

# HAZARDOUS MANUAL TASKS: THE RISKS AND THE FACTS

Refer to *Code of practice - hazardous manual tasks* for further guidance

Date of birth (DD/MM/YYYY)

Name of assessor(s)

Position(s)

## STEP 1: WHAT IS THE MANUAL TASK?

Relevant worker(s) to consult

Name of task or activity

Location where tasks occurs

Who performs the task

General description

## STEP 2: IS THE MANUAL TASK HAZARDOUS?

Hazardous manual tasks can result in musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) such as sprains or strains. Work through the following questions to determine which postures, movements and forces of the task pose a risk.

### QUESTION 1 - DOES THE TASK INVOLVE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING RISK FACTORS?

Repetitive movement

Sustained or awkward postures

Repetitive or sustained forces

'Repetitive' means that a movement or force is performed more than twice a minute and 'sustained' means a posture or force is held for more than 30 seconds at a time.

### QUESTION 2 - DOES THE TASK OCCUR OVER A LONG TIME?

Is the task done:

for more than a total of two hours over a whole shift

continuously for more than 30 minutes at a time

### QUESTION 3 - DOES THE TASK INVOLVE HIGH OR SUDDEN FORCE?

Yes

No

### QUESTION 4 - DOES THE TASK INVOLVE VIBRATION?

Yes

No

### QUESTION 5 - IS THERE A RISK?

The task involves a risk of MSDs (eg sprain or strain) if you have ticked any boxes or answered 'yes' to either:

Question 1 and Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

If you answered 'yes' to Question 4 the task may be a risk and will require further investigation.

### STEP 3: WHAT IS THE SOURCE OF THE RISK?

These are the things that are causing the risk and may be changed in order to eliminate or minimise the risk.

Work area design and layout: work space available; design of workstation, furniture and equipment.

The nature, size, weight or number of things handled in performing the manual task.

Systems of work, eg pace and flow of work; resources available; maintenance.

The environment in which the manual task is performed (eg flooring; obstructions; lighting; hot/cold/humid environments).

### STEP 4: HOW DO I CONTROL THE RISK?

Follow the hierarchy of control. A range of controls may be required.

Can the task be eliminated?

Can you change what is causing the risk (the source)? (eg change the work area; alter the size of loads; use mechanical aids; manage environmental conditions; use adjustable equipment; implement preventative maintenance program)

What training is needed to support the control measures? (Training needs to be task specific, noting that training in lifting techniques is not effective as a sole or primary means to control the risk of MSDs.)

#### IMPLEMENT CONTROLS

Person(s) responsible for approving controls

Person(s) responsible for putting controls in place

By when

### STEP 5: REVIEW THE CONTROLS

Evaluated on (DD/MM/YYYY)

Assessor

Consultation undertaken with all relevant workers?

Have any other risks been created by the controls?

Have the controls implemented reduced the risks?

Can further controls be implemented to minimise the risk?

This material has been adapted from manual tasks worksheets from Workplace Health and Safety Queensland and SafeWork SA.