

**SAFETY REPS CHECKLIST FOR WAREHOUSES**

	YES	NO
Have Risk Assessments been carried out in your warehouse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have they been done by a Competent Person?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Were GMB safety reps involved in the assessment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have adequate manual handling assessments been undertaken?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have these assessments taken into account the pick rates?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a viable workplace transport policy in place?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do management follow the HSE standards on stress management?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the racking checked and maintained on a regular basis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a clear and transparent policy on bullying and victimisation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is any PPE issued suitable and sufficient for the job?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you get adequate breaks working in cold temperature areas?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are GMB safety reps consulted on any proposed changes in good time?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

This list is not exhaustive and there may be other health, safety and welfare issues that will be needed to be raised with your employer.

**JOIN GMB NOW  
WAREHOUSE WORKERS ARE  
SAFER IN GMB**

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**HOW DO I JOIN? JOIN ONLINE AT WWW.GMB.ORG.UK**

Or just fill in parts 1, 2 and 3 or 4 below and hand the form to your local GMB representative or post it to GMB, FREEPOST (WC2268), London SW19 4YY (you do not need a stamp). If you have any questions call GMB on 020 8947 3131, email [info@gmb.org.uk](mailto:info@gmb.org.uk) or visit our website [www.gmb.org.uk](http://www.gmb.org.uk)

FOR UNION USE ONLY Section  Branch No  Membership No  Date of joining

**GMB membership application form PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS**

**1 TELL US ABOUT YOU**

Surname  First name  Title Mrs/Miss/Ms/Mr Date of birth   
 Home address  Home Tel  Email   
 Postcode  Mobile  I agree to abide by GMB rules Signature   
 Bangladeshi  / Black African  / Black Caribbean  / Black British   
 Chinese  / Indian  / Irish  / Pakistani  / White   
 Other:

**2 TELL US ABOUT YOUR JOB**

Employer  Your job  Pay No   
 Address where you work  How many hours a week do you work?  Work Tel  Pay Date   
 Postcode

**3 CHOOSE EITHER AUTHORISATION OF DEDUCTION OF YOUR TRADE UNION CONTRIBUTIONS FROM YOUR PAY**

Section 68, Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidated) Act 1992 as amended  
 I authorise my employer to deduct from my pay each week/month the sum of £  or other amounts as may be fixed by the GMB from time to time.  
 • Please start the deductions immediately and pay the amounts to the GMB.  
 • I note that this agreement may be cancelled by one month's notice in writing.  
 • I give permission to my employer to notify the GMB of any future change of address.  
 Signed  Cash   
 Date

**4 OR INSTRUCTION TO YOUR BANK OR BUILDING SOCIETY TO PAY BY DIRECT DEBIT**

Please fill in the form and send to GMB, 22-24 Worples Road, London SW19 4DD  
 Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society branch   
 To the Manager of  Bank/Building Society   
 Address  Postcode   
 Name(s) of account holder(s)   
 Bank/Building Society Account Number   
 Bank/Building Society Sort Code   
 Originator's Identification Number   
 Instructions to your Bank or Building Society. Please pay GMB Direct Debits from the account detailed in this Instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this Instruction may remain with GMB and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.  
 Signature(s)   
 Date   
 Reference number (Office use only)

**GMB campaigning for safety in warehouses**

# Warehouse Safety

Warehouses can often appear to those on the outside world as large, calm buildings where nothing much seems to go on...



Warehouses can often appear to those on the outside world as large, calm buildings where nothing much seems to go on. The reality could not be further from the truth as inside there are numerous hazards to be confronted. This brief guidance is designed to help GMB safety representatives and their members deal with some of the issues they face every day.

### MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

It is clear from the relevant legislation that managers are primarily responsible for the health and safety of the workforce (Health & Safety at Work Act (1974) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999)). Under these regulations they are responsible for ensuring workers capabilities and suitability for various tasks, ensuring adequate training takes place, undertaking risk assessments and cooperating with other employers (such as Employment Agencies). In the event of a prosecution for a breach of health and safety legislation it will be a senior manager who will be answerable before the law.

### RISK ASSESSMENTS

These are often made out to be bureaucratic and complex, but they don't have to be, as the outcome of a risk assessment is very straightforward, namely the establishment of a safe system of work as possible. In a very basic approach this means identifying the hazard(s) involved with the work process and the risk (or likelihood) of the hazard harming a worker or another individual (contractor, agency worker, visitor etc). There is plenty of guidance available to employers from the HSE, Trade Unions or Trade Associations on Risk Assessment but the primary aim is to eliminate, or more likely reduce the risk of a hazard affecting a worker to as low a level as possible. The Risk Assessment should be carried out by a Competent Person appointed by the employer. The safety rep and GMB members

should be involved and bring their knowledge and experience of the job to bear (MHSW Regs ACoP 15) in ensuring that the risk assessment covers all aspects of any task assessed.

### MANUAL HANDLING

Manual handling is the biggest cause of injuries in the food manufacturing sector causing 29% of all injuries and 31% of over three day injuries (RIDDOR). The HSE food section has identified one of the main causes of these types of injuries is the stacking/unstacking of boxes, crates and sacks. Injuries occur from two main areas. Firstly, acute injuries happen suddenly when a heavy or awkward load is encountered leading to an immediate Musculoskeletal Disorder (MSD). Or secondly, there should be a clear policy in place, not just a grievance procedure, which gives confidence to the workforce that any misdemeanours by management are acted upon you can suffer chronic back pain from a long period of repetitive lifting and twisting. This is of course made worse if the pick rate is combined with a heavy accumulated weight with little or no recuperation time. In determining the pick rate a number of factors have to be considered, these include the capability of each individual, the length and duration of each task and the potential for damage over a long period of time. These should be determined by a proper ergonomic assessment.

### RADIO FREQUENCY PICKING DEVICES

These are being introduced increasingly as a method to make picking more effective. There are a number of problems with their use. Firstly, those worn on the arm may be damaging in the long term to muscles and movement due to the weight and positioning of the device. Secondly, by being directed at all times there is a loss of control and decision making in a job, which can increase the pressure to perform and reduce informal recovery time leading to both physical and mental stress. The HSE Management Guide to Stress emphasises the need for consultation before the introduction of new technology or changes in job methods as a means of tackling workplace stress.

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### STORING AND MOVING OF LOADS

Most goods are stored in some form of racking system. These should be checked for damage on a regular basis and should not be used if damaged or defective. They should also not be used over their capacity as this can cause objects to fall from heights. Loads are then often moved on pallet trucks or "cages", again these should not be overloaded as this can cause vision, manoeuvrability and collision problems. All materials placed in these containers should also be loaded in a stable manner to stop spillages and subsequent triphazards.

### WORKPLACE TRANSPORT

The HSE recommend the segregation of transport and pedestrians where possible in the workplace. There should also be clear directional signage (preferably one way) and clearly laid out and marked walkways for vehicles and pedestrians. There should be an enforced workplace speed limit and if necessary physical control measures in place. Anyone driving a vehicle, including a forklift truck, should hold the appropriate qualification. Keys should not be left in unattended vehicles and vehicles should only be left in properly designated areas.

### BULLYING

There are a number of other workplace issues which can occur in the workplace. An obvious example is bullying and victimisation, often against those who stand up for their rights. There should be a clear policy in place, not just a grievance procedure, which gives confidence to the workforce that any misdemeanours by management are acted upon.

### WORKING AT LOW TEMPERATURES

Special arrangements should be made for workers who are exposed to low temperatures. These should include the provision of thermal/protective clothing. Warm rooms with a hot drinks dispenser may also be required. Suitable and sufficient breaks should be arranged for cold store workers so that they may warm themselves. The length and frequency of the breaks will depend on the nature of the work, the temperature and the exposure time.

### PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

Any clothing supplied should be suitable and sufficient for the task involved and take account of the demands of the job. Where clothing is supplied to cope with low temperature several thin layers are better than one thick layer in providing insulation. Water, from sweating must be allowed to escape so materials with good "wicking" properties should be used (polypropylene is better than cotton). Footwear may be needed to be able to cope with the cold, therefore they should be lined as well as protective i.e. toe cap protection. Equipment should be chosen to give minimum discomfort allowing the worker to work more effectively.

### RIGHTS OF SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES

Under the SRSC Regulations safety representatives have number of rights that they exercise on behalf of their members. The most important one is Regulation 4A which Consultation in good time. The employer should be consulting with the safety representative regarding introduction of new technology or equipment into the workplace and the planning of such an introduction. Obviously there many employers who need education in safety reps rights.