

Statement of the Issue

To conduct upper limb disorder risk assessments and to rank risk for planning short, medium and long term actions to reduce the risk.

A food processing company, with 6 sites in England and Wales, identified the need to assess the risk of upper limb disorders at its sites. Although the company had a risk ranking scheme established it did not have the ergonomics expertise to assess the tasks as having the potential for causing upper limb disorders. The Company's risk ranking scheme was modified to take account of the requirements for ergonomic assessment.



Each site was visited by Hu-Tech's ergonomists to assess tasks within all types of food preparation – confectionery, savoury, pies etc. The assessments found problems of postures of the upper limbs but also the task, workstation, work environment and general work organisation. In particular, elements of force and repetition were recorded as potential contributory factors to upper limb discomfort.

Significant Outcomes

Each assessment was recorded – detailing the task and the risk of injury for the task. Hu-Tech was also asked to suggest whether the expenditure required to control of the risks was significant or marginal, and what potential benefits would result. These findings provided the company with a document which:

- identified risk
- rated risk
- recommended remedial actions
- proposed changes for future developments
- estimated costs
- outlined benefits

Benefits

The Risk Manager was able to see the extent of the risk and prioritise an order for these to be addressed. The Risk Manager was also able to establish common risks between sites and develop a procedure for addressing these issues within the Company as a whole.

A plan of action was formally established with informed decisions for short, medium and long-term actions, which included changes in practice and to capital investments.

For information visit www.hu-tech.co.uk or email: info@hu-tech.co.uk

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