

Hazardous manual tasks

SAFEWORK NSW

HAZARDOUS MANUAL TASK SYSTEMS SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

This assessment tool aims to help employers, managers and supervisors to:

- determine how effective their system is for managing hazardous manual tasks (HMT)
- identify opportunities for improvement.

Improving how HMTs are managed can:

- reduce the risk of injuries
- provide business benefits (e.g. improved productivity, staff morale and staff retention).

USING THIS TOOL

- Include a cross section of staff and contractors to help get a true indication of how your workplace is progressing with developing better safety systems.
- Fill out the assessment tool, noting which column has the most ticks.
- Each element has three rating levels. After filling out the assessment tool, if you tick:

Good practice zone - you are likely to have effective HMT systems and practices in place and will need to maintain these.

Working towards a systematic approach zone - you are on the right track, and there are opportunities for improvement.

Improvement required zone - it is likely that you are not managing HMT issues effectively. Significant improvements are likely to be required to prevent injuries.

- Once the checklist is completed, discuss the results with your leadership team and decide on actions to be taken.
- Keep a record of what needs to be done and how it will be implemented.
- Start with the areas where your rating was in the improvement required (**red**) zone, followed by those in the working towards a systematic approach (**amber**) zone and good practice (**green**) zone.

 Find more information and resources at safework.nsw.gov.au

Improvement required	Working towards a systematic approach	Good practice
Management commitment to HMT		
Legislation: <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i> (WHS Act) section 27.		
No time or money allocated to address HMT issues	Insufficient time and money allocated to address HMT issues	Management actively participates in HMT initiatives
No controls implemented for HMT	Limited management involvement in HMT initiatives	Management allocates adequate resources to address HMT issues
No management involvement	HMT controls are implemented on an ad hoc basis	Managers authorise controls/actions following HMT/musculoskeletal disorder (MSD) incidents
Managing HMT is not seen as a priority	Lower order HMT controls are implemented (e.g. raising awareness, training are implemented)	Managers/supervisors have key performance indicators related to MSD injury prevention
Comments		

Improvement required	Working towards a systematic approach	Good practice
Consultation about HMT		
Legislation: WHS Act - Part 5 - consultation, representation and participation. WHS Act - Sections 47, 48, 49 - requires workers to be consulted.		
No consultation with workers about HMT	Workers are consulted on an ad hoc basis	Workers consistently participate in identifying, developing controls and reporting HMT (example of a process used to achieve this is Participative Ergonomics for Manual Tasks (PErforM))
Supply chain partners not consulted about HMT issues	Supply chain partners (e.g. designers, manufacturers, suppliers, subcontractors, transport operators, landlords) are consulted on an ad hoc a basis	Supply chain partners are consistently consulted about HMT issues
Workers not consulted when PCBU plans to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> introduce new tasks/change existing tasks select new equipment refurbish, renovate or redesign existing workplaces carry out work in new environments. 	Consultative arrangements in place but don't include HMT	HMT consultation procedures are documented
	Workers' views not always considered	Workers views are valued and actioned
	Informal consultation is in place	If workers are represented by a health and safety representative (HSR), consultation involves the HSR
	Workers involved in identifying HMT but not involved in development of controls	Workers are consulted about:
		HMT hazard identification (physically demanding tasks, risk factors, pain, discomfort, changes to make the job easier to perform)
		Assessing HMT risk factors and their causes
		Development of procedures to reduce HMT risk factors

Consultation about HMT continued over...

Improvement required	Working towards a systematic approach	Good practice
Consultation about HMT		
Legislation: WHS Act - Part 5 - consultation, representation and participation. WHS Act - Sections 47, 48, 49 - requires workers to be consulted.		
		Workers are consulted about:
		Development and implementation of control measures for HMT (including trial and review of new solutions prior to purchase)
		Workers are consulted when planning to:
		Introduce new tasks or change existing tasks
		Select new equipment
		Refurbish, renovate or redesign existing workplaces
		Carry out work in new environments
Comments		

Improvement required	Working towards a systematic approach	Good practice
How does your workplace identify HMTs?		
Legislation: WHS Regulation 2017 - Clause 34- Duty to identify hazards. Clause 60 - Managing HMT risks to health and safety. NSW Code of Practice (CoP) HMT 2019 Part 2 - Identifying HMT.		
HMT are not identified	Limited reporting of HMT by workers	Workers are encouraged to report pain or discomfort
No HMT identification process implemented	Some HMT have been identified	Systematic identification of HMT, trends and issues are tracked
	Some documentation in place to support the identification process	Workers are consistently involved in identifying and reporting manual task hazards
	Some workers are trained in how to identify HMT	HMT are consistently included in risk/hazard registers
	Workers are consulted on an ad hoc basis	HMT are constantly identified in incident reports
	HMT risk factors (force, posture, repetitive movement and vibration) are identified in an ad hoc manner	There is an incident/hazard reporting process communicated and understood by all workers that includes HMT
		HMT identification process is documented
		Tasks observed and assessed to identify HMT risk factors
		There is recognition of the links to psychosocial risks when considering all the issues (e.g. workload, high job demand, pace)
		HMT risk factors are included in regular workplace inspections
Comments		

Improvement required	Working towards a systematic approach	Good practice
How are HMTs assessed?		
NSW CoP HMT 2019 - Part 3 - Assessing the risk.		
No risk assessments undertaken	Risk assessments conducted in ad hoc manner with some tasks missed	All risk assessment records available
No records available	Generic tools are used that don't identify causes of HMT risk factors	HMT risk assessments are consistently conducted using a tool to address specific risk factors e.g. Manual tasks risk management worksheet, PERforM
Generic risk assessment tools (e.g. consequence-risk matrix) used that don't identify specific HMT risk factors	Risk assessments conducted but not recorded/documented	Workers are consistently involved in HMT risk assessments
Workers not involved in risk assessments	Some HMT risk factors are assessed	Prioritise controls based on assessed risks
	Some worker involvement in risk assessments	
	HMTs requiring controls not prioritised	
Comments		

Improvement required	Working towards a systematic approach	Good practice
How are HMTs controlled?		
Legislation: WHS Regulation – Clause 36 – Hierarchy of control measures. Clause 37 – Maintenance of control measures. Clause 38 – Review of control measures. Clause 60 – HMTs: Managing risks to health. Clause 61 – Designed to eliminate/minimise the risk of MSD.		
No controls are in place	Some sources of risk are considered in the development and implementation of controls e.g. postures, layout of the workplace	In determining control measures, all relevant matters that may contribute to a MSD are considered e.g. nature of the task, working environment, design of work area/layout, nature of the load and systems of work
Only low-level controls such as lifting technique/manual handling training are used as controls	Some higher order controls are implemented, but lower order controls such as lifting technique/manual handling training is the main control measure used	Higher order controls are implemented to address sources of risk e.g. elimination, redesigning of work area/layout, using engineering controls
Sources of risk are not looked at	Controls implemented are not always reviewed	Fit-for-purpose controls are implemented e.g. mechanical aids suited for the task
	Limited development and implementation of safe work procedures involving HMT	System improvements are implemented e.g. implement lead indicators, consultation mechanisms
	Procedures are not always followed in day to day operations	Controls are reviewed and maintained on a regular basis
		Procedures are appropriate, developed via consultation, and followed in day to day operations
Comments		

Improvement required	Working towards a systematic approach	Good practice
How are MSDs investigated? NSW CoP HMT 2019		
MSDs are not investigated	Investigations focus on immediate circumstances of the incident	MSDs are systematically investigated
	Investigations focus on injuries sustained by a worker	Investigations review HMT risk factors and sources of risk
	Investigation outcomes focus on lower order controls	A variety of people are involved in investigations (e.g. HSR, workers, supervisors, maintenance, purchasing)
	Investigation outcomes focus on workers behaviour, instead of system failures. e.g. training workers is the most common control	Investigations review effectiveness of current controls
		Goal of investigations is to identify higher order controls
		Investigations result in system improvements (e.g. purchasing, planning work)
Comments		

Improvement required	Working towards a systematic approach	Good practice
How are workers trained and supervised regarding HMTs? Legislation: WHS Regulation - Clause 39 - Provision of information, training and instruction. NSW CoP HMT 2019		
No HMT training	HMT training [^] is inconsistent	Workers, supervisors and managers receive HMT training
Informal training	Some induction training on HMT	All training is regularly reviewed
Lifting techniques training* (e.g. bend your knees and keep your back straight)	Some workers can't demonstrate how to perform a HMT safely (e.g. appropriate equipment to use)	Training/induction documented
No supervision to ensure workers are performing tasks safely	Some training on HMTs, however controls rely on worker behaviour	HMT training content includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • manual task risk management including the HMT risk factors • specific manual task risks and the solutions to reduce risks • how to perform manual tasks safely (including the use of mechanical aids, tools, equipment and safety working procedures) • how to report a problem or maintenance issue
<i>*Training in lifting techniques is not effective as the sole or primary means to control risk of MSD.</i> <i>[^]HMT training must include the nature of the work, nature of the risks associated with the work and control measures implemented as per the Hazardous Manual Tasks Code of Practice 2019.</i>	Some training on measures implemented to control HMTs	
	Some training documentation	Training content is relevant to workers' position
	Workers receive training but supervisors/managers don't	Delivered in suitable formats for workers (e.g. non-English speaking background)
	Workers are supervised on an ad hoc basis	Workers are consistently supervised to ensure safe work procedures are followed
Comments		

Improvement required	Working towards a systematic approach	Good practice
How does your workplace report HMT?		
No procedures for reporting MSD/HMT	MSD/HMT reporting procedures developed but not always followed	HMT reporting procedures are developed and implemented
MSD/HMT aren't reported	Some incidents/injuries have been reported but follow-up action is limited	HMT incident/injuries are consistently reported and follow-up action consistently implemented
Comments		

ACTIONS

	Who	
	Date to be completed	
	Date completed	

	Who	
	Date to be completed	
	Date completed	

	Who	
	Date to be completed	
	Date completed	

Name of manager

Signature

Date (DD/MM/YYYY)

This material has been adapted from *Hazardous manual task systems self-assessment tool* from Workplace Health and Safety Queensland. For more information please visit www.safework.nsw.gov.au