

1. Purpose of Policy

This policy aims to minimise the risk of manual handling injuries at the Club's facilities and to promote the wellbeing of staff, members, visitors, contractors and volunteers.

2. Definitions and Coverage

2.1. Manual handling is defined as "any activity requiring the use of force exerted by a person to lift, push, pull, carry or otherwise move or restrain any animate or inanimate object. Also actions involving repetition and sustained awkward posture."

2.2. Hazardous Manual Handling means any of the actions described above that cause or have the potential to cause a Musculoskeletal disorder as a result of the following characteristics:

- a) Repetitive or sustained application of force
- b) Repetitive or sustained awkward posture
- c) Repetitive or sustained unusual movement
- d) Application of high force
- e) Exposure to sustained vibration
- f) Handling persons
- g) Handling unstable or unbalanced loads, or loads which are difficult to grasp or hold.

2.3. This policy applies to all of the Club's Staff, Members, Visitors, and Volunteers at any internal or external activity or event, and especially at working bees.

2.4. All staff, coaches and volunteers should watch out for unsafe manual handling practices and advise accordingly. Accidents should be preventable if people observe safe practices.

3. Manual Handling Guidelines

3.1. When undertaking a new or unfamiliar activity, exercise caution, and seek the advice of a staff member, qualified coach or another volunteer.

3.2. Always consider the safety of an activity before proceeding

3.3. Avoid unnecessary manual handling

3.4. Seek assistance in handling heavy or awkward objects

3.5. Gymnasts under the age of 18 should not be required to lift or move any gymnastics equipment weighing more than 10kg, without assistance of a coach or another gymnast. In most cases, gymnasts should not be assisting with the lifting or movement of any equipment other than mats.

3.6. Manual handling of any equipment by gymnasts should be supervised by a qualified coach at all times

4. Policy Compliance

4.1. At the Club, manual handling risks include, but are not limited to:

- a) Moving or carrying equipment
- b) Lifting or spotting participants
- c) Restraining participants
- d) Typing at a computer in an awkward posture
- e) Stretching to reach a participant or high shelf or apparatus
- f) Standing on unstable platforms or apparatus
- g) Bending to adjust, move or distribute matting or apparatus close to or on the ground
- h) Moving computer and other office equipment
- i) Catching a falling participant
- j) Climbing over or under apparatus or equipment

4.2. The Club will aim to implement manual-handling risk control measures by:

- a) Redesigning areas of risk to eliminate or reduce risks;
- b) Changing the workplace systems of work and/or the object;
- c) Providing mechanical aids to reduce the risk and training in their use;
- d) Providing training and education appropriate to each task; or
- e) Some combination of the above methods

4.3. Policy compliance requires the following:

- a) Where possible manual-handling risks should be considered prior to any activity and/or purchasing of all goods to be used at the Club.
 - b) Undertake a regular process (risk assessment) to identify all manual-handling hazards at the Club. This is especially important prior to any Club activity, event or working bee when equipment will need to be relocated or shifted. The process should involve a cross section of staff and any other persons involved with the hazard.
 - c) Look at injury records to see in which areas, and which tasks injuries may be occurring.
 - d) Consult with employees/volunteers at meetings about the tasks they carry out.
 - e) Formal observation of work practices
- 4.4. Policy compliance for staff and coaches will be promoted through education, training, induction training and reiteration of the policy. The Policy will be displayed for volunteers and they will be reminded of risks at the beginning of each event or working bee when relocation of equipment may be necessary.

5. Risk Assessments:

- 5.1. A risk assessment should identify tasks with the potential for having a hazardous manual-handling component. The purpose of assessing the risk is to firstly establish if there is risk involved in the task, and secondly to determine the level or risk: high, medium or low.
- 5.2. A risk assessment should take into account the following factors:
- a) The force to be applied by the employee/volunteer
 - b) The actions and movements involved (e.g. reaching up or forward, unbalanced or uneven lifting or carrying, awkward grip)
 - c) The nature of the objects being handled (size, shape, mass, structure, animate or inanimate)
 - d) The duration and frequency of the manual handling
 - e) The time and distance over which an object is handled
 - f) The availability of mechanical aids
 - g) The layout and condition of the workplace environment (e.g. heights of desks, restricted access, confined space, hot/cold, poorly lit, slippery or uneven floor surfaces).
 - h) The work organisation (availability of people, flow of materials, lack of time)
 - i) The postural requirements imposed by manual handling (e.g. bending, twisting, stretching).
 - j) The analysis of injury statistics relevant to manual handling
 - k) The age, skill and experience of the person carrying out the manual handling
 - l) Any other factors considered relevant by the club or employees/volunteers.
- 5.3. Consider especially any risks to staff returning from leave, teaching a new skill, or in a new environment.
- 5.4. A risk assessment for regular training activities should be reviewed annually. Risk assessments should be prepared before any Club event, working bee or activity where volunteers are assisting.

6. Requirements & Responsibilities

6.1. Employees and Volunteers

- a) Are responsible for reading and following the Manual Handling Guidelines / Policy.
- b) Should report any known unassessed risks to the Club Coordinator
- c) Should not take any unnecessary risks where injury may occur, and if in doubt, always seek assistance
- d) Should encourage others to comply with the Manual Handling guidelines referred to in this Policy, and to adopt a common sense approach

6.2. Club Coordinator

- a) Is responsible for maintaining the Manual Handling Policy
- b) Is responsible for monitoring policy adherence, monitoring risk areas and identifying new risks
- c) Is responsible for ensuring risk assessments for training are prepared and reviewed annually and that risk assessments are prepared before any Club event or working bee, etc
- d) Is responsible for communicating the Policy to staff, coaches, members, visitors, contractors and volunteers