

Health and Safety
Executive



PROPOSED EU DIRECTIVE ON MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS

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A BRIEF HISTORY OF MSD LAW IN EUROPE

- Across the EU 25% of workers complain of backache and 23% report other muscular pains
- Three Directives: Manual Handling, Display Screen Equipment and Vibration
- Commission very aware of the gaps

SCOPE OF THE DIRECTIVE

- No pre-existing agreement between member states on what a new directive should include
- Covers all MSDs except Vibration
- Cannot reduce existing protection
- Replaces the MH and DSE Directives

SECOND DRAFT I

- More complete than the first
- Still needs a lot of work
- Agreement on a basic screening tool difficult
- Non-binding guidance introduced

SECOND DRAFT II

- Employer to conduct a preliminary analysis using a screening tool “to be established by competent authorities in the member states”
- Detailed risk assessment for higher exposures “at levels described in the screening tools”
- Detailed risk assessment if “several cases” of MSDs reported by health surveillance

SECOND DRAFT III

- Reduction of such risks based on Framework Directive taking account of:
 - design and layout
 - organisation: duration and intensity
 - adequate rest periods
- Worker information and training (including manual handling training and training in DSE assessments)
- Eye sight tests and the requirement to label loads are included

CURRENT DISCUSSIONS

- Two working groups considering drafts
 - ACSH Working Group
 - Group of Experts
- EU Impact Assessment
- Timings uncertain



MSD DIRECTIVE

QUESTIONS

www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/europe/euronews/dossiers/msd.htm