

Manual task services

Manual tasks are a major cause of injuries in the workplace.

Manual tasks are physical work activities that can be defined as any activity requiring a person to use a part of their musculoskeletal system in performing their work.

Manual tasks if performed incorrectly can be hazardous; potentially causing musculoskeletal disorders which can lead to injury, disease or death.

These manual tasks include:



Lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, carrying or otherwise moving, holding or restraining any person, animal or item.



Repetitive actions.



Exposure to sustained vibration.



Sustained and or awkward work postures.

Option 1:

Manual task focus session – 1 hour

The session will ask participants to focus on a specific incident relevant to their work department. They are required to think and identify what contributing factors (hazardous manual task characteristics, environmental, tools/equipment and people) lead to a musculoskeletal injury occurring.

After identifying the risk factors, they will discuss what controls should/could have been implemented to prevent injury and what might be needed in their workplace to prevent such injuries occurring in future.

The aim of this workshop is to engage workers in completing risk assessments of commonly occurring manual tasks. They will be required to identify risk controls using the hierarchy of control, ideally within the elimination, engineering and substitution categories, rather than just administrative personal protective equipment (PPE) controls.

Option 2:

Online manual task course

Manual tasks are performed by all workers within local government; with poor manual task practices remaining one of the most common causes of injury in the workplace, with the injuries being a large burden on workers, local governments and the industry as a whole.

This online course has been created by LGIS injury prevention consultants to be interactive and engaging for all local government workers, either as induction based training, or as a refresher course to help workers prevent sprain and strain injuries.

LGIS and WALGA have worked together to bring this course to its members.

Learning outcomes:

- Identify the difference between a hazard and a risk;
- Understand manual tasks within the workplace;
- Identify the risk associated with manual tasks;
- Understand and identify the hazardous characteristics of manual tasks;
- Understand safe lifting techniques.

Manual task risk management program

What is PErforM? Participative Ergonomics for the control of Hazardous Manual Tasks.

PErforM is a simple hazardous manual task (HMT) risk management program, internationally recommended for reducing work related musculoskeletal disorders. PErforM helps workplaces involve their workers in solving manual tasks problems.

PErforM was developed jointly by Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (WHSQ), University of Queensland and Curtin University of Technology.

It has been successfully implemented in many industries, but more importantly by:

- City of Subiaco (depot and Lords);
- City of South Perth (libraries and Old Mill).
- City of Bunbury (operations)

What's in it for my local government?

- Provides better control of hazardous manual tasks;
- Assists you to comply with work, health and safety (WHS) legislation;
- Helps improve productivity;
- Makes for a more knowledgeable workforce;
- Reduction of musculoskeletal injuries.

For successful implementation it is recommended a PErforM work team be created consisting of all levels of the local government:

- **Director or manager**
To demonstrate support and commitment of a primary preventative strategy from the executive management team and to allow for approval of any budgetary item/s.
- **Supervisor and/or leading hand**
For implementation and supervision of procedural and/or systems changes and to provide knowledge and experience of HMTs and potential risk controls.

- **Work, health and safety representatives (WHSRs)**
To assist in driving the program and implementing changes. Also to assist in identifying key risk areas.
- **Proactive workers keen to make a difference**
To assist with the identification of key risk areas, consultation process and evaluation of risk controls.

Having workers from all levels of the business will allow for prompt and smooth implementation of the program, and ensure successful outcomes are achieved.

What's involved?

LGIS Injury Prevention consultants will deliver a series of workshops (3) to the PErforM work team over a period of six months:

- **Part 1** – Understanding Hazardous Manual Tasks (HMTs) and the PErforM Risk Assessment process;
- **Part 2** – Implementing controls to reduce the risk of HMTs and understanding sources of risk;
- **Part 3** – Review and evaluation of the PErforM program and its outcomes.

After each workshop the work team will complete a series of course work to ensure the successful implementation of the PErforM program.



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