

Hazardous Manual Tasks Plan

SAMPLE

Table of Contents

Purpose and Scope	4
Definitions.....	4
Legislative Framework and Standards.....	4
Roles and Responsibilities.....	5
Officers (e.g. Directors, Senior Managers)	5
Managers and Supervisors.....	5
Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs).....	5
Workers.....	6
WHS Personnel / Advisors	6
Consultation and Communication	6
Hazard Identification – Hazardous Manual Tasks.....	7
Hazard Identification Methods.....	7
Manual Task Hazard Identification Checklist	8
Risk Assessment	8
Risk Assessment Process	8
Risk Assessment Triggers.....	9
Risk Assessment Template.....	9
Risk Control – Hierarchy of Control.....	10
Elimination.....	10
Substitution.....	10
Engineering Controls.....	10
Administrative Controls	11
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).....	11
Control Implementation Plan	11
Safe Work Procedures for Hazardous Manual Tasks	12
Content of Safe Work Procedures	12
Example Tasks Requiring SWPs	12
Training, Instruction and Supervision.....	12
Induction Training.....	13
Task-Specific Training	13

Supervision	13
Training Records	13
Procurement, Design and Workplace Layout	14
Procurement of Plant and Equipment	14
Workplace and Task Design	14
Vehicle and Load Design	14
Maintenance and Inspection of Equipment	14
Inspection Requirements	14
Maintenance and Fault Reporting	15
Health Monitoring and Early Intervention	15
Reporting of Discomfort	15
Early Intervention Actions	15
Incident Reporting and Investigation	16
Reporting Requirements	16
Investigation Process	16
Monitoring, Review and Continuous Improvement	16
Review Triggers	16
Performance Indicators	16
Manual Tasks and Review Checklist	17
Documentation and Recordkeeping	17
Document Control Table	17
Implementation Plan	17
Example Implementation Actions	18
Implementation Action Plan Table	18

Purpose and Scope

This Hazardous Manual Tasks Plan sets out the arrangements [Company Name] will implement to identify, assess and control risks associated with hazardous manual tasks in the workplace. It is designed to ensure compliance with relevant Work Health and Safety (WHS) legislation, Codes of Practice and Australian Standards, and to prevent musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) and other injuries.

This plan applies to all workers, including employees, labour hire workers, contractors, volunteers and work experience students engaged by [Company Name]. It covers all workplaces, including manufacturing and production facilities, warehouses and distribution centres, retail and wholesale outlets, disability and aged care services, transport and logistics operations, and automotive and mechanical workshops.

Definitions

For the purposes of this plan, the following definitions apply.

- **Hazardous manual task:** A manual task that requires a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry, move, hold or restrain any person, animal or thing that involves one or more of the following characteristics: repetitive or sustained force, high or sudden force, repetitive movement, sustained or awkward posture, or exposure to vibration.
- **Manual task:** Any activity requiring the use of force by a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry, move, hold or restrain any person, animal or thing.
- **Musculoskeletal disorder (MSD):** An injury to, or disease of, the musculoskeletal system, whether occurring suddenly or over time. Includes sprains, strains, back injuries, joint and muscle injuries, soft tissue injuries, and chronic pain conditions.
- **Plant:** Any machinery, equipment, appliance, container, implement or tool, and any component or anything fitted or connected to it.
- **Reasonably practicable:** That which is, or was at a particular time, reasonably able to be done to ensure health and safety, taking into account and weighing up all relevant matters such as likelihood, degree of harm, knowledge, availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk, and cost.

Legislative Framework and Standards

[Company Name] will manage hazardous manual tasks in accordance with:

- Work Health and Safety Act and Work Health and Safety Regulations applicable in the relevant Australian jurisdiction
- Safe Work Australia “Hazardous Manual Tasks Code of Practice”
- Safe Work Australia “How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks Code of Practice”

- Relevant industry-specific guidance material (e.g. for manufacturing, warehousing, retail, disability and aged care, transport and logistics, automotive and mechanical)
- Relevant Australian Standards for plant, equipment and ergonomics.

[Company Name] acknowledges the primary duty of care to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers by eliminating or minimising the risks arising from hazardous manual tasks.

Roles and Responsibilities

Officers (e.g. Directors, Senior Managers)

Officers must exercise due diligence to ensure [Company Name] complies with its WHS duties in relation to hazardous manual tasks. This includes:

- Acquiring and keeping up-to-date knowledge on WHS matters related to manual task risks.
- Understanding the operations of [Company Name] and the hazards and risks associated with manual tasks in each work area (e.g. manufacturing lines, warehouse racking, retail storeroom, client handling in care settings, loading docks, workshops).
- Ensuring appropriate resources and processes are in place to eliminate or minimise manual task risks, including provision of mechanical aids, suitable plant layout, and training.
- Verifying that risk management processes (identification, assessment, control, review) are implemented and effective.

Managers and Supervisors

Managers and supervisors are responsible for implementing this plan in their areas of control. They must:

- Identify hazardous manual tasks in consultation with workers.
- Ensure risk assessments are completed, documented and reviewed.
- Implement and maintain control measures, including engineering controls, work design changes and safe work procedures.
- Ensure workers receive induction, training, instruction and supervision on safe manual task practices and use of equipment.
- Monitor work practices and intervene where unsafe manual tasks are observed.
- Report and investigate manual task incidents, near misses and reported discomfort.

Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs)

Where HSRs are elected, they will:

- Represent workers in consultation processes related to hazardous manual tasks.
- Assist in identifying hazards and reviewing control measures.
- Participate in inspections, incident investigations and risk assessments where relevant.
- Promote reporting of early signs of musculoskeletal discomfort.

Workers

All workers, including contractors and labour hire workers, must:

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.
- Follow safe work procedures and instructions for manual tasks.
- Use mechanical aids and equipment provided, and not intentionally misuse or bypass controls.
- Participate in training and consultation processes.
- Report hazardous manual tasks, early signs of discomfort, pain or fatigue, and any incidents or near misses.

WHS Personnel / Advisors

WHS personnel or advisors engaged by [Company Name] will:

- Provide technical advice on manual task risk management.
- Assist with developing and reviewing procedures, training and risk assessments.
- Monitor trends in incidents and injuries related to manual tasks.
- Facilitate ergonomic assessments and workplace design improvements.

Consultation and Communication

[Company Name] is committed to consulting with workers and, where applicable, HSRs on hazardous manual tasks. Consultation will occur when:

- Identifying hazardous manual tasks and assessing associated risks.
- Proposing changes to plant, layout, work systems or work organisation that may affect manual tasks (e.g. new production lines, new racking systems, changes to delivery schedules, introduction of new client handling equipment).
- Developing or reviewing safe work procedures and training.
- Investigating incidents or injuries related to manual tasks.

Consultation methods may include:

- Toolbox talks and pre-start meetings in manufacturing, warehousing, transport yards and workshops.