**Work procedure checklist to control hazardous manual tasks**

**Preventing sprains and strains from everyday construction work**

There are many core construction tasks, such as concreting, steel fixing, formwork and operating mobile plant, with hazardous manual task (HMT) risk factors that can result in musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs).

HMT risk factors are often overlooked in safe work method statements (SWMS) or safe work procedures.

To prevent MSDs in construction, it’s critical to identify and manage HMT risk factors alongside other hazards associated with the activity or task.

**When to use this checklist**

Use this checklist before starting construction tasks to determine if any of the below sprain and strain risk factors are present. This will help determine if the SWMS or safe work procedure also need to address HMT risks and include controls to minimise sprain and strain risks. This checklist may be considered in addition to your organisation’s standard SWMS review checklist.

**Risk factors**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Exertion or force | Awkward postures | Vibration | Duration | Repetition | Mental stress or work pressure |

Learn more about [identifying and assessing HMT risk factors.](https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/safety-and-prevention/hazards/hazardous-manual-tasks/what-are-hazardous-manual-tasks/identify-and-assess-hazardous-manual-task-risks)

**Are you a principal contractor?**

Principal contractors (PC) have a duty to eliminate or minimise the source of risk for all workers including subcontractors where the source of risk on site is outside the subcontractor or worker control. This can include:

* work area layout, location of set down areas and access ways
* what is being handled, such as the size and weight of materials specified
* environmental factors including the floor surfaces and lighting
* work organisation, such as time pressures and work pace.

Often the PC can eliminate or minimise these sources of risk, especially when it’s identified and considered at the design and planning stage.

If the source of risk is outside a subcontractor’s control, PCs should ensure the safe work procedure includes opportunities for consultation between the PC and subcontractor.

The following are not acceptable controls for hazardous manual tasks:

* using safe lifting technique (e.g. keep back straight and bend knees)
* relying on stronger workers
* advising to use common sense
* incentives that increase pace and encourage workers to skip their breaks or work longer hours.

**Checklist**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Does the work procedure or SWMS have the following?** | Yes | No | N/A | Comment/action |
| Reference to current Queensland HMT legislation:* Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 s.60.
* Hazardous manual tasks Code of Practice 2021.
 |[ ] [ ] [ ]   |
| A HMT specific risk assessment tool is used, for example [Manual tasks risk management worksheet.](https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/safety-and-prevention/hazards/workplace-hazards/construction/manual-tasks-in-construction) |[ ] [ ] [ ]   |
| All relevant HMT risk factors for the task are identified:forceawkward or sustained posturesrepetitive movementvibration* duration
* mental stress.
 |[ ] [ ] [ ]   |
| Controls target the sources of risk for each identified risk factor:work area design/layoutnature of item being handled – weight, size, quantitysystem of workwork environment. |[ ] [ ] [ ]   |
| Higher order controls from the hierarchy of controls. For example:eliminate or design out HMTsuse mechanical aidschanges to work area layout and system of work (such as the location of storage and delivery areas, consideration of staff resources available and roster lengths to manage workload and break-taking).For examples of controls see the [Manual tasks risk register examples](https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0024/16728/msd-risk-register.docx). |[ ] [ ] [ ]   |
| Clearly specifies what equipment to use and how to use it. |[ ] [ ] [ ]   |
| Opportunities identified for consultation between PC and contractors to discuss risk management of HMT. For example:safe design forumspreplanning workshopsregular site meetings to plan crane usage, delivery locations. |[ ] [ ] [ ]   |