

Policy Title

Manual Handling Policy

Policy Owner

Safety & Independent Assurance Director

Owning Dept

Safety

Last Updated

February 2025

Next Review Date

February 2027

Reason for Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the RNLI has identified the risks with regards to manual handling tasks. This policy should lay out the hierarchal processes to follow to ensure manual handling operations are properly controlled and managed.

The purpose of this policy is to have consistent processes throughout the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), both ashore, afloat and in the offices in order to manage manual handling and have robust procedures in place.

Objective of Policy

The RNLI recognises that manual handling of people, animate or inanimate loads should be avoided; so far as is reasonably practicable (SFAIRP). All manual handling operations, which cannot be avoided, must be risk assessed to identify the hazards and determine an action plan to remove or reduce the risks to an acceptable minimum.

Applicability

This Policy applies to all RNLI volunteers, employees, whether permanent, temporary or contracted in (either as an individual or through a third party supplier). Any contractors who may be working on behalf of the RNLI will also need to adhere to this policy.

Policy

1. RESPONSIBILITY

The Manual Handling Policy is owned by the Safety & Independent Assurance Director.

Roles and responsibilities relating to manual handling within the RNLI are detailed in the manual handling procedure.

2. POLICY

The purpose of having a system that supports the management of the risks associated with manual handling is to:

- Identify the risks
- Prevent illness and injury

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Author: Kelly Scagell

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- Ensure appropriate equipment is available
- Provide a safe working environment

The RNLI is committed to implementing measures to comply with the regulatory requirements placed upon them through:

- Providing the resources required to manage manual handling across the organisation e.g. continually researching and developing new solutions to reduce manual handling
- Consultation with those involved in the task during the risk assessment
- Completion of task-specific manual handling risk assessments
- Implementation of control measures e.g. avoiding altogether or use mechanical aids
- Providing safe systems of work where they are needed to instruct Staff on the control measures
- Providing manual handling training packages to volunteers and employees which are specific to the work tasks as part of their role, which should incorporate the results of the risk assessment. All training should be delivered by a competent training provider
- Ensuring that volunteers and employees follow instructions through regular supervision
- Carrying out reviews and audits to ensure compliance

The RNLI will ensure where new work practices are introduced; new risk assessments will be carried out where required.

In all operational situations the person responsible for the management of an operational situation, where reasonably practicable, will avoid the need for operational people to undertake manual handling tasks that could lead to a foreseeable risk of injury. Manual handling training provided for all operational people will provide all personnel with sufficient knowledge to carry out dynamic manual handling assessments. A crew member/lifeguard on an operational call must adopt a safe system of work; individual training, skill and experience will all contribute to a measured and effective solution.

When considering what is 'reasonably practicable', additional potentially relevant factors may be:

- a) the seriousness of the need for the lifting operation; and
- b) a public authority's duties to the public and to the particular member of the public who has called for the authority's help.

Taking these factors into account, the level of risk which an employer may ask an employee to accept may, in appropriate circumstances; be higher when considering the health and safety of those in danger, although this does not mean that employees can be exposed to unacceptable risk of injury.

In non-operational situations the RNLI will, whenever possible, avoid the need for people to undertake manual handling in their role. Where avoidance is not achievable then the manual handling task must be completed by a trained manual handler, supported by a suitable and sufficient risk assessment.

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Reference Documents

Health & Safety at Work Act 1974

Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER)

Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)

Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)

Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992

L23 Guidance on the Regulations

INDG143(rev3) Manual Handling at work

Northern Ireland:

Manual Handling Operations Regulations (NI) 1992

Ireland:

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 Chapter 4 of part 2.

Ergonomics – Good practice in the Irish workplace HSA (December 2015)

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