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**STAR AVIATION** Manual Handling



### ABOUT THIS MODULE

The most common workplace injuries result from manual tasks. To increase your awareness of hazardous manual tasks and develop your understanding of how to prevent an injury, we have developed this module.

By the completion of this module, you will be able to:

- Define what a manual task is;
- Identify types of manual task injuries;
- Describe the risk management process;
- Identify hazardous manual tasks and implement relevant risk management procedures.

You should allow about 30 minutes to complete this module. At the end of the module, you will be asked to undertake an online assessment to check your understanding of the key concepts presented.

You are now ready to begin.

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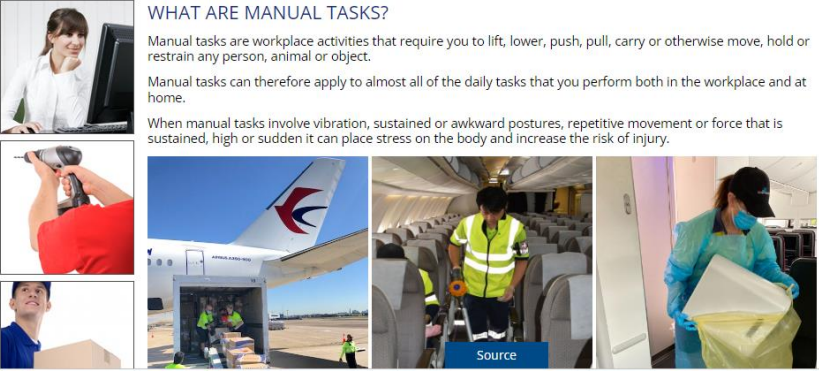
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### WHAT ARE MANUAL TASKS?

Manual tasks are workplace activities that require you to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any person, animal or object.

Manual tasks can therefore apply to almost all of the daily tasks that you perform both in the workplace and at home.

When manual tasks involve vibration, sustained or awkward postures, repetitive movement or force that is sustained, high or sudden it can place stress on the body and increase the risk of injury.



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### MANUAL TASK INJURIES

Manual tasks, if not performed safely, may result in injuries to the **musculoskeletal system**. Injuries can occur **suddenly or over time** and can restrict the way you go about your daily activities. In some circumstances, musculoskeletal injuries can result in significant physical disability. Musculoskeletal injuries commonly affect:



The back      Soft tissues

Musculoskeletal injuries can be prevented. Always listen to your body's warning signs of discomfort and pain and stop what you are doing before you develop an injury.

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### LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES



Under health and safety legislation, our organisation is responsible for, as far as reasonably practicable, preventing musculoskeletal injuries from occurring.

To meet this responsibility, we aim to ensure:

- All hazardous manual tasks are identified, assessed, controlled, reviewed and communicated;
- You are trained on how to perform manual tasks correctly;
- Resources are made available to control manual task hazards;
- Equipment and machinery provided for manual tasks are inspected and maintained.

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### YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Workers also have responsibilities under health and safety legislation. Specifically, you have a responsibility to:

- Report hazards, incidents and injuries
- Ensure the safety of your work area

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### THE RISK MANAGEMENT PROCESS

As part of our legal obligation to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of everyone in the workplace, our organisation must ensure all hazardous manual tasks are identified and managed appropriately. You are also responsible for managing the risks associated with hazardous manual tasks that you perform.

The risk management process is a continuous process involving these four steps:

1. Identify hazardous manual tasks.
2. Assess the risk.
3. Control the risk.
4. Monitor and review.

These steps will be discussed in more detail in the following frames.

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### STEP 1: IDENTIFY HAZARDOUS MANUAL TASKS

Before you commence any kind of manual task, you should always consider if it might be hazardous to your health and safety.

To identify hazardous manual tasks, you should ask yourself:

1. Does the task involve a **long duration** and:
  - a) **Repetitive movement?**
  - b) **Sustained or awkward postures?**
  - c) **Repetitive or sustained forces?**
2. Does the task involve **high or sudden force?**
3. Does the task involve **vibration?**

If the answer is **yes** to any of these questions, then the task may be hazardous and should be managed accordingly.

How can a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) identify hazardous manual tasks?

Answer

Important Tip

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## Manual Handling

### SCENARIO: Moving a box from the van to the storeroom

Your Manager has asked you to move a box from the van to the store room.

**What makes moving a box a hazardous manual task?**

Consider the three questions which identify hazardous manual tasks and click on the correct answer. For a detailed explanation, move your cursor over the **?** icon.

1. Does the task involve a long duration AND repetitive movement, sustained or awkward posture and / or repetitive or sustained force?  
  **?**
2. Does the task involve high or sudden force?  
  **?**
3. Does the task involve vibration?  
  **?**

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### STEP 2: ASSESS THE RISKS

Once a hazardous manual task has been identified, the next step is to assess the risk of an injury occurring while performing the task. This includes considering the:

- Probability (likelihood) of an injury actually occurring;
- Consequences of the injury in terms of severity.

This step is important as, in order to find the best risk control (step 3 of risk management), you need to know what risk areas need to be controlled.

Areas of risk for manual tasks include:

The nature and number of items handled

Work area and environment

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### SCENARIO: Moving a box of stock from the van to the storeroom

Let's continue with our scenario of lifting and moving a box.

We know that this is a hazardous manual task, so in accordance with the risk management process, the next step is to assess the risks.

Consider the key risk areas and establish what risks need to be controlled. Then hold your cursor over the risk areas below to see if you have identified the key risks.

The nature and number of items handled

Work area and environment

The way work is organised

Individual risk factors

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### STEP 3: CONTROL THE RISKS

The next step in the risk management process is to identify suitable control measures to reduce the level of risk of a manual task to as low as reasonably practicable.

Whenever possible, hazardous manual tasks should be eliminated. If this is not possible, then the risk should be controlled.

Control measures should be applied in the order specified in the hierarchy of controls (i.e. elimination, substitution, engineering / isolation, administrative controls and personal protective equipment). A combination of control measures can also be used simultaneously.

The next frames will look at different ways to control manual task risks in more detail.

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### MANAGING LOADS

Manual lifting or carrying of heavy loads should be avoided wherever possible. If this is not possible, you can minimise the risk of injury by using [mechanical aids](#).

When using a mechanical aid, you must ensure that:

- It is designed to suit the load and work task;
- It is suitable for the work environment;
- You are trained in the use of the aid;
- It is regularly maintained or serviced.

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### TEAM LIFTING

The risks associated with heavy loads can be minimised by lifting and / or carrying heavy items with a co-worker.

When you lift a load in a team, ensure that:

- All team members are competent in lifting;
- Safe lifting principles are maintained;
- Everyone communicates and agrees on the steps you will take to move the item (see Tip);
- All team members lift at the same time;
- The load is evenly distributed where possible.



Note Tip

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### THE RIGHT WAY TO LIFT

When you lift an item, either alone or as a team, you must use the SMART lifting techniques:



1. **S**ize up the weight and dimensions of the load.
2. **M**ove your body as close to the load as possible.
3. **A**lways bend your knees.
4. **R**aise the load with your legs not your back.
5. **T**urn your feet in the direction that you want to move.

You should also ensure that you carry the object between your

Tip

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### SAFE CARRYING PRINCIPLES

When carrying loads, you should:

- ✓ Always face the direction of travel;
- ✓ Keep your arms tucked in;
- ✓ Keep the load close to your body;
- ✗ Not restrict your vision with the load;
- ✗ Not twist your body;
- ✗ Not change your grip on the load unless it is supported.



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## Manual Handling

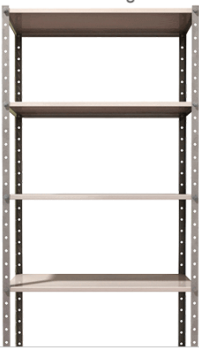
### Check Weight

### SAFE STORAGE

Safely storing boxes, files and office equipment is an important part of preventing manual task injuries.

To avoid injury, you should:

- Not overload file or storage cabinets;
- Place the heaviest boxes between knee and shoulder height;
- Use a step or ladder to reach items stored in a high location. Never stand on an office chair with wheels;
- Check the weight of an object before you attempt to lift it, either into or out of storage.



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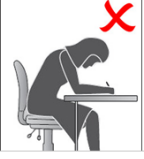
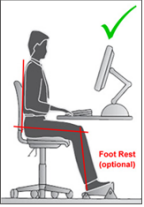
### MANAGING WORKING POSTURE

An ideal posture is one where the:

- Body and head are upright and forward facing;
- Arms are by the side of the body;
- Forearms are either hanging straight or at right angles to the upper arm;
- Hands are in the handshake position.

To allow for good posture, you should:

- Adjust your work area to fit your needs;
- Ensure you work at a [height appropriate to the task](#);
- Keep regularly used items close at hand.



Caution Note

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### ADJUSTING YOUR WORKSTATION

As most people spend a lot of time at their computer, it is important to make sure your workstation is set up properly to avoid discomfort and possible injury.

Move your cursor over the red buttons ● on the image for tips on how to set up your workstation to reduce the risk of developing an injury.



Caution Tip

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### REPETITION AND DURATION

When performing **repetitive work** over a long duration, your muscles are more likely to be prone to injury.

To reduce the risk of injury, you should perform a variety of tasks to allow different muscle groups to be used.

This can be done by simply:

- Changing the order in which the task is performed;
- Creating shorter periods of work through job rotation;
- Taking regular **rest breaks**;
- Exercising and stretching muscles (see Examples).

Click the buttons for demonstrations of some exercises and stretches you can perform.

[Neck Exercises](#)   [Shoulder Rolls](#)   [Shoulder Stretch](#)  
[Wrist & Back Stretch](#)   [Back Arching](#)

Note   Examples

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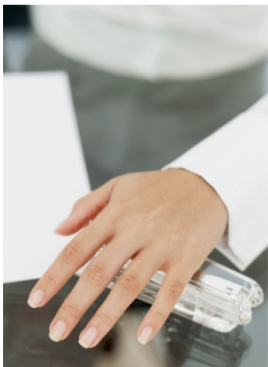
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### HANDLING TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT

Infrequent use of **tools and equipment** generally does not cause harm. However, when tools are used repeatedly and / or for long periods of time they may be harmful.

To minimise the risk of injury, you should select tools which:

- Are specially designed for the task;
- Can be held with a neutral wrist or handshake grip;
- Can be operated in either hand;
- Provide a comfortable grip;
- Are well balanced;
- Reduce impact shocks and kickback reactions.

Tools and equipment should also be regularly inspected and serviced in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications.

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### HOUSEKEEPING

While conducting manual tasks it is important to have a clean and tidy workplace that is free from hazards.

By following good housekeeping practices and being observant, you will help to prevent injuries resulting from slips, trips and falls. As a guide, you should:

- Keep floors, ramps and stairs clean and dry. Clean up spills immediately;
- Store equipment appropriately. Do not leave items lying around or under your workspace;
- Regularly empty rubbish bins so they do not overflow;
- Conduct frequent inspections of your work area;
- Know where to find cleaning equipment in your office;
- Keep emergency exits and passageways clear at all times.



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## Manual Handling

### SCENARIO: Moving a box from the van to the storeroom

Let's continue our scenario from earlier in the module of moving a box from the back of the van to the storeroom.

Think about the frames you have just read about controlling the risks and answer the following question:

**What should you do to reduce the chance of developing an injury when moving the boxes?**



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### STEP 4: MONITOR AND REVIEW

The final step in the risk management process is to monitor and review the controls you use to manage the risk of injury from a manual task. This step is very important as some controls actually create other hazards.

If a control measure is not effective, you will need to work through the risk management process again to find a more suitable control measure.

When should you monitor and review control measures? **Answer**

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### MODULE IN REVIEW

Most jobs have a manual task component; therefore, it is important you know how to conduct hazardous manual tasks without causing injury to yourself or others.

This module has discussed risk reduction techniques you can apply to manual tasks, including:

- Using mechanical aids to manage loads;
- Using the **SMART lifting technique**;
- Storing items according to weight and use;
- Maintaining an ideal working posture;
- Adjusting your workstation to suit your needs;
- Performing exercises and stretches.

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What does the letter R in the acronym SMART stand for?

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- A Raise the load with your legs and not your back.
- B Raise the load above your head with the weight equally proportioned on either side.
- C Report any hazards to your manager.
- D Remove any hazards before commencing any work.

Click to continue

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What should you do to allow for good posture while at work?

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- A Ensure you work at a height appropriate to the task.
- B Keep regularly used items close at hand.
- C Adjust your work area to fit your needs.
- D All of the above.

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What is the first step of the risk management process?

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- A Monitor and review.
- B Assess the risks.
- C Control the risks.
- D Identify hazardous manual tasks.

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How can you reduce the risk of an injury resulting from repetitive work?

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- A Take regular rest breaks.
- B Perform a variety of tasks to allow different muscle groups to be used.
- C Exercise and stretch your muscles.
- D All of the above.

Click to continue

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Discomfort and muscle pain are warning signs that you might develop an injury from a manual task. True or false?

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True

False

Click to continue

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There is no need to inspect or service tools and equipment unless they are broken. True or false?

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True

False

Click to continue

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Manual tasks are workplace activities that require you to lift, lower, push, pull or carry any person, animal or object. True or false?

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A True.

B False.

Click to continue

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Regarding manual tasks, what is our organisation responsible for?

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A Providing training on how to perform manual tasks correctly.

B Identifying, assessing, controlling, reviewing and communicating hazardous manual tasks.

C Making resources available to control manual task hazards.

D All the above.

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Regarding safe storage methods, which of the following statements is true?

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- A Storage cabinets and shelves should be packed to capacity to ensure the workplace is tidy.
- B Heaviest boxes should be placed between the knee and shoulder height.
- C Office chairs with wheels can be used to reach items stored at height, to reduce the amount of reaching required.
- D If an item is too heavy to be moved and stored, it can be left where it is.

Click to continue

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### CONGRATULATIONS

You have successfully completed your assessment with a score of 80%

Your results have been recorded, please close this window.

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