



lyit

Institiúid
Teicneolaíochta
Leitir Ceanáin

Letterkenny
Institute
of Technology

Manual Handling Procedure

Introduction

Manual handling of loads occurs in a range of work activities in the Institute of Technology for this reason the Institute has undertaken to develop and instigate a Manual Handling Procedure. Manual handling makes up a significant proportion of non-fatal accidents reported to the Health and Safety Authority every year from all sectors of the workplace. Injuries relating to Manual Handling have been on the increase since 1993 and in 2003 for example 34% of reportable accidents were injuries relating to manual handling activity according to the HSA. Sufficient resources will be provided to carry out the requirements of this Procedure.

The Institute recognises that work related musculo-skeletal injuries from manual handling can affect staff. The key objective of this manual handling Procedure is to avoid and reduce the risk associated from manual handling. Under The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work, (General Applications) Regulations 2007, Chapter 4 of Part 2, outlines the requirements that must be adhered to in relation to manual handling of loads. The scope of this Procedure is to ensure that all manual handling risks are assessed and manual handling is avoided and reduced where reasonably practicable.

Definition of Manual Handling

Regulation 68 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work, (General Application) Regulations 2007 defines manual handling of loads as the following:

“Any transporting or supporting of any load by one or more employees, and includes lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving a load, **which by reason of its characteristics or unfavourable ergonomic conditions, involves risk**, particularly of back injury, to employees.”

These characteristics or unfavourable ergonomic conditions are the risk factors which are outlined in Schedule 3 of the 2007 Regulations and have the potential to cause harm see appendix 1 for list of the risk factors.

Duties of Responsible Persons

Head of School or Functional Area

The heads of school or function are responsible for ensuring that the appropriate control measures and work practices to avoid or reduce manual handling risks are implemented in their functional areas. The head of each school/functional area are also responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of the manual handling Procedure in their area to ensure the controls are in place and being used. Head of School or Functional Area should ensure that persons that cannot avoid carrying out manual handling tasks should partake in manual handling training at a minimum of every three years to reduce the risk as low as is possible.

Staff

The co-operation of staff is essential in reducing and eliminating the risks from manual handling. Staff should therefore ensure they comply with the following requirements:

- They should follow the safe system of work designed and introduced by the management and should not deviate from this without good reason;
- They should use any mechanical aids which have been provided for their use and for which they have been trained. Any faults with mechanical aids should be immediately reported to the head of school or function;
- They should assist their head of School/Function with the implementation of staff training, should attend training sessions as required and should apply the knowledge gained from training to their daily work;
- They should report all accidents and occurrences which either caused, or could have caused, injury;
- They should inform the head of school or function if they are unable to undertake their normal manual handling duties because of injury, illness or any other condition;
- They should not undertake any manual handling operation which they believe is beyond their capability;
- They should report any unsafe systems of work to the head of school or function.

Training

External manual handling instructors will be utilised and carry out manual handling training for staff members. This training will be completed every three years and records of this training kept.

Accident Reporting & Accident Investigation

All accidents or incidents no matter how minor are reported in the Institute. It is an important that manual handling incidents or accidents are also noted and records kept as per the institutes' accident reporting procedure. All staff members are responsible for ensuring these records are generated.

Procurement of Equipment

All schools and functions in the Institute should be aware of manual handling hazards that may be created when purchasing new equipment or making changes to existing systems of work. This can be controlled by appropriate audit procedures for purchasing new equipment or altering systems of work. For example, the introduction of new mechanical aids to avoid or reduce manual handling, then staff are given appropriate training in the safe use of this new equipment.

Communication

This Procedure document will be accessible on the Health and Safety Section of the Institutes website. In addition, an electronic copy will be emailed to all Heads of School or Functional Areas, Health & Safety Representatives and Health and Safety Committee members, for circulation and implementation within areas under their control.

Consultation

Heads of School and Functional areas of the Institute will implement mechanisms to consult with staff and their representatives, Health and Safety Committees and where appropriate, registered associations for staff throughout all stages of identification, assessment and control of both existing and new manual handling tasks and in the evaluation process once controls are implemented.

Reference Documents

For further information on manual handling please see appendix 2 for reference documents.

Appendix 1 - Schedule 3

Regulation 69

RISK FACTORS FOR MANUAL HANDLING OF LOADS

1. Characteristics of the load

The manual handling of a load may present a risk particularly of back injury if it is:

too heavy or too large, unwieldy or difficult to grasp, unstable or has contents likely to shift, positioned in a manner requiring it to be held or manipulated at a distance from the trunk, or with a bending or twisting of the trunk, or likely, because of its contours or consistency (or both), to result in injury to employees, particularly in the event of a collision.

2. Physical effort required

A physical effort may present a risk particularly of back injury if it is:

too strenuous, only achieved by a twisting movement of the trunk, likely to result in a sudden movement of the load, or made with the body in an unstable posture.

3. Characteristics of the working environment

The characteristics of the working environment may increase a risk particularly of back injury if:

there is not enough room, in particular vertically, to carry out the activity, the floor is uneven, thus presenting tripping hazards, or is slippery in relation to the employee's footwear, the place of work or the working environment prevents the handling of loads at a safe height or with good posture by the employee, there are variations in the level of the floor or the working surface, requiring the load to be manipulated on different levels, the floor or foot rest is unstable, or the temperature, humidity or ventilation is unsuitable.

4. Requirements of the activity

The activity may present a risk particularly of back injury if it entails one or more of the following requirements:

over-frequent or over prolonged physical effort involving in particular the spine, an insufficient bodily rest or recovery period, excessive lifting, lowering or carrying distances, or a rate of work imposed by a process which cannot be altered by the employee.

5. Individual Risk Factors

The employee may be at risk if he or she:

is physically unsuited to carry out the task in question, is wearing unsuitable clothing, footwear or other personal effects, or does not have adequate or appropriate knowledge or training.

Appendix 2 – Reference Documents

The following documents are useful for reference and guidance for this Procedure:

- Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 – S.I. No. 10 of 2005
- Safety Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 – S.I. No. 299 of 2007
- Health and Safety Authority – Guidance on the Management of Manual Handling in the Workplace (June 2005)
- Guide to the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 Chapter 4 of Part 2: Manual Handling of Loads