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<b>Health and Safety Executive</b>		<b>Sector Information Minute</b>	
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Target Audience  
All FOD Inspectors

**MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS AND MANUAL HANDLING  
IN THE GLASS INDUSTRIES**

This SIM provide information on musculoskeletal disorders and manual handling in the flat glass industry and outlines the results of work previously carried out by the Metals and Minerals Sector: Ceramics Section on this subject.

**BACKGROUND**

1 In the glass industry the handling of loads is a major cause of accidents. There are 2 different types of accident: those involving musculoskeletal injuries and those causing cuts and lacerations. In 1998/99 there were 14 major accidents and 187 over-3-day accidents of this type recorded on FOCUS.

2 By dealing with the process of manual handling, including use of the correct personal protective equipment (PPE), employers should be able to benefit from a significant reduction in lost time accidents. This should enable the industry to improve its health and safety performance in line with Revitalising Health and Safety (RHS) and the 'Glass Charter' initiative (see SIM 6/2001/08).

3 When originally formulated, the Sector's programme of work in this area was in 2 stages:

(1) **Stage 1 2001/02** involved a review of the current situation, the production of guidance and the use of publicity in the industry (via intermediaries). **This work has concluded.** □

(2) **Stage 2 2002/03** was to have included targeted inspections to follow up the publicity from stage one. New ways of working removed the need to specify the number of contacts required and hence **the second stage will no longer take place as originally conceived.** However, these issues will form a useful part of any inspection concerning manual handling when visits are carried out to relevant

factories.

## NATIONAL ENFORCEMENT EXPECTATIONS

4 Companies should be aware of these problems and have considered the specific risks associated with the nature of the load. The guidance on best practice referred to in para 3(1) will begin to appear during the early part of work year 2002/03. However, in its absence inspectors should not be inhibited from taking appropriate action where unsatisfactory conditions are found in line with the EMM guidance contained in the FOD Manual Handling Topic Inspection Pack.

## ACTION BY INSPECTORS

5 In addition to the matters outlined in the Manual Handling Topic Inspection Pack, effective interventions on this subject will ensure that:

- (1) suitable lifting aids are provided and used;
- (2) employees are provided with **and** use the correct PPE as identified in guidance produced by the Metals and Minerals Sector and also the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF); and
- (3) assessments take into account the nature of the load.

## REFERENCES

6 Information is currently available in the following publications from the GGF:

- (1) Glass & Glazing Federation (GGF) *Health and Safety Manual*;
- (2) Glass & Glazing Federation (GGF) Video *The Cutting Edge*; and
- (3) Glass & Glazing Federation (GGF) Video *Double Trouble*.

7 In addition, [SIM 3/2000/51](#) *Safety in the Handling and use of Flat Glass: Guidance produced by the GGF* is relevant:

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