

MAC tool

Frequently asked questions

Q What is the MAC?

A The Manual Handling Assessment Chart (MAC) is a tool to help in the identification of common risk factors in lifting, carrying and team handling operations. The MAC helps the assessor to identify the tasks that need improvement first.

Q Why was the MAC developed?

A The MAC was conceived to assist regulatory inspectors develop their knowledge and confidence in tackling manual handling issues.

Q Will the MAC be available to the public and if so where can I obtain a copy?

A The MAC is available as a free leaflet (INDG383) for single copies and priced for multiple copies (ISBN 0 7176 2741 1), from HSE Books (Tel: 01787 881165 Fax: 01787 313995). It can also be printed from the HSE website.

Q How does the MAC fit in with the risk assessment filter and checklist provided in the guidance on Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended 2002) (MHOR)?

A Employers, safety officers and others may find the MAC useful when completing the risk assessment checklist for handling situations, provided in the guidance on MHOR. However, the MAC is not appropriate for all manual handling operations, and so may not comprise a fully 'suitable and sufficient' risk assessment if relied on alone.

Q What is the role of the MAC scores? What do they indicate?

A The total scores should be used to assist the assessor with their prioritisation of remedial actions. The scores provide an indication of which manual handling tasks require attention first.

Q If a manual handling task involves lifting and then carrying, what should I assess?

A Ideally both, but after some experience of using the MAC you should be able to judge which of the task elements poses the greater risk.

Q How do I interpret the load weight/frequency graph for female workers?

A Initially consideration was given to providing a separate graph for males and females. However, for simplicity the load weight/frequency graphs presented are applicable to males and females.

Q Can the MAC be used to assess tasks that involve handling people?

A Although the risk assessment principles embodied in the MAC apply to all handling situations, it should be noted that the MAC was not designed with patient handling in mind, and therefore may not be appropriate for patient handling risk assessments.

Further information

For information about health and safety ring HSE's Infoline Tel: 0845 345 0055.

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