

MANUAL HANDLING POLICY

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1. INTRODUCTION

More than a third of all over-three-day injuries reported each year to the Health and Safety Executive and local authorities are caused by moving and handling - the transporting or supporting of loads by hand or by bodily force.

Manual Handling injuries currently account for over a quarter of all injuries reported to the authorities each year. Whilst fatal handling injuries are unusual, 6% of all major injuries arise from handling activities. "There is more sickness absence as a result of injuries sustained during moving and handling activities than any other cause of accidents at work".

Manual handling injuries can occur wherever people are at work e.g. in offices, warehouses, hospitals, laboratories, and while making deliveries.

Many of the work activities of National Services Scotland (NSS) staff involve lifting and handling; for example the donor session attendants, mail room and warehouse staff all perform a number of specific lifting and handling operations every day.

The legislation not only takes account of the weight to be lifted but several other factors that are of equal significance. The NSS policy reflects these guidelines.

2 MANUAL HANDLING POLICY

National Services Scotland (NSS) will, where reasonably practical, avoid the need for staff to undertake manual handling tasks that are likely to cause injury and where it is not reasonably practicable to do so, will risk assess any such tasks or activities to reduce the risk of harm.

2.1 LEGISLATION

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, as amended in 2002 ('the Regulations') apply to a wide range of moving and handling activities, including lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling or carrying. The load may be either inanimate - such as a box or a trolley, or animate - a person.

The MHO Regulations 1992 (SI No. 2793) as amended 2002 have been introduced under the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), to enable the UK to implement the requirements of European Directive 90/269/EEC on the manual handling of loads. The Regulations, which came into force on 01.01.1993, seek to prevent injury from manual handling operations and revoke and replace all previous legislation concerned with the lifting and carrying of heavy weights.

Any breach of this policy may be regarded as an offence and the member of staff may be subject to investigation in accordance with the NSS Disciplinary Policy.

Should members of staff have any difficulties with understanding any aspect of this policy, or require further information in respect of accessibility, interpretation or application of the policy, they should contact their NSS H&S Adviser.

2.2 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Competent person – trained manual handling risk assessor.

“Manual Handling Operations” - means any transporting or supporting of a load by hand or bodily force (including lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving)”.

Load - means any item or object that is being transported or supported. The definition includes the handling of an animal or person. So, for example the actions taken by a mailroom person to move mail sacks, warehouse attendant to hand pick, or a medical laboratory scientist moving a centrifuge, constitute manual handling operations.

Injury from manual handling operations - does not include injury caused by the inherent properties of substances that spill from or contaminate the surfaces of the load. However where the external properties of the load are changed by leakage e.g. the load is made slippery, that slippiness would fall within the regulations whilst any chemical or skin hazard that arises would not. This would fall under the COSHH Regulations.

2.3 RISK ASSESSMENT

Where a hazardous manual handling operation cannot be avoided a thorough risk assessment must be undertaken by a competent person, (Risk Assessment Template available on geNSS in the HWL Health and Safety, Moving and Handling Toolkit; Appendix 3) and measures must be introduced to reduce the risk of injury to the lowest level practicable. Monitoring must take place to ensure the effectiveness of those measures and re-assessment must be carried out where there is a change of work, a review following an incident or accident investigation, or a question of the effectiveness of the procedures.

2.3.1 Whilst automation or mechanisation may reduce manual handling hazards they may introduce new different hazards of their own. These factors must be taken into account during the assessment.

2.3.2 When completing the risk assessment form the following should be considered by the competent person:-

- (a) the handling operation(s) and anticipate all reasonably foreseeable factors.
- b) to review as per local agreement (6 months to yearly) and update when there has been a significant change.
- (c) the significant findings recorded in a retrievable way.

2.3.3 The risk assessment should take into account the following functions:

- (i) the tasks
- (ii) the loads
- (iii) the working environment
- (iv) individual capability

- (v) equipment
- (vi) other factors e.g. work equipment, weather conditions

2.3.4 Steps to reduce risk will depend on the circumstance and could be as simple as reducing load, size or distance of travel, or reviewing the suitability of any transport/handling equipment.

Examples of handling aids that may be appropriate include electric or manual hoists, sack barrows or other suitable trolleys.

2.3.5 A process flow guide for the Manual Handling Operations Regulations is available as Appendix 1.

2.4 MUSCULOSKELETAL EFFECTS

The particular musculoskeletal / occupational health effects and potential concerns with the individual employee are:

- (i) For work involving handling of loads the employer must ensure that the task is within the ability of the worker. It is unusual that anyone should be excluded, and advice from the OHP should be sought.
- (ii) NSS employees who may have a health problem or medical condition. All employees are obliged to advise their supervisor immediately of any condition that has the potential to put them at greater risk of injury. Such conditions may include any relevant medical history, recent injury / surgical operations and pregnancy.

A health assessment will be carried out by Occupational Health (OH) where a person is being considered for a job that includes manual handling operations. This would include pre-employment / change of employment and staff requiring additional support, including following an incident / accident.

For information on the procedure for referral to the Occupational Health Service see Appendices 2, 3 and 4.

2.5 TRAINING

National Services Scotland will adopt training strategies to take account of manual handling practices, which will provide adequate information, instruction, supervision and training covering all aspects of manual handling activities.

Training will be provided on a variety of levels:

All Staff

This will be provided on an appropriate basis dependant on the degree of risk associated with the tasks undertaken within that area and demonstrated in local manual handling policy and risk assessments.

Competent Persons

This will be provided through external providers on 2 levels:

- Manual Handling Risk Assessor Program
- Manual Handling Risk Assessor & Train the Trainer Program

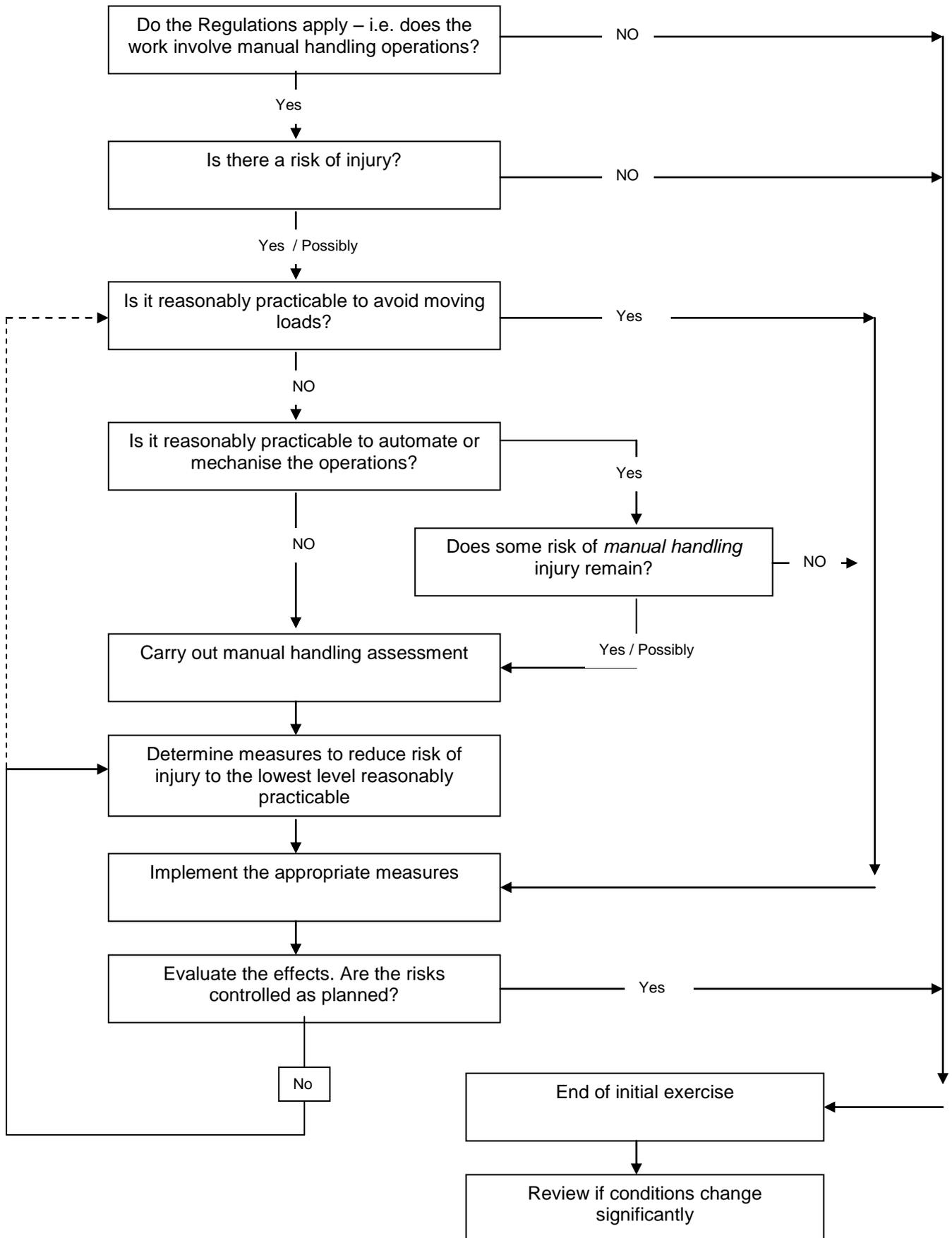
Each site should endeavour to have at least one competent person available on site to complete and support any training and assessments required.

Support to complete this training is available from the central Healthy Working Lives Team if required.

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APPENDIX 1

Find below a process flow guide for the Manual Handling Risk Assessment Process



1 Occupational Health Concerns

- 1.1 The particular occupational health concerns with the individual employee are:
- 1.1.1 Does the job require a person of unusual strength or height?
- There is a certain amount of self selection for work involving handling of loads, but the employer must still ensure that the task is within the ability of the worker. It is unusual that anyone should be excluded, and advice from the Occupational Health Provider should be sought before any such decisions made.
- In general men have greater physical strength than women, but there is a great deal of variation in individual capabilities. Women are generally shorter than men, and some lifting tasks may be better suited to employees within a given height range. At the same time physical capability varies with age, teenagers and older workers may be more susceptible to injury and in the case of older workers, the recovery period may be longer.
- To balance this however the benefits of age and experience and mature judgement may compensate for declining physical ability.
- 1.1.2 Does the job create a hazard to NSS employees who may have a health problem or medical condition including during pregnancy?
- Any NSS employee is obliged to advise his/her supervisor or Human Resources Department of any condition that may include pregnancy, recent surgical operations and any relevant medical history (both occupational and non occupational).
- 1.2 For this reason all NSS staff will have a Pre-Employment health assessment in order to obtain relevant health information where a person is being considered for a job that includes manual handling operations with a risk of injury. This assessment is in addition to the basic health questionnaire (Appendix 4). Initially some current NSS staff will require to be referred. This should be decided by the Line Manager and the local Health and Safety Advisor as a result of the assessment.
- 1.3 In addition to the Pre-Employment stage, occupational health advice should be sought concerning any employee who has an absence of 3 days or more due to a lifting and handling injury or an employee who records a number of such injuries in the accident book or by the accident reporting procedure. This referral should be made by the relevant Human Resources Manager and the local Health and Safety Advisor.
- 1.4 Steps to reduce risk will depend on circumstances and could be as simple as reducing load size or distances of travel, such as access and availability of lifts and should be considered where reviewing accommodation for donor sessions.
- Examples of handling aids that may be appropriate include electric or manual hoists, sack barrows or other suitable trolleys.

APPENDIX 2

- 1.5 The measures will certainly encompass the provision of suitable training and information to employees. Training should include the principles of kinetic lifting, a safe system of work and the use of any risk reduction methods NSS have provided.

NSS should take steps to provide information to employees on:

- a) the weight of each load
- b) the heaviest side of a load
- c) where the centre of gravity is not positioned centrally, including loads where the centre of gravity is likely to shift during handling, e.g. half full containers of liquid.

- 1.6 Information regarding the Manual Handling Operations Regulations and other aspects of lifting and handling will be provided by the Local / National Health and Safety Advisers.

2. Procedure for Referring to the Occupational Health Service

- 2.1 Pre Employment health assessment should be undertaken for all NSS staff. Where the job applied for involves lifting and handling, the basic health questionnaire should be completed (See Policy: Pre Employment/Placement Health Assessment) and in addition the Lifting and Handling questionnaire should be completed (Appendix 3).
- 2.2 Any employee whose job involves lifting and handling who becomes pregnant or informs Human Resources of a medical problem that may affect their ability to lift should be referred to the Occupational Health Nurse in the first instance.
- 2.3 The unit Health and Safety Advisor will liaise with the Occupational Health Provider and advise them of any accident patterns emerging. In addition, any employee who has a 3 day plus absence as a result of a lifting and handling accident should be referred to the Occupational Health Service. Similarly, any individual who has a high accident rate should also be referred to the Service. This referral should be made by either the unit Health and Safety Advisor or the employee's Line Manager.
- 2.4 After assessment of both the individual and job, the Occupational Health Nurse should refer the employee where appropriate. If further information is required the Occupational Health Provider will contact the unit Health and Safety Advisor or Line Manager.
- 2.5 If further medical information is required the individual's General Practitioner or other specialist may be approached in line with Access to Medical Records Act. All medical and Occupational Health records will remain confidential to the Occupational Health Provider and will not be disclosed without the employee's consent.
- 2.6 Human Resources/Department Heads and employees will be advised of recommendations and factors which may maximise their functional abilities and minimise risks to the employee in terms of lifting and handling. This may

APPENDIX 2

be by phone in the first instance if appropriate but will be in writing within 5 working days.

- 2.7 Human Resources should be advised of any other recommendation such as training or mechanical aids which could minimise the risk of lifting and handling injury within NSS.
- 2.8 The Occupational Health Provider will be able to advise and consult with NSS supervisors and Management on any issues concerned with lifting and handling

Moving and Handling Risk Assessment

This Assessment Report has been completed for the individual named below following a review of their Musculoskeletal Assessment Questionnaire. Any action required should be implemented within the timescale(s) specified. A review will be undertaken on the Review Date indicated.

Task:

No. of employees that conduct this task:

How long is the task typically undertaken for:

a) without a break:

b) in a typical shift (excluding breaks):

How frequently is the task undertaken:(e.g. daily, weekly):

Other tasks undertaken by worker that may pose risk of musculoskeletal injuries:

Can the task/operation be eliminated?

Could the process be: Automated?

Eliminated?

What other risks could this introduce?

M&H Assessor:

Signature:

Date:

Line Manager:

Signature:

Date:

Task Description – Outline the task and activity undertaken:

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Activity/Tasks	Yes/ No	Observation <i>Note problem postures and identify parts of the body involved</i>	Recommendations/Actions Required
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General Information

<p>Does the work involve any piecework, bonus incentives or production quotas?</p> <p>Do the tasks involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Repetition? Repeated motions in the same way with the same body part(s)? b) Frequently or prolonged physical effort? c) A rate of work imposed by a task or process? <p>Are work breaks and/or changes of activity taken before the onset of visual or postural fatigue?</p>			
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Activity/Tasks	Yes/ No	Observation <i>Note problem postures and identify parts of the body involved</i>	Recommendations/Actions Required
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The Body Assessment

<p>Does the task involve:</p> <p>a) Force Pushing or pulling products/items/parts forcefully with the hands or wrists in an awkward or bent position?</p> <p>Picking up heavy or awkward objects with the hands?</p> <p>b) Static Exertion Holding an awkward position or posture for a long period of time?</p>			
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Activity/Tasks	Yes/ No	Observation <i>Note problem postures and identify parts of the body involved</i>	Recommendations/Actions Required
Does the task involve: a) lifting heavy loads? b) pushing, pulling or dragging heavy loads? c) lifting involving high or low lifts or carrying over a distance? d) unsatisfactory body movement or posture, especially: - bending or twisting frequently at the waist - twisting the trunk? - stooping? - reaching in front or behind? - reaching upwards? - working with a bent neck?			
Capabilities	Yes/ No	Observation <i>Note problem postures and identify parts of the body involved</i>	Recommendations/Actions Required
Individual Capabilities			
Does the task involve: a) unusual strength, height, ability etc? b) creating a hazard to those who might reasonably be considered to be pregnant or to have a health problem? c) requirement of special training of individuals involved to be taken into account Have physical capabilities of the individuals involved been taken into account?			
<i>The Load Assessment</i>			
Outline the types of loads involved:			
Loads	Yes/ No	Observation <i>Note problem postures and identify parts of the body involved</i>	Recommendations/Actions Required
Are the Loads: a) heavy? b) bulky or unwieldy? c) difficult to grasp? d) unstable or with contents likely to shift? e) sharp, hot or otherwise potentially damaging? If stored, are the storage facilities easy to access and items stored safely, at a safe height in relation to weight? Are substances involved?			

Environmental Assessment

Outline the working environment(s) where tasks and activities take place

Environment	Yes/ No	Observation <i>Note problem postures and identify parts of the body involved</i>	Recommendations/Actions Required
<p>Are there:</p> <p>a) space constraints preventing good posture?</p> <p>b) uneven, slippery or unstable floor?</p> <p>c) variations in levels of floor surfaces?</p> <p>d) extremes of temperature or humidity?</p> <p>e) conditions causing ventilation problems?</p> <p>f) poor lighting conditions?</p> <p>g) high levels of noise which could impair concentration or prevent normal conversation?</p>			

Other Factors

Other factors	Yes/ No	Observation <i>Note problem postures and identify parts of the body involved</i>	Recommendations/Actions Required
<p>Do any of the tasks involve the use of tools?</p> <p>If so, does the use involve:</p> <p>a) bending the wrist?</p> <p>b) direct pressure on the palm of the hand?</p> <p>If tools or personal protective clothing are required:</p> <p>a) has the task been selected based on a risk assessment process?</p> <p>b) is it suitable for the task?</p> <p>c) are there systems in place for maintenance, reporting of defects and completion of repairs?</p> <p>d) PPE - clothing, does it hinder movement or posture?</p> <p>e) are there suitable storage facilities?</p>			

Additional Information/Summary

**NSS OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE
MANUAL HANDLING – HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE**

NAME:	DATE OF BIRTH
EMPLOYEE NUMBER:	DESIGNATION

	Yes	/	No
1. Do you have or have you suffered from:			
a) limited range of movement in:			
Limbs	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Back	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
b)			
Heart problems	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Circulatory problems	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Respiratory problems	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
c)			
History of hernias	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Muscle of joint pain	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
History of back pain	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Vertigo (dizziness)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Fear of heights	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Do you have a hearing impairment?	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Do you have a speech impairment?	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Other (please specify)			

You must inform your supervisor of any physical condition suffered by you or change to the above information which might reasonably be considered to affect your ability to undertake manual handling operations safely.

Signature.....

Date.....

7 REFERENCES

Manual Handling - Guidance on Regulations (ISBN 011 886 3355)

Croners Health and Safety at Work

Lighten the Load - Guidance for Employers on Musculoskeletal Disorders
H.S.E.

Ergonomics At Work HSE Ind (g) 90 (L) (neu)

GMB Working Together
European Year of Safety Hygiene and Health Protection at Work

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Reviewed By February 2012

Agreed by: Date:

Chair, Staff Governance Committee