

B. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

B3. MANUAL HANDLING AND VIBRATION

1.0 Scope

This Standard focuses on musculo-skeletal damage that can result from manual handling and from vibration. This Standard covers musculo-skeletal hazard evaluation, control programme design and control programme evaluation, to ensure that employees and contractors will not suffer adverse health effects from poor task and equipment design, or from inappropriate behavioural practices.

2.0 Programme Design

- 2.1 Where risk assessment indicates the need, a documented programme must be in place such that:
- (a) It complies with all relevant requirements in the A Standards;
 - (b) Workplace vibration sources that contribute to the exceedance of OELs (hence potential for impact on worker musculo-skeletal fitness) are identified and adequately characterised;
 - (c) Workplace manual / materials handling tasks are assessed and recorded to include biomechanical factors (eg. posture, bending, twisting, repetitive motions, working overhead, exerting force away from the body);
 - (d) Manual handling tasks assessed as having potential to cause an LTI (ie. with potential for impact on worker musculo-skeletal fitness) are identified and adequately characterised; and
 - (e) Control measures are in place to minimise exposures and protect employees and contractors from adverse exposure. Machines, working equipment and tasks should be evaluated for possible modification or replacement where necessary, and education provided to employees to address behavioural issues.
- 2.2 The workplace must be assessed by an appropriately experienced person for compliance with good design, layout and practice, to minimise adverse health consequences due to manual handling and vibration issues.
- 2.3 The quantitative evaluation of vibration produced by specific equipment must include the following measurement parameters: direction of movement, frequency, intensity, and variation with time and duration, as per documented methods.
- 2.4 Operators must be informed of the results of assessments, trained to recognise potentially hazardous manual handling and vibration issues, and instructed in appropriate manual handling techniques, where the risk assessment indicates a need.

3.0 Exposure Controls

- 3.1 Design criteria that address ergonomic requirements, and the minimisation of vibration where appropriate, must be available for the purchase or fabrication of all new workplace equipment and furniture.
- 3.2 Ergonomic assessment of work processes must be incorporated into planning activities.
- 3.3 Where possible, machines or equipment, or alternative systems of work, must be employed to conduct heavy, awkward or repetitive tasks.
- 3.4 There must be documented procedures for inspection, assessment and maintenance of the engineering controls.
- 3.5 The vibration / manual handling training programme must include elements to encourage operators to keep fit and healthy (keep body weight down), recognise unsafe manual handling and vibration conditions, adopt good posture, lift everything twice (mentally then physically), use correct lifting methods, use a team lift or mechanical lifting aids whenever possible, and employ other preventative measures as appropriate.