

SINGAPORE STANDARD

CP 92 : 2002

(ICS 53.120)

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR

Manual handling

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Foreword

This Code of Practice was prepared by a Working Group appointed by the Technical Committee for Personal Safety in Workplace under the direction of the then Industrial Safety Standards Committee.

Musculoskeletal injuries and disorders are one of the most frequent work-related problems. There is sufficient evidence relating manual handling activities to musculoskeletal injuries and disorders, particularly those affecting the back. Factors such as the object, working posture, frequency and duration of manual handling can alone or in combination lead to hazardous handling activity and increased risk of musculoskeletal injuries and disorders. The purpose of this code is to provide information and guidance for the identification, assessment and control of risks arising from manual handling activities in workplaces so as to prevent musculoskeletal injuries and disorders associated with such activities. It also gives guidance on the planning and implementation of an ergonomics programme for manual handling operations. This code will serve as a reference standard for acceptable practices for manual handling in Singapore. It is our hope that this code would result in a higher standard of protection for all persons who are involved in manual handling in the course of their work.

In the preparation of this code, reference has been made to:

1. Applications manual for the revised National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) lifting equation (Jan 1994)
2. Worksafe Western Australia Commission code of practice on manual handling (November 1996)
3. NIOSH Technical Report on work practices guide for manual lifting (March 1981)
4. Draft International Standard ISO/DIS 11228-1: Ergonomics – Manual handling – Part 1 : Lifting and carrying (1998)
5. Health and Safety Executive: Manual handling -Guidance on regulations – (Manual handling operations regulations 1992)
6. Worksafe Standard Australia National Standard for manual handling and national code of practice for manual handling (February 1990)

Acknowledgement is made for the use of information from the above publications.

NOTE

1. *Singapore Standards are subject to periodic review to keep abreast of technological changes and new technical developments. The revisions of Singapore Standards are announced through the issue of either amendment slips or revised editions.*
2. *Compliance with a Singapore Standard does not exempt users from legal obligations.*

Code of practice for manual handling

0 Introduction

Manual handling is an essential activity in most workplaces. Injuries and disorders most commonly associated with manual handling, affect the musculoskeletal system particularly the back, neck and upper limbs. In general, the injuries and disorders are caused by inflammation, wear and tear and damage to the joints, ligaments, tendons, muscles, nerves and intervertebral discs of the spine during manual handling activities. A back injury could result from the sudden damage associated with a single episode such as lifting too heavy a load or slipping and falling. However, most often it is the result of cumulative mechanical stress and gradual wear and tear from repetitive or prolonged manual handling activity. Very often there is no sudden or unexpected event or accident to which the injury could be attributed to. Recovery from back injuries may take a long time and further injury may occur, making the problem worse.

Musculoskeletal disorders and injuries associated with manual handling can be prevented by taking a systematic approach of identification, assessment and control of the risks associated with such activities.

1 Scope and purpose

The purpose of this code is to provide information and guidance for the identification, assessment and control of risks arising from manual handling activities in workplaces and on the planning and implementation of an ergonomics programme for manual handling operations. It is not possible to provide details covering every situation of manual handling. The principles given here may be adapted to apply to a variety of manual handling operations.

2 Definitions

2.1 Manual handling

Any activity requiring the use of human force to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain an object.

2.2 Manual lifting

An object is lifted when it is moved from its initial position upwards, downwards and/or horizontally.

2.3 Manual carrying

When an object remains lifted and is moved by human force, it is carried.

2.4 Shall

Indicates that a statement is mandatory.

2.5 Should

Indicates a recommendation.