain, permanent disability and in some cases loss of experienced and valuable staff. Although such accidents and injuries will never be completely eliminated manual-handling tasks can be managed in order to reduce the likelihood of accidents.

REGULATION

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations require an assessment of all risks to employees, if this general assessment indicates the possibility of a risk from the manual handling of loads then the requirements of the Manual Handling Operations Regulations should be followed.

WHAT IS MANUAL HANDLING?

The regulations apply to the manual handling of loads by human effort as opposed to mechanical handling by crane, clamp truck etc.

Introducing mechanical assistance may reduce but not eliminate manual handling since human effort is still required to move, steady or position the load.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibility for reducing the risk of injury from manual handling operations rests with the company and is met by departmental managers and key staff trained in manual handling safety.

The strategy which departments should adopt is:

- Identify manual handling operations, which involve a risk of injury.
- Carry out a risk assessment of the activity. This should detail the task and the risk reduction methods to be employed, in order of preference:
 - Eliminate the task
 - Automate or mechanise the activity
 - Modify the activity and where appropriate provide training and information to handlers.
- Periodically review manual handling operations to ensure that developments and changes in the working environment can be accommodated.

STRATEGY

Where we identify that tasks our staff undertake involve risk of injury through manual handling we will complete a risk assessment of the task, from this we will aim to eliminate or at the very least reduce, the risks associated with manual handling.

Once we have the risk assessment signed off at director level, method statements will be produced and provided to staff as required.

Identification and assessment of manual handling tasks must be undertaken by a competent person trained in the techniques of manual handling.

TRAINING AND SUPPORT MATERIALS

All employees will complete manual handling training, this is provided in-house by our own trainer, and however, selected staff will also attend an external training company for refresher training.

The company uses a varied approach to the training form, these are:

- Online courses
- External third party training
- Internal training
- Tool box talks

External & online training – employees will receive a certificate once the course has been successfully completed.

Internal training – details of the course are held on the employees personnel file for reference.

Tool box talks are supplied in hard copy so the employee can keep these for future reference.

A GUIDE TO MANUAL HANDLING RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK REDUCTION

1) What is manual handling?

1.1) Manual handling is the handling of loads by human effort as opposed to mechanical handling by crane, lift truck etc. Mechanical assistance may reduce but not eliminate manual handling since human effort is still required to move, steady or position the load.

2) Why risk assessment?

2.1) Once hazardous manual handling tasks have been identified then in order to manage them there needs to be an assessment which identifies and evaluates the significant risk factors and specifies the measures necessary to eliminate or reduce risks.

2.2) A good risk assessment will consider the task, the environment, the load and the individual handler's capability.

2.3) The object of the risk assessment (in order of preference) is to eliminate activity to reduce risk and to provide training and information where appropriate.

3) Skills and knowledge required for assessment

3.1) The person undertaking the assessment should have an understanding of the requirements of the regulations as detailed above.

Author & Authorised Signatory:



Name: Rob Chappell

Title: Health & Safety Consultant

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