



# WHS-PRO-020

## Manual Handling Procedure

WHS-PRO-020 Manual Handling Procedure					
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## PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to provide a systematic approach to the identification, assessment and control of manual handling risks and to prevent manual handling injuries in the workplace and to ensure legal compliance.

## SCOPE

Applies to tasks involving manual handling which are to be identified and risk assessed so that hazards are eliminated or controlled to prevent injuries or adverse health effects.

## REFERENCES

- AS/NZS 4801:2001 OH&S Management Systems – 4.4.6 Hazard identification, hazard/risk assessment and control of hazards
- WHS Regulation 2011 - Chapter 4 Hazardous work, Part 4.2 Hazardous manual tasks
- Code of Practice – Hazardous manual tasks

## DEFINITIONS

### **Hazardous Manual Task:**

Means a task that requires a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any person, animal or thing that involves one or more of the following:

- repetitive or sustained force
- high or sudden force
- repetitive movement
- sustained or awkward posture
- exposure to vibration

These factors (known as characteristics of a hazardous manual task) directly stress the body and can lead to injury

### **Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDS)**

A musculoskeletal disorder means an injury to, or a disease of, the musculoskeletal system, whether occurring suddenly or over time. It does not include an injury caused by crushing, entrapment (such as fractures and dislocations) or cutting resulting from the mechanical operation of plant.

## FORMS

- [WHS-FOR-020.1 Hazardous Manual Task Identification Worksheet](#)

## ACTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSD)

- A musculoskeletal disorder means an injury to, or a disease of, the musculoskeletal system, whether occurring suddenly or over time. It does not include an injury caused by crushing, entrapment (such as fractures and dislocations) or cutting resulting from the mechanical operation of plant.
- MSD may include conditions such as:
  - sprains and strains of muscles, ligaments and tendons
  - back injuries, including damage to the muscles, tendons, ligaments, spinal discs, nerves, joints and bones
  - joint and bone injuries or degeneration, including injuries to the shoulder, elbow, wrist, hip, knee, ankle, hands and feet
  - nerve injuries or compression (e.g. carpal tunnel syndrome)
  - muscular and vascular disorders as a result of hand-arm vibration
  - soft tissue hernias
  - chronic pain.
- MSD occur in three ways:
  - gradual wear and tear to joints, ligaments, muscles and inter-vertebral discs caused by repeated or continuous use of the same body parts, including static body positions
  - sudden damage caused by strenuous activity, or unexpected movements such as when loads being handled move or change position suddenly.
  - exposure to vibration.
- These factors (known as characteristics of a hazardous manual task) directly stress the body and can lead to injury.

### Manual Task Risk Management Process

- Sydney Harbour Federation Trust aims to reduce the incidence of MSD and comply with the WHS Regulation by managing the risks associated with hazardous manual tasks. This is undertaken through a risk management process and to do this Sydney Harbour Federation Trust will, so far as reasonably practicable;
  - Identify hazardous manual tasks,
  - Assessing the risks,
  - Eliminate the risks from the hazardous manual tasks,
  - Implement control measures in accordance with the hierarchy of controls to minimise the risks from hazardous manual tasks where elimination is not practicable,
  - Maintain, monitor and review the risk control measures.
- Consultation with the employee performing and affected by the hazardous manual tasks is required at all steps in the process described above.

### Identify Hazardous Manual Tasks

- In managing risks from carrying out manual tasks, Sydney Harbour Federation Trust shall identify those tasks that have the potential to cause musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs).
- Hazardous manual tasks are ones that involve involving one or more of the following:
  - repetitive or sustained force
  - high or sudden force
  - repetitive movement
  - sustained or awkward posture
  - exposure to vibration.
- Hazards that arise from manual tasks generally involve interaction between a employee and:
  - the work tasks and how they are performed
  - the tools, equipment and objects handled
  - the physical work environment.
- Managers shall identify those tasks that have the potential to cause musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) and shall complete the **WHS-FOR-020.1 Hazardous Manual Task Identification Worksheet**.

### Assessing the Risk of Hazardous Manual Tasks

- Where Managers have identified hazardous manual tasks from the **WHS-FOR-020.1 Hazardous Manual Task Identification Worksheet** a risk assessment shall be conducted. A risk assessment allows the examination of the characteristics of a manual task in more detail, and identify how to control it and determine:
  - which postures, movements and forces of the task pose a risk.
  - where during the task they pose a risk.
  - why they are occurring.
  - what needs to be fixed.

### Controlling the Risks

- Effective risk control will require that you know what risk factors are present, where they occur and why they are present (sources of risk).
- Risk control measures are ranked in terms of the level of protection and reliability from highest to lowest. This is known as the Hierarchy of Controls and includes;
  - Eliminate the risk
  - Minimise the risk through the a) substitution, b) isolation or c) engineering controls
  - Administrative controls
  - Personal Protective Equipment

### Implementing Controls

- To implement effective risk controls, a range of options may be needed including short term and long-term solutions.
- Employees should be involved in the selection and planning of implementation of risk controls including any trials that may be possible.
- Effective risk controls should be implemented with training, instructions, information and supervision provided to employees using and affected by the risk control measures.

### Review Controls

- Control measures that have been implemented shall be reviewed by the Managers and, if necessary, revised to make sure they work as planned and to maintain a work environment that is without risks to health and safety.
- Control measures may be reviewed using the same methods as the initial hazard identification step and consult the employees involved in the manual task and consider the following:
  - Are the control measures working effectively in both their design and operation, without creating new risks?
  - Have new work methods or new equipment reduced physical strain or difficulty?
  - Has instruction and training on hazardous manual tasks and the implemented control measures been successful?
  - Is the frequency and severity of MSDs reducing over time?
  - If new information becomes available, does it indicate current controls may no longer be the most effective?
- If problems are found, go back through the risk management steps, review your information and make further decisions about risk control.

### Information, Training and Instruction

- Training in the type of control measures implemented should be provided during induction into a new job and as part of an on-going training needs. Training should be provided to employees required to carry out, supervise or manage hazardous manual tasks
- The training should include information on:
  - manual task risk management, including the characteristics of hazardous manual tasks
  - specific manual task risks and the measures in place to control them
  - how to perform manual tasks safely, including the use of mechanical aids, tools, equipment and safe work procedures
  - how to report a problem or maintenance issues.