



Health and Safety

Manual Handling

Minimum Standard

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1 Aims and Principles

The aim of this Government of Jersey (GoJ) Minimum Standard is to provide guidance on the steps which should be taken to ensure safe handling of loads, including people, in the workplace.

This Minimum Standard is intended to cover hazardous manual handling tasks and departments responsible for carrying out this type of work should develop their own procedures which detail the specific arrangements to be implemented.

The procedures must include the standards set out in this document or be of an equivalent or higher standard.

2 Legislation and Guidance

a) Applicable Legislation

[Health and Safety at Work \(Jersey\) Law, 1989](#)

b) Guidance

[Manual Handling at Work resources \(UK HSE\)](#)

[Manual Handling at Work – A Brief Guide INDG143 \(UK HSE\)](#)

[Manual handling - Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 - Guidance on Regulations L23 \(UK\)](#)

[Risk Assessment for Pushing and Pulling INDG478 \(UK HSE\)](#)

[Manual Handling Assessment Charts – MAC tool \(UK HSE\)](#)

[Good Handling Techniques \(UK HSE\)](#)

[Resources index - Musculoskeletal disorders \(UK HSE\)](#)

3 Definitions

Manual Handling

Any transporting or supporting of a load by hand or bodily force which includes:

- Lifting, holding, pushing, pulling, throwing, carrying or moving
- Using mechanical aids which require effort e.g. trolleys

Hazardous Manual Handling

Where the manual handling operation is such that it poses a risk of injury to persons carrying it out or in the case of people handling, to the person being moved or lifted. This can be due to any number of factors including the nature of the task, the individual carrying out the task, the type of load and environmental factors.

These factors are further explained in Appendix A.

Mechanise/Automated Equipment

Powered equipment which can be used to handle a load e.g. crane, fork lift truck, hoist etc.

Lifting and Handling Aids

Equipment which can be used to move a load but which usually requires effort to load/unload and move e.g. sack truck, pump truck, wheel chair, hoist, goods cage etc.

4 Who this Minimum Standard Applies to

- Government of Jersey (GoJ) and States' employees
- Voluntary staff or those on honorary contracts where there is no implied contract of employment

Application to Emergency Services

Where departments carry out manual handling operations under emergency conditions e.g. the Jersey Fire and Rescue Service, it is recognised that working under these circumstances presents unique challenges.

Prohibiting all potentially hazardous manual handling operations would create an inability to provide the general public with an adequate rescue service and what is 'reasonably practicable' may not be easy to ascertain in an emergency situation.

What is 'reasonably practicable' for the Jersey Fire and Rescue Service, for example, would need to take into account the wider context in which firefighters operate, where any further preventive steps would make its emergency functions extremely difficult to perform.

However, this does not mean that employees can be exposed to unacceptable risk of injury. When considering what is 'reasonably practicable', additional relevant factors to be considered may be:

- the emergency situation and the need for the lifting operation;
- the public authority's duties to the public and to the particular member of the public who needs help.

The department must ensure that their own arrangements reflect these special circumstances, including the requirement for dynamic risk assessments and the process for recording decisions made.

5 Links to other GoJ Policies, Minimum Standards and Guidance

a) Policies

Government of Jersey - Health and Safety Policy

b) GoJ Minimum Standards

Risk Assessment
Personal Protective Equipment
Lone Working
Control of Contractors
Incident Recording and Investigation
Occupational Health – Surveillance and Monitoring
Lift Trucks
Cranes, Lifting Appliances and Lifting Accessories

c) Other Internal Guidance

Further guidance may be available from other departments carrying out this type of work.

For assistance with preparing internal procedures, contact should be made with your departmental Health and Safety Manager/Adviser “Professional”.

6 Roles and Responsibilities

The department’s policy and procedures for manual handling, must clearly set out the roles and responsibilities of all those individuals involved with the work.

Reference should be made to the Government of Jersey Health and Safety Policy for general responsibilities.

7 Manual Handling in Specific Sectors

Managing manual handling operations in specific sectors can pose unique challenges.

Sector specific guidance is available online at [Resources index - Musculoskeletal disorders - HSE](#)'

8 Identifying Manual Handling Tasks

Manual handling is carried out in virtually all workplaces and the first step in controlling the risks is to identify those tasks which pose a potential risk to employees. Consultation with employees who carry out manual handling tasks is likely to provide a good indication whether a task is potentially hazardous or not.

There will be tasks which are obvious e.g. where employees are required to move loads from one location to another or to carry out repetitive lifting. However, some manual handling tasks may be less obvious e.g. pushing or pulling loads, providing support to a load, transferring a load onto/off of a manual handling aid etc.

There may also be some tasks where the risks from manual handling tasks are not recognised because the role is not considered to be one which involves manual handling e.g. administrative staff handling boxes of paper, teaching staff moving large volumes of materials etc. It is therefore vital that managers consider all tasks carried out by their employees where manual handling could be involved.

For some tasks, it will be immediately apparent that the risk is low and the "simple filters" detailed in Section 10 can be used to confirm this.

9 Principles of Risk Control in Manual Handling

When determining the best means of managing the risk associated with a hazardous manual handling task, the following should be considered:

AVOID hazardous manual handling operations where reasonably practicable to do so.

Consider whether the load must be moved at all. Can the task be carried out in a different way?

You can avoid hazardous manual handling operations by:

- redesigning the task to avoid moving the load
- automating or mechanising the process

The best time to decide about mechanisation or automation is when you design plant or work systems e.g. design the layout of a process so there is very little movement of materials.

Consider introducing, for example, a conveyor, a chute, a pallet truck, an electric or hand-

powered hoist, or a lift truck to reduce the risk of harm.

ASSESS any hazardous operations that cannot be avoided to determine the best method to move the load which creates the least risk

Assess the risk of injury from any hazardous manual handling operations that cannot be avoided.

You should consider the task, the load, the working environment and individual capability.

REDUCE the risk of injury as far as reasonably practicable.

This could be through the use of handling aids, changing the nature of the load (e.g. splitting heavy loads), improving the working environment etc.

Reduce the risk of injury from hazardous manual handling operations which cannot be avoided. Measures to control risk will vary depending on the task.

Where it is reasonably practicable to do so, provide mechanical aids.

Where this is not reasonably practicable, explore changes which can be made to the task, the load and/or the working environment such as:

- make the load smaller or lighter and easier to grasp
- break up large consignments into smaller loads
- modify the workplace to reduce carrying distances, twisting movements, or the need to lift things from floor level or above shoulder height
- change the work routine to avoid excessive work rates and tight deadlines
- improve the environment – more space, better flooring, extra lighting or changing the air temperature
- make sure the person doing the lifting has been trained to lift as safely as possible

10 Manual Handling Assessments

Manual handling should, in the first instance be avoided, but if it is not reasonably practicable to do so, then a risk assessment should be undertaken to ensure that the risk to individuals is reduced to an acceptable level.

There are four key factors which influence the degree of risk posed by a manual handling task. These are often referred to as **TILE** and are:

- Task

- Individual
- Load
- Environment
- Other

These factors are further explained in Appendix A and Appendix B for pushing and pulling tasks.

Level of Assessment Required

The level of assessment required will depend on many factors and the UK HSE has produced detailed guidance to assist employers in determining what action needs to be taken.

Reference should be made to the Appendix in the UK HSE guidance document, [Manual handling - Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 - Guidance on Regulations L23 \(UK\)](#) to assist with the assessment process.

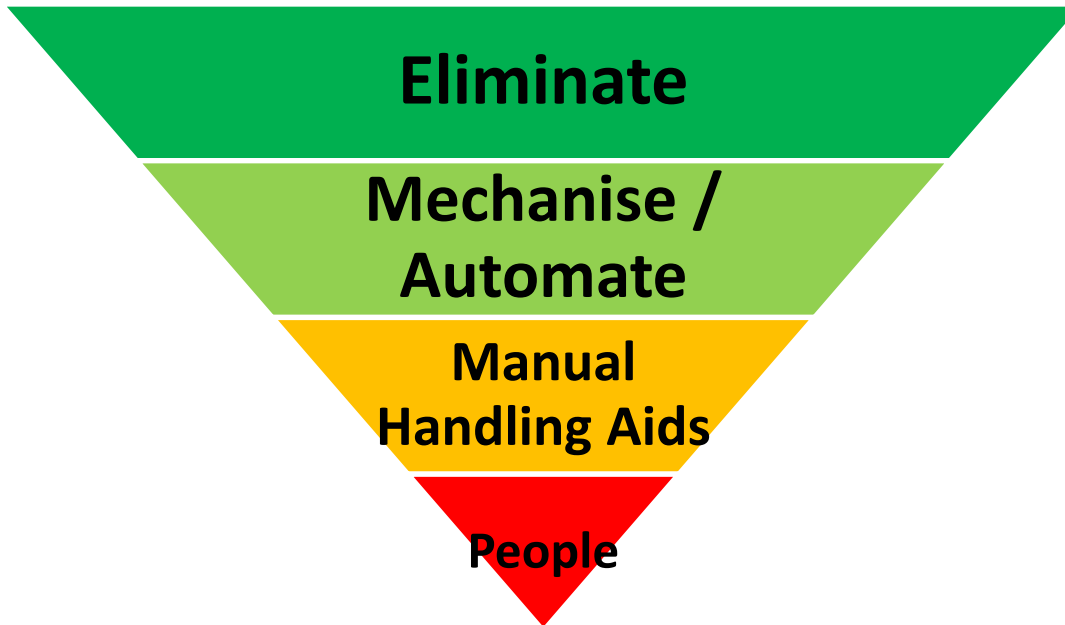
- **Simple filters** are available to help employers distinguish low-risk tasks from the tasks which need a more detailed assessment. These cover the following tasks:
 - Lifting and lowering
 - Carrying for up to 10 m;
 - Pushing and pulling for up to 20 m;
 - Handling while seated.
- **Manual Handling Assessment Charts (MAC tool)/Risk Assessment of Pushing and Pulling (RAPP tool)** are tools which provide assistance to employers for assessing the most common manual handling risk factors associated with hazardous manual handling. Using these tools will help the employer to prioritise action to control the risks
- **Full risk assessment** – This additional assessment ensures that all factors are adequately covered. An assessment using the MAC Tool should be carried out but this further assessment is required if additional risk factors not covered by the MAC Tool are present. These are:
 - large vertical movement;
 - risk of sudden movement of loads;
 - a rate of work imposed by a process;
 - unstable or with contents likely to shift;
 - sharp, hot or otherwise potentially damaging;
 - require unusual strength, height etc;
 - require special information or training for its safe performance;
 - movement or posture is hindered by PPE or by clothing.

An "ergonomic" approach to assessing the safety of manual handling operations is recommended to ensure that the person carrying out the manual handling task feels comfortable, as well as the person being moved or lifted, where handling of people takes place.

11 Manual Handling Hierarchy of Controls

When the level of risk posed by a hazardous manual handling task has been determined, it will be necessary to implement controls to reduce the risk.

The hierarchy of controls for manual handling aims to minimise the use of people to carry out hazardous lifting operations and requires all other options to be considered first. When determining suitable controls, the starting point must always be at the top of the hierarchy. The hierarchy can be descended if it is not reasonably practicable to implement a particular type of control but it must be recognised that as the hierarchy is descended, the risks to persons increase.



Eliminate

This should always be considered as the first option and follows the principles of AVOID. Does the item need to be moved at all? For example, a heavy item needs to be repaired/maintained. Can this be done in situ rather than removing it and taking it back to a workshop? In the majority of cases, the item does need to be moved and therefore other means to reduce the risks need to be considered.

Mechanise/Automate

This should be considered as the next option and includes the use of equipment such as:

- Fork lift trucks
- Cranes
- Hoist
- Conveyors

Effort may be required to load/unload the item but the equipment supports the weight of the load whilst it is being moved.

Manual Handling Aids

Where it is not reasonably practicable to use powered equipment, consideration should be given to the use of manual handling aids. There are many examples of these including:

- Pallet truck
- Sack truck
- Barrel trolley
- Patient hoists
- Wheelchair
- Trolleys
- Cages
- Slide sheets
- Carry handles
- Clamps

People

The use of people, including multiple people, to carry out hazardous lifts is the last resort and needs very careful consideration.

It must be established that all other means of moving the load are not reasonably practicable before using people.

12 Team Handling

Team handling is where more than one person is involved with the task. There are considerable risks associated with team handling and it should only be used as a last resort for managing loads which are excessive in weight.

To ensure the success of a team handling operation, the following must be considered and properly planned:

- Who will be involved and how well-matched are they?
- Who will be in charge?
- Does everybody understand how the operation will be carried out?
- Are sufficient handholds available?

- Has the route been established and checked to ensure it is clear?
- Is there sufficient space for all persons during all stages of the operation?
- Will the weight be even distributed?
- Are there changes in level which will affect the distribution of the load e.g. stairs, slopes?

The [Manual Handling Assessment Charts – MAC tool \(UK HSE\)](#) can be used to carry out an assessment of team handling operations using up to 4 people.

Whilst there is no maximum number of people which should be involved in a team handling operation, teams of 5 or more will increase the risks even further and a full risk assessment is required.

13 Training

Training in manual handling will only be successful if all other steps are taken to manage the risks and should not be relied upon as a sole means of managing those risks. Whilst training will help to raise awareness of the risks associated with manual handling operations, the factors which affect them and the correct way of lifting, it will not ensure safe manual handling on its own.

The training provided should be relevant to the type of work carried out and the department's own working practices. It can be a combination of external and internal training which should be refreshed at suitable intervals.

Safe systems of work prepared for manual handling tasks must be communicated to relevant employees and can form part of the training.

Where mechanical or handling aids are provided, employees must receive adequate training in their safe use.

Appendix A

Manual Handling Tasks - Risk Factors

The following factors need to be considered as they will affect the level of risk associated with the manual handling task.

Task

- Twisting of the trunk
- Stooping or poor posture
- Reaching upwards
- Holding or manoeuvring loads away from the trunk of the body
- Excessive carrying of loads
- Excessive lifting or lowering
- Excessive pushing or pulling
- A process which forces a rate of work
- Prolonged physical effort
- Insufficient rest and recovery

Individual

Their strength and capabilities, knowledge of the load and task and training and experience can all affect the level of risk.

Questions which should be asked when determining whether somebody is suitable for a task include:

- Does the manual handling require a certain level of strength?
- Does the activity require a person of a certain height?
- Does the individual have any health problems which could affect their ability?
- Is the individual pregnant?
- Have they been trained in safe manual handling and lifting technique?
- Do they know how to handle the load properly?
- Does this activity require any special information or training?

Load

The load itself can have a big impact on the risk level of the manual handling activity. The weight of the load is, of course, a consideration, but there are other characteristics of the load that should be assessed which include:

- Is the load heavy?
- Is the load unstable?
- Is the load hazardous?
- Does it have sharp edges?
- Is there a risk of spillage of the load?
- Is it bulky or difficult to grasp? Is the load very hot or cold?
- Will the load reduce visibility?
- Is the weight of the load even?

Appendix A

Environment

The location that the manual handling will take place in can have an impact on the level of risk. For example:

- Are space restrictions preventing good posture?
- Is the ground stable?
- Is the floor slippery?
- Is the ground uneven?
- Are any trip hazards or obstacles present?
- Are there variations in floor level? e.g. slopes, stairs
- Are there extremes of temperature?
- Is the environment humid?
- Is there enough ventilation?
- Are there strong winds?
- Is the lighting poor?
- Is weather a factor e.g. temperature, ice, cold, hot etc.?

Other

- Is movement or posture hindered by clothing or Personal Protective Equipment?
- Is equipment used to assist with the manual handling task? If yes, refer to Equipment section in Appendix B

Appendix B

Pushing and Pulling - Risk Factors

Task

- Large amounts of effort are required to start or stop the load moving or to keep it moving.
- The risk increases over longer distances or at high speed.
- Obstacles can create risks as workers try to avoid colliding with them.
- The worker needs to move suddenly or twist to manoeuvre the load.
- Repetitive pushing and pulling without sufficient recovery time.
- The position of the hands should be comfortable for the worker. They are best positioned between hip and shoulder height.
- The worker has to push or pull the load with only one hand.

Individual

- Workers have different characteristics and capabilities. For example, a tall worker may have to adopt an awkward posture to push a trolley with low handles, while a shorter worker may have difficulty seeing over the load.
- Individual factors such as pregnancy may temporarily reduce the amount of force a worker can safely handle.
- The task may require unusual capability. If this is the case, think about who should carry out the task and how.
- Specialised training or instruction may be needed.
- The task may pose a risk to those with a physical or learning difficulty, or to new and young workers.

Load

- Consider the weight of the load and the weight of the equipment being used by the worker.
- Good handholds will help apply force and control the load.
- Ensure the load is sufficiently stable for negotiating any slopes, corners or rough surfaces.
- Plan the route and ensure the worker can safely see over the load.
- Check if the route is wide enough for the load and wheeled equipment.
- Wheeled equipment needs suitable and well-maintained wheels or castors. Any brakes need to be effective.

Environment

- Steep slopes and rough surfaces can increase the amount of force required to push/pull a load.
- Environmental factors such as temperature, lighting and air currents can increase the risks of pushing/pulling.
- Floor surfaces that are clean and dry can help reduce the force needed to move a load.
- Lack of space can force the worker to adopt awkward postures.
- Handling in confined spaces and narrow passages/doorways could cause a

Appendix B

trapping/abrasion injury.

In addition to the above, there are other factors which should be considered:

Equipment

- Ensure the correct equipment is provided for the task and it is fit for purpose.
- Ensure the SWL specified by the manufacturer is not exceeded
- There should be a maintenance programme and a well-promoted fault-reporting system.
- Equipment should be inspected as required.
- Ensure that the wheels suit the flooring and environment, e.g. are the wheels on the device suited to a hot environment or carpets?
- Look at the handle height in relation to the different users as this can be a risk factor for their posture. Vertical or sloped handles may help.
- If the equipment has no brakes or poor/ineffective brakes it could be difficult to stop.
- Is posture hindered by personal protective equipment? If so, is it really needed or can the task be done in a different way?

Work organisation and psychosocial factors

- These affect the worker's psychological reaction to work and the environment, e.g. high workload demands, short deadlines and lack of control over working methods.
- Poor communication between managers and employees can lead to an unhappy workforce which could have an effect on production.
- Organisational 'change' can affect the motivation of the workforce.