

Elliott Nash Limited Manual Handling Procedure (SHE 17)

Introduction

Elliott Nash Limited is committed to limit the risk posed by manual handling activities and to ensure the safety of our employees.

We will:

- Avoid hazardous manual handling so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Make a suitable and sufficient assessment of any hazardous manual handling operations that cannot be avoided.
- Reduce the risk of injury from those operations so far as is reasonably practicable.

Purpose of the Legislation

The Manual Handling Regulations 1992 seeks to eliminate, where possible, the risk of injury to employees who are required to use the application of human effort for the purpose of transporting or supporting a load. Assessment of risk based on a range of relevant factors is used to determine the likelihood of injury and point the way to remedial action.

The following guidelines provide an initial filter which can help to identify those manual handling operations deserving more detailed examination. The guidelines set out an approximate boundary within which operations are unlikely to create a risk of injury sufficient to warrant more detailed assessment. This should enable assessment work to be concentrated where it is most needed.

There is no threshold below which manual handling operations may be regarded as 'safe'. Even operations lying within the boundary mapped out by the guidelines should be avoided or made less demanding wherever it is reasonably practicable to do so.

The factors to be considered when assessing manual handling tasks are:

- The task
- The load
- The working environment
- The individual's capability of carrying out the task

Detailed questions against each of these factors are given in checklist 2.

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Key words in the legislation

The regulations apply to the manual handling of loads including lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving by hand or by bodily force.

Manual handling includes both transporting a load and supporting a load in a static posture. The load may be moved or supported by the hands or any other part of the body, for example the shoulder. Manual handling also includes the intentional dropping of a load and the throwing of a load whether into a receptacle or from one person to another.

The application of human effort for a purpose other than transporting or supporting a load does not constitute a manual handling operation. For example, operating the starting handle of an engine or a control lever on a machine is not manual handling, nor is the action of pulling on a rope while lashing down on the back of a vehicle.

A load in the context of the regulations is a moveable object. This includes, for example, the pulling of sheets into position, the lifting and supporting of small sheets/blanks, and the positioning of pallets. An implement, tool or machine is not considered to constitute a load while in use for its intended purpose.

The regulations seek to prevent injury not only to the back, but also to any part of the body. Although the most common is a strain or sprain to the back, other injuries can occur under this category such as:

- Fractures
- Bruising
- Lacerations (to hands, feet or trunk)

Injuries can result from a single handling operation or may be cumulative i.e. a build up over a period of time due to repetitive handling actions.

There is a wide range of individual physical capabilities. The guideline figures quoted below will give reasonable protection to nearly all men and women.

It is important to understand that the guideline figures are not limits. They may be exceeded where a more detailed assessment shows that it is appropriate to do so, having regard always to our duty to avoid or reduce risk of injury where this is reasonably practicable.

Guidelines for Lifting and Lowering

Basic guidelines for manual handling operations involving lifting and lowering allow an employee to handle a weight of no more than 25kgs. This assumes that the load is readily grasped with both hands and that the operation takes place in reasonable working conditions with the handler in a stable body position.

The guideline figures take into consideration the vertical and horizontal position of hands as they move the load during the handling operation, as well as the height and reach of the individual handler. It will be apparent that the capability to lift or lower is reduced significantly if, for example, the load is held at arms length or the hands pass above shoulder

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height.

If the hands enter more than one of the box zones during the operation the smallest weight figure should be used. The transition from one box zone to another is not abrupt; an intermediate figure may be chosen where the hands are close to a boundary. Where lifting or lowering the hands beyond the box zones is unavoidable a more detailed assessment should be made.

Twisting

- A. Ideally operations involving twisting should be avoided or minimised but where this is found necessary the following guidance should be applied. The basic guideline figures for lifting and lowering should be reduced if the handler twists to the side during the operation. As a rough guide the figures should be reduced by about 10% where the handler twists through 45 degrees and by about 20% where the handler twists through 90 degrees.
- B. The basic guideline figures for lifting and lowering are for relatively infrequent operations up to approximately 30 operations per hour - where the pace of work is not forced, adequate pauses for rest or recovery are possible and the load is not supported for any length of time. They should be reduced if the operation is repeated more frequently. As a rough guide the figures should be reduced by 30% where the operation is repeated once or twice per minute, by 50% where the operation is repeated around five to eight times per minute and by 80% where the operation is repeated more than about 12 times per minute.

Guidelines for carrying

- A. Basic guideline figures for manual handling operations involving carrying are similar to those given for lifting and lowering, though carrying will not normally be carried out with the hands below knuckle height.
- B. It is also assumed that the load is held against the body and is carried no further than about 10m without resting. If the load is carried over a longer distance without resting the guideline figures may need to be reduced.
- C. Where the load can be carried securely on the shoulder without first having to be lifted (as for example when unloading sacks from a lorry) a more detailed assessment may show that it is acceptable to exceed the guideline figure.

Guidelines for pushing and pulling

- A. The following guideline figures are for manual handling operations involving pushing and pulling, whether the load is slid, rolled or supported on wheels. The guideline figure for starting or stopping the load is a force of about 25kg. The guideline figure for keeping the load in motion is a force of about 10kg.
- B. It is assumed that the force is applied with the hands between knuckle and shoulder height; if this is not possible the guideline figures may need to be reduced. No specific limit is intended as to the distance over which the load is pushed or pulled provided there are adequate opportunities for rest or recovery.

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Guidelines for handling while seated

- A. The basic guideline figure for handling operations carried out while seated is 5kgs. If handling requires leaning forward or reaching out or, for example, there is significant twisting to the side a more detailed assessment should be made.
- B. Remember - the guideline figures should not be regarded as precise recommendations. They should be applied with caution. Where doubt remains, a more detailed assessment should be made.

Risk Reduction

Any one of, or combination of, the following measures may reduce the risk of manual handling injury.

1. Task Factors

- Mechanisation
- Improving the task layout
- Improving the work routine
- Using the body more effectively
- Introducing team handling

2. Load Factors

- Making the load lighter
- Making the load easier to handle
- Making the load less damaging to hold

3. Working Environment Factors

- Removing space constraints
- Improving floor/ground conditions
- Improving the thermal environment
- Improving lighting
- Reducing the handling between different levels

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4. Individual Capability Factors

- Optimising handling postures
- Education/Training
- Health surveillance

Assessment Procedure

Two checklists are given

No. 1 provides a summary and a record of an initial assessment to define if something more detailed is required.

No.2 is designed for activities that need detailed and thorough assessment.

The checklist will be used as follows:

- A. All work activities will be studied by the nominated person to establish if a manual handling activity forms part of that work activity. Details of any manual handling activities that do form part of that work activity will be entered onto checklist No 1.
- B. An assessment will be made to establish if the manual handling activity falls within the guidance figures given, if they do then an overall assessment of risk will be recorded in Section B of Checklist No 1 and remedial action will be detailed in Section C.
- C. If the manual handling activity falls outside the guidance figures given, a more detailed examination of the activity will take place, using Checklist No 2. This detailed examination will include assessing the risk posed by the task, the load, the work environment and the capability of the individual carrying out the task. Where the risk of injury is identified as medium or above a specific remedial action will be taken to reduce this.

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