

Manual handling risks during assistance of disabled passengers boarding or disembarking aircraft

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Summary

This SIM provides information on manual handling risks associated with routine transfer of incapacitated or wheelchair-using passengers to and from the aircraft. It identifies the methods and equipment that we would expect to see employed. It also identifies practices that should be avoided. Additional information has been added on securing of wheelchairs in vehicles.

The Civil Aviation (Access to Travel for Disabled Persons and Persons with Reduced Mobility) Regulations 2007 came into force on 26 July 2007. Transportation Section is working with DfT, CAA and industry to develop new guidance on the implementation of these regulations. Inspectors should contact the Section if they have any queries.

Introduction

1 This SIM provides advice to inspectors for assessing the measures that have been put in place to assist disabled passengers and persons with reduced mobility (PRMs) on and off aircraft. It covers those passengers who are less mobile or require use of a wheelchair, including passengers who become incapacitated in flight, or have difficulty walking or climbing stairs.

2 The guidance applies to all routine situations, and outlines best practice which should be followed as far as possible in non-routine or emergency situations. However, in the case of unforeseen medical emergencies or emergency evacuation of aircraft, contingency plans should be available, and staff should be trained in those aspects of emergency situations for which they may have responsibility.

3 This guidance does not cover handling of passengers throughout the airport, transfer of the passenger between wheelchairs nor wheelchairs on board the aircraft, or additional assistance which may be provided in the airport and terminal such as unloading luggage from a vehicle, checking in, travelling to departure gates, etc. All of these may present manual handling risks and should be part of the employer's risk assessment and training procedures where necessary.

4 Existing legislation and guidance:

- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 applies to the use of booking services and airport facilities and services.

- EU Regulation 1107/2006 concerning the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air introduces new responsibilities and requirements for airports to ensure that disabled persons and PRMs have access to all facilities.
- The International Air Transport Association (IATA) Airport Handling Manual also contains guidance and recommendations on the handling of PRMs, some details of which are in Appendix 1.
- General guidance on facilities for disabled passengers is available in the Department for Transport Code of Practice for Access to Air Travel for Disabled People
- The new Civil Aviation (Access to Air Travel for Disabled Persons and Persons with Reduced Mobility) Regulations 2007 and the EC Regulations introduce some significant changes, including placing responsibility on the airport authority for ensuring provision of services for disabled passengers from arrival to departure. The EC Regs also consider design and refurbishment of airports and aircraft with the needs of disabled passengers in mind.

5 The DfT Code of Practice gives guidance for tour operators and airlines on establishing the specific requirements of an individual passenger before they arrive at the airport, so that suitable facilities and assistance are available. This Code also takes into account standards and recommendations developed by the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) and the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO). This Code of Practice is currently under review and new guidance is due to be published early in 2008.

The task

6 At larger airports, boarding on many flights is undertaken through the use of extending passenger loading bridges or 'air bridges'. This enables passengers to access the aircraft without the need to negotiate a stairway up to the plane. However, not all gates have this facility, some smaller aircraft are incompatible with air bridges, and in some cases airlines may choose not to use the airbridge. In these cases passengers are required to embark by walking (or travelling by bus) across the ramp and ascending steps up into the aircraft.

7 Handlers are required to raise (or lower) a passenger and possibly their wheelchair, which may total in excess of 100kg, through several metres. Given these facts it is clear that some form of mechanical assistance is required and training and communication are of particular importance if team handling is involved.

8 The provision of suitable equipment is the most significant factor in terms of the task design and in terms of manual handling risk to the individuals responsible for transferring passengers to and from the aircraft. The choice of equipment greatly influences the handling requirements.

9 Where air bridges are available and used the manual handling risks are significantly reduced. In the absence of an air bridge there are a number of methods for disabled passengers to board or leave the aircraft, each employing significantly different pieces of equipment:

- i) Use of a scissor-lift vehicle, often referred to as an Ambu-lift, whereby, the wheelchair passenger is pushed into the vehicle at ground level, the lift is then raised mechanically to a height level with the aircraft entrance and the passenger can be wheeled into the aircraft. This removes any requirement for manually lifting the passenger.
- ii) Use of a boarding chair. Boarding chairs are specifically designed to be used for aircraft boarding. Generally they will be much narrower than a standard wheelchair to enable access down the aisle once aboard the aircraft. Also the wheels will be smaller to enable a more controlled lift up/down stairs. This method requires considerably more effort than using a scissor-lift, but still the majority of the weight of the passenger is taken through the chair. Use of a boarding chair will require two handlers.
- iii) There are a number of battery powered wheelchairs and stair climbers, some of which are designed specifically with compact dimensions which enable them to manoeuvre in limited space and negotiate the aircraft steps and aisle. They are also fitted with harnesses and head rests.
- iv) The final method available is to manually carry the passenger. This presents a high risk to the handler (and the passenger), cannot be performed by less than two people and must be avoided, except in emergency situations if no alternative is available.

10 Even if air bridges or scissor-lifts are used there is likely to be a requirement to transfer the passenger to a boarding chair to access a seat once on board the aircraft. This presents significant manual handling problems which are not covered in this SIM. Some airlines are using hoists specifically designed for use on aircraft such as the Eagle hoist. Though these are not yet in wide use in this country and may not be suitable for all aircraft.

11 The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) is responsible for the regulation of aircraft registered in the UK. Inspectors may find it useful to know that CAA policy specifically restricts the allocation of seats to disabled passengers and some other categories of passengers at 'self-help' exits on the aircraft. Seats at other emergency exits may not be allocated to disabled passengers if this would impede cabin crew in carrying out their emergency duties. Disabled people should, however, be seated as close to emergency exits as the above limitations allow. Some aircraft may have seats which are modified to improve access for disabled passengers, for instance having moveable or removable arm rests.

Manual handling risks

The load

12 As noted in **para 7** the combined weight of a passenger and chair (the 'load') may well be in excess of 100kg. Combining this with the many other human variables - factors such as mobility, responsiveness, behaviour (potentially nervous or unpredictable) - presents one of the most difficult tasks for manual handling. Each lift will offer a unique set of risks and there are few factors, in terms of the load, that can be controlled by the handler.

13 Concerns have been expressed amongst handlers that the seated occupant of a boarding chair will often try to reach out and hold the nearest handrail as most of the chairs do not have arm rests and the occupant can feel insecure. Handlers should be alert to this possibility.

The environment

14 As with the load, the handler has little control over the environmental conditions on the ramp. The provision of an airbridge or scissor-lift will provide the best protection from the elements for both handler and passenger, reducing the risks of slips or trips during wet or windy weather, although the ambient temperature within the device itself will be difficult to control.

Equipment

15 One of the main problems in this area is the availability of suitable equipment. The successful use of lifting aids will depend on the equipment available, the efficient maintenance of the equipment and the communication between aircraft/airline and the ground handlers, to ensure the equipment is available at the gate.

16 The use of 'air bridges' will be more common with larger, wide-bodied aircraft, therefore removing the need for ramp handling. Provision must be made for the safe transfer of wheelchairs from the air bridge to the ramp for loading into the aircraft hold.

Scissor lifts or Ambu-lifts

17 A problem affecting the use of scissor-lifts is the interface between the lift and the aircraft entrance, due to the range of aircraft types serviced. This can be a particular problem where the aircraft has integral steps, although Ambu-lift designs are available that overcome this problem.

18 The height range of the platform on which the passenger is lifted will not be compatible with all aircraft. If the device is mounted on the back of a vehicle and the lifting platform extends over the top of the vehicle cab, the cab restricts the minimum height, and this can be a problem for small aircraft. Devices such as this will generally have a tailgate to raise the passenger from ground level.

19 For larger aircraft the maximum platform height may not reach the aircraft entrance. Therefore, there may be a need for an airport to have a range of lifting devices.

Boarding chairs and stair climbers

20 There are a number of companies manufacturing powered or manual carry chairs and stair climbers, some of which are specifically designed for use on aircraft steps.

21 The chairs incorporate lifting handles at head and foot which may be adjustable, single or multiple wheel assemblies or treads, passenger restraining straps, and chair folding and

locking mechanisms. Design of handles, size, width and tread of wheels, type of restraints and locking mechanisms vary according to design.

22 In a recent HSL assessment of the use of stair climbers by ambulance personnel in health care services, acceptability of the chairs has been variable. Concerns which have been expressed include the following:

- (1) weight of chair;
- (2) poor manoeuvrability around corners and on stairways - may have to tip chair to turn;
- (3) some chairs appear to offer significant advantages when going down stairs, but create more problems or risks when used for going up stairs;
- (4) handle height and adjustability - may have to pull handles in and out to turn corners;
- (5) stability of chair while lifting patient in and out, and general difficulty in transferring passenger to or from chair;
- (6) adequacy of footrest - for user and carrier accessibility;
- (7) exceeding the maximum weight limit of the chair can lead to distortion/buckling/fatigue failure of frame particularly if used regularly for carrying heavy passengers. The weight limit of emergency chairs varies greatly, from around 115 to 200kg;
- (8) inappropriate assembly such as not properly engaging the locking mechanisms;
- (9) component reliability - restraining straps, folding and locking mechanism, wear and tear on seat covers, loose wheels;
- (10) occupants of such chairs may feel insecure and attempt to grasp adjacent handrails.

23 Use of any such chair will require careful assessment in relation to the exact circumstances of its use - type of aircraft steps; available space for turning or passenger transfer; stability; foreseeable use.

24 When boarding chairs are used availability may be a problem. Badly maintained chairs will increase the effort required to transfer the passenger to the aircraft and will also increase the risk of injury to the passenger.

Training and selection

25 It is usual for disabled passenger handling to be undertaken by a specialist organisation, perhaps sub-contracted by the ground handling organisation. In some cases, however, this task may be fulfilled by a company dealing with a range of activities and should ensure that suitable training is provided for staff. The companies will often assist

disabled passengers throughout the airport to a point where the individual can be handed over to the crew on the aircraft itself.

26 Comprehensive training in use of equipment, including any different types of chair in the circumstances in which they will be used and in any limitations in use, is essential. For example, some of the newer designs, particularly tri-wheels and caterpillar type chairs, require a great deal more training and user experience than 'standard' chairs.

27 Problems may arise if the handlers are unfamiliar with the equipment because the scissor-lift, or boarding chair, is of a different design to that which was used for training. It is unacceptable for untrained individuals to undertake such lifts.

What should be expected

Task design

28 Using an air bridge to transfer passengers from the terminal to the aircraft removes virtually all the manual handling risks. No lifting of the load is required, the environment is controlled and no special wheelchair is required. Although the passenger may have to be transferred to a 'boarding chair' once on the aircraft, this transfer may take place within the terminal where there is more space. If the passenger's own wheelchair is to be loaded into the aircraft hold, safe systems of work must be in place to enable transfer of the wheelchair to the ramp for loading to avoid manual handling risks to handlers.

29 However, the availability and use of an air bridge does not fall under the control of the ground handlers and if the air bridge cannot be used then a scissor-lift should be provided. As with an air bridge, this minimizes the manual handling risks and only pushing/pulling on the wheelchair is required.

30 Only in exceptional circumstances should a passenger be transferred up the stairway in a Boarding Chair. Using a chair on the stairway significantly increases the manual handling risk to the handlers. Lifting with a Boarding Chair requires two handlers.

31 The manual carrying of passengers should be avoided and only undertaken in an emergency situation. There are a variety of slings and other equipment available to assist patient transfers, many of which are for use by the emergency and health care services. HSE do not recommend carrying equipment or lifting methods as manual carrying of passengers should not be undertaken as part of the normal task.

32 For any lift, and particularly for Boarding Chair use, it is important to plan the lift. There should be good organisation to enable the handlers and correct equipment to be available, to ensure the planned route is clear, and to ensure that the 'set down' area is suitable for further passenger transfer.

The load

33 The individuals involved in the handling of disabled passengers have no control over the size, shape, mass, etc of the passenger. As part of the planning stage of the lift, the

handlers should make an assessment of the unique characteristics of the passenger. This will involve talking to the individual to ascertain if they have particular needs.

34 The passenger should feel secure in the chair and should be given clear information about the transfer to the aircraft to reassure them. Although seemingly not relevant to the welfare of the handlers themselves, conveying this information will put the passenger at ease and hopefully present the handlers with a less nervous passenger. Equipment must be suitable for the task. In terms of scissor-lift devices there should be no large steps, or gaps for the wheelchair to cross and there should be no requirement to lift the passenger whilst in the wheelchair.

Equipment

Scissor lifts

35 The lift should be stable and this may require the use of stabilising legs to be extended. BS EN 1915-1:2001 sets out the basic safety requirements for aircraft ground support equipment and BS EN 12312-14 gives specific requirements for disabled/incapacitated passenger boarding equipment.

36 A scissor-lift device should be available for all relevant flights. To achieve this, sufficient devices are needed in the first place, and a sufficient range to accommodate the range of aircraft likely to be encountered. Maintenance must be effective to minimize the outage times for equipment. There must be systems in place both in terms of communication and actually moving the lifts around the airport to ensure transfer of the devices to the required location.

37 It is not acceptable to use lifting devices that are designed to carry freight or catering supplies unless the vehicles have been specifically modified to carry disabled passengers.

38 The Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) produce Guidance on the safe transportation of wheelchairs DB 2001(03), which is currently under revision.

39 When passengers in wheelchairs are being transported in ambulifts (and airside buses) both wheelchair and passenger should be secured in position. If inspecting ambulifts inspectors should confirm that restraints are normally used and regularly maintained. Inspectors who find genuine obstacles to applying the standards should contact Transportation Section.

40 Standards are described in BS ISO 10542 'Technical systems and aids for handicapped or disabled persons. Wheelchair tiedown and occupant-restraint systems'. This standard has four parts:

- Part 1:2001 Requirements and test methods for all systems.
- Part 2:2001 Four-point strap-type tiedown systems.
- Part 3:2005 Docking-type tiedown systems
- Part 4:2004 Clamping-type tiedown systems

41 There may be a small number of occasions when the nature of a disability makes it difficult to fit passenger restraints or to do so would cause severe distress. Handling agents should be sufficiently trained in dynamic risk assessment to be able to manage these situations in such a way as to reduce the risk as much as is reasonably practicable.

Boarding chairs

42 There are many different designs of boarding chairs, but they are all narrow chairs that allow access down the aisles in the plane. Chairs should be designed to enable one person to lift at the foot of the chair and one to lift at the shoulder of the chair. Where possible, the handles should extend to prevent the handler from stooping. Similarly, the handles at the shoulder should be positioned at a comfortable height to avoid handlers raising their elbows and shoulders.

43 Stair climbers should be designed to allow access into the aircraft aisle, to avoid the requirement for passengers to be transferred between chairs on entering the aircraft.

44 Chairs should be fitted with a braking system and secure harness to prevent inadvertent movement of the passenger, and to ensure that the passenger feels secure. Preferably, chairs should offer some mechanical assistance to the handler, eg battery powered.

45 In terms of technical specifications, chairs should be designed such that the force required to push and turn (on a level surface) a wheelchair or boarding chair occupied by a 99th percentile weight male should not exceed the maximum force which can be exerted by a 5th percentile female. These weights are based on statistical data and calculation of such forces is extremely complex. In very simple terms, chairs should be designed so that a male at the top end of the weight/build scale can be easily pushed by a female at the lower end of the weight/build scale. Manufacturers should be able to give details of forces required to move specific chairs and specialist advice should be sought if there is any doubt about this.

46 Personal protective equipment to be worn by the handlers should include suitable safety footwear to minimize slipping and crushing injuries from the wheels of the chair. When working airside, individuals will also be required to wear ID badges, hi-viz clothing and ear protection. To minimize interference with the handling task, ID badges and clothing should not be loose fitting.

Training and selection

47 As noted previously, it is usual for a specialist organisation to take responsibility for assisting wheelchair users through the airport and onto the plane. In some cases, however, this task may be fulfilled by a company dealing with a range of activities such as baggage handling, etc. All individuals undertaking this task involved in the transfer of disabled passengers should be familiar with, and trained in the use of, the specific equipment used at the airport at which they work. Individuals who have not been specifically trained should not undertake disabled passenger handling or boarding chair use.

48 Refresher training should be provided at regular intervals and a revised training programme will be required if different equipment is made available. An outline of the contents of a suitable training course is attached at Appendix 3.

49 On-going injury monitoring, investigation and assessment coupled with the implementation of risk reduction strategies should be undertaken. A current risk assessment should identify what the employer sees as the main risks and what measures have been put in place to minimize the identified risks.

Action by inspectors

50 Inspectors are requested to:

(1) apply the standards detailed in this SIM when inspecting or discussing disabled passenger handling activities;

(2) alert the Transportation Section to any problems which arise from applying these standards; and

(3) draw to the attention of the Transportation Section any new or innovative means of improving manual handling practices.

Enforcement

51 Further development work on the application of the Enforcement Management Model (EMM) to health issues is continuing. It is not currently possible to handle the risks of musculoskeletal disorders rigorously within the EMM, but the following guidance is given as an interim measure.

52 Inspectors should follow the guidance in the FOD Inspection Pack on Musculoskeletal Disorders [PDF](164KB) and be aware of the Health Services sector policy that the Manual Handling Assessment Tool (MAC) should not be applied to patient/ passenger lifting (see OM 2002/122).

Risk

53 In 2005/06 the accident category 'Handling and Sprains' accounted for around 55% of reported over-3-day accidents in the air transport industry.

Benchmark standards

54 The legal framework which sets the requirements for the management of risk from manual handling is laid down in the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992.

55 In particular the following should be considered:

- HSW Act s.2 and s.3, MHSWR reg.5: manual handling policy and other arrangements drawn up by the employer;
- MHOR reg.4, (as amended) MHSWR reg.5: risk assessments for disabled passenger assistance carried out by a competent person;
- MHSWR reg.7: employer has access to competent advice on passenger handling matters and access to an occupational health service to assess fitness of individuals for work, contribute to incident investigations, assist in staff training and advise on rehabilitation;
- MHOR reg.4, LOLER, PUWER: moving and handling aids are provided, are suitable for the task, properly maintained, and where appropriate, have undergone a thorough examination and test;
- MHSWR regs.3 and 10, HSW Act ss.2 and 3: the lifting/moving needs of employees and individuals have been assessed as far as reasonably practicable;
- MHOR reg.4, MHSWR reg.13: no employees should undertake manual handling operations or use lifting aids until they have been trained and assessed as competent.

56 The enforcement guidance below is of a generic nature. Inspectors should use their discretion when determining appropriate controls in particular situations bearing in mind what is reasonably practicable. Transportation Section should be contacted if specific guidance is required.

57 The main factors which must be examined in carrying out an ergonomic risk assessment are: the load, the task, the environment, the individual, and any other factors (eg PPE).

Generic guidance

58 Where there is evidence that there is a significant risk of injury and:

- (1) there is a lack of lifting/moving equipment such as scissor lifts such that manual handling tasks which could be avoided are being carried out; and/or
- (2) there is damage or defect to equipment creating manual handling risks which could otherwise be avoided; and/or
- (3) employees are not following safe practices while carrying out disabled passenger handling operations,

- a **Prohibition Notice (PN)** or **Deferred Prohibition Notice** should be considered if supported by specialist advice, taking into account the advice in para 61. A letter or Improvement Notice for the airline may be necessary to address situations where the airline's requirements create significant risks for handlers.

59 You should, however, be aware that the CAA have responsibility for aircraft design issues and in-flight safety. Inspectors should consult Transportation Section before taking any action which might involve such issues.

60 Inspectors should take into account the overall implications of an immediate PN, which could prevent aircraft turnround and may have serious implications for overall airport and aircraft safety. If the prohibition would, of itself, bring about other risks to health and safety that otherwise would not have existed, a deferred PN will be the preferred option, allowing, for instance, reasonable time for the repair of defective equipment for use on subsequent passenger boarding operations, without imposing additional risks in changing the system of work around an aircraft awaiting take-off. Where a longer time scale is required, for instance for the acquisition of additional equipment, an Improvement Notice is likely to be the practical option.

61 Where inspectors find failings of management systems such as:

- absence of suitable risk assessments; and/or
- inadequate arrangements for planning, organising, control etc; and/or
- lack of suitable training; and/or
- there is no access to competent advice,

and there is evidence that:

- employees are not following safe practices while carrying out disabled passenger handling operations; and/or
- there is a lack of lifting/ moving equipment such that manual handling tasks which could be avoided are being carried out; and/or
- there are damage or defects to equipment which create manual handling risks which could otherwise be avoided,

an **Improvement Notice** should be considered. Advice or enforcement should be addressed to the party or parties best able to rectify an identified problem, ie airport and/or airline and/or ground handler

62 It is important to consider who is responsible for providing and maintaining equipment such as scissor lifts as this could be the airport operator, the contractor, the airline or another organisation.

Local factors

63 Inspectors should apply local factors based on their knowledge of the specific situation and employer.

Target for action

64 Inspectors should consider and target specific manual handling risks and underlying management failings by the employer and, if relevant, the airline involved in a specific situation.

65 As always, inspectors should take action against the company in the best position to remedy the defects. In most cases, the target for action is likely to be the employer of the affected personnel. However, Transportation Section would encourage Inspectors to also pursue relevant issues from HSG209 Aircraft Turnround with the service provider's client (most probably the airline). Matters relating to the assessment, control and monitoring of contractors and the control of risks to non-employees are likely to be the most pertinent in this context. Transportation Section should be consulted before any enforcement action proceeds on such matters.

Strategic factors

66 Musculoskeletal Disorders are currently an HSC priority programme. The risk of musculoskeletal injury among ground handlers is well known in the industry and is the cause of considerable lost time and absence, and consequent cost to the employer, as well as the cost to the nation of injury and early retirements, and the pain and suffering of individuals.

67 Inspectors should also consider that enforcement action will have a positive impact on dutyholders in the industry in general.

68 The Revitalising Health and Safety in Air Transport (RHSAT) industry strategy group set itself a target to achieve a 50% reduction in MSD's by the year 2010/11

Cancellation of instructions

69 SIM 05/2003/55 - Manual handling risks during assistance of disabled passengers boarding or disembarking aircraft – cancel and destroy.

Appendix 1 - Further guidance on manual handling

HSAC publication Manual Handling in the Health services.

SIM 07/2001/44 Patient Handling in Health Care: Good Practice.

MSDs Intranet page.

Appendix 2 - IATA airport handling manual 26th edition 2006

AHM 176 gives recommendations for the handling of passengers with reduced mobility (PRMs).

Definition: Passengers with Reduced Mobility (PRMs) shall be defined as those passengers with a physical disability or with a medical condition, which require individual

attention or assistance on enplaning/ deplaning and during ground handling which is normally not extended to other passengers.

Categories: there are a number of categories of PRMs which are given specific codes. The codes for wheelchair users are:

WCHR (Wheelchair - R for Ramp) passenger is able to ascend/ descend steps and make own way to/from cabin seat, but requires wheelchair for distance to/from aircraft.

WCHS (Wheelchair - S for stairs) passenger is unable to ascend/ descend steps, but is able to make own way to/ from cabin seat; requires wheelchair for distance to/ from aircraft or mobile lounge and must be carried up/ down stairs.

WCHC (Wheelchair - C for cabin seat) passenger is completely immobile; requires wheelchair to/ from aircraft/ mobile lounge and must be carried up/ down steps and to/ from cabin seat.

There are also codes for other disabilities such as leg in cast, oxygen use, medical case, etc.

Handling on the ground: Necessary steps should be taken to ensure that the Handling Company is in a position to ensure safe handling of PRMs by ensuring that appropriate devices are made available, such as, but not limited to, wheelchairs and lifting systems.

Staff and training: The handling Company shall take all necessary steps to establish and coordinate training programmes to ensure that trained staff are available. Carry up/down should only be performed by specially trained staff.

For further information on guidance in the IATA Airport Handling Manual please contact Transportation Section.

Appendix 3 - Manual handling training courses

1 There is no prescriptive guidance on what a 'good' course should include or how long it should last at present. However, typically a suitable course should:

- be suitable for the individual, tasks and environment and use relevant examples. This will usually mean that it needs to be industry specific. It is not acceptable to demonstrate lifting regular shaped cardboard boxes in a spacious room if the task involves lifting irregular shaped packages in confined spaces, or assisting disabled passengers.
- last approximately ½ day or more; anything less than one hour is not likely to cover all the relevant information.

2 A suitable course would also include:

- some basic information about the anatomy of the spine and muscular system and how injuries occur.

- the key risk factors for manual handling injuries relating to the load, task, environment and capability and how those factors present in the particular industry and workplace.
- how to avoid manual handling and reduce risk factors.
- factors relating to individual capability should include the capability to adopt posture required for safe lifting, eg bending the knees.
- basic principles of safe moving and handling and then how those can be applied in that particular industry and workplace, taking into account local factors such as specific tasks and workplace and wearing of PPE, etc. This should enable delegates to deal with unfamiliar operations through basic understanding of the principles of avoidance and safe lifting techniques
- demonstration and practice of lifting and handling techniques such as planning the lift, feet position for stability/balance, posture, keeping load close to the body, moving feet instead of twisting the trunk.
- demonstration and practice in safe use of lifting equipment if applicable.
- practical work to allow the trainer to identify and remedy any unsafe practice demonstrated by trainees.
- what the company procedure for reporting injuries is and what action will be taken if a member of staff is injured.

3 Other things to look for:

- ask whether the trainer asked for information about the company and specific identified risks before starting the training. If a trainer has not asked these questions it is likely that the course will not have been tailored to that company and whilst covering the basics may not have made it applicable.
- sufficient records to show who has been trained, when and what was covered in the course.
- planned programme of training to ensure all staff are trained, with a monitoring system to confirm that they actually did attend.