

Health and Safety Legislation Consultation

Manual Handling Regulations 2025

Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture

Rheynn Chymmyltaght, Bee as Eirinys,



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Opened 21 Nov 2025

Contact

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Overview

The Isle of Man (IOM) has jurisdiction over its territorial waters but currently does not have a comprehensive offshore health, safety, and environmental framework to regulate work activities offshore.

To address this gap, the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture (DEFA) is reviewing and updating specific legislation to align with UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE) standards. This will enable offshore work to proceed under internationally recognised safety regulations, supporting future offshore energy developments.

To ensure consistent health and safety standards across both land and sea, the updated legislation will apply to work undertaken onshore and offshore within the Island and its territorial waters. This process has the added advantage of updating legislation in key areas to align with the latest UK legislation.

This consultation specifically relates to the following draft legislation:

- **Manual Handling Regulations 2025**

Recognising the potential impact on IOM businesses, DEFA will implement a phased approach designed to give businesses sufficient time to prepare for compliance. Following public consultation and incorporation of any necessary amendments, the Department aims to submit the proposed legislation to Tynwald in early 2026, with a target commencement date of 1 Aug 2028.

DEFA welcomes stakeholder and public feedback on the updated and proposed health and safety legislation, and where appropriate any associated guidance documentation, through this public consultation process.

What these Regulations do

The draft IOM **Manual Handling Operations Regulations 2025** establish minimum health and safety requirements for tasks involving manual handling of loads, aiming to reduce risks of injury, particularly to the back. Employers must, where reasonably practicable, avoid hazardous manual handling; if avoidance is not possible, they must assess risks using specified factors, implement measures to minimize those risks, and provide information on load characteristics. For their part, employees are required to follow safe systems of work. The regulations exclude normal shipboard activities, they allow exemptions for national security and extend to certain territorial sea activities. Their overall purpose is to ensure safer handling practices through risk assessment, control measures, and training.

How do these Regulations compare with current IOM & UK Legislation?

The IOM does not currently have its own Manual Handling Regulations. Instead, manual handling duties here are enforced under the **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974** as it applies to the Island. That Act imposes a general duty on employers to ensure the health and safety of employees, including managing risks from manual handling, but there is no specific set of regulations equivalent to the UK's **Manual Handling Operations Regulations (MHOR) 1992**.

The UK framework introduced detailed requirements to avoid, assess, and reduce manual handling risks, supported by HSE guidance. The IOM currently relies on the general provisions of the 1974 Act and associated IOM **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 2003 (as amended)** for risk assessment, rather than having a dedicated manual handling regulation.

The new draft IOM **Manual Handling Operations Regulations 2025** create an IOM-specific regime, aligning with UK principles but formalizing them locally with clearer duties, assessment criteria, and exemptions.

Practical Implications of Introducing the 2025 Regulations

- **Legal Clarity and Specific Duties**
 - The legislation moves from broad general duties to explicit requirements for manual handling.
 - Employers will have a statutory obligation to avoid hazardous manual handling where practicable, and if unavoidable, assess and reduce risks using defined criteria.
- **Mandatory Risk Assessment Framework**
 - Introduces a structured assessment process based on factors in the Schedule (task posture, load characteristics, environment, individual capability).
 - Requires formal documentation and review of assessments when circumstances change.
- **Information Provision**
 - Employers must provide load weight and centre-of-gravity details where reasonably practicable. This is new and more prescriptive than current practice.
- **Extended Scope**
 - Duties apply to self-employed persons and certain activities in the territorial sea.
 - Adds national security exemptions, which will require administrative processes for certification.

- **Compliance and Enforcement**
 - Creates a clear benchmark for inspectors and enforcement action.
- **Operational Impact**
 - Employers will need to update policies, training, and record-keeping systems.
 - Considerations to be given to the practical implications of meeting the “reduce risk” requirement.

What other UK or IOM legislation is mentioned in these Regulations?

- The IOM **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (as applied to the IOM)**.
 - The enabling Act under which these regulations are made
- The IOM **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 2003 (Isle of Man)**
 - Referenced for risk assessment (Regulation 3) and health surveillance (Regulation 5).
- The UK **Visiting Forces Act 1952 (UK)**
 - Defines “home forces”, “visiting forces” for exemption purposes under Regulation 7.
- The IOM **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (Application to the Territorial Sea) Order 2025**
 - Extends the application of these regulations to certain activities in the territorial sea.
- The IOM **Agriculture (Safety, Health and Welfare Provisions) Act 1974**
 - Amended by these regulations (repeals section on lifting excessive weights and definition of “young person”).

Consultation Objectives

The following are the objectives of this consultation:

1. **Legislative alignment:**
Assess stakeholder support for aligning Manx health & safety legislation with UK standards, ensuring consistency and regulatory compatibility.
2. **Regulatory scope and clarity:**
Identify specific areas within health & safety regulation that may require additional focus, clarification, or enhancement to meet industry needs and best practices.
3. **Industry impact and readiness:**
Understand potential challenges for IOM-based businesses in adapting to the new framework, including operational, financial, or compliance-related concerns.

4. **Support mechanisms:**

Identify the support needs of stakeholders (e.g., guidance, training, transitional arrangements) to facilitate effective implementation and compliance with the new regime.

5. **Feedback on draft legislation:**

Collect stakeholder input on the draft legislative instruments for each stage of consultation.

6. **General feedback:**

- Provide an open channel for additional comments, concerns, or suggestions to inform the development of a robust and responsive health & safety framework.

IOM Health & Safety at Work Inspectorate

When any new legislation is introduced the Department is conscious of the need to ensure that the best guidance documentation is available. The current [IOM HSWI website](#) states the following:

- *“UK legislation and their associated codes of practice is best viewed as an illustration of good practice which may be helpful in explaining the general duties imposed by the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974”.*

Differences between UK HSE ACOPs and UK HSE Guidance

When referring to UK codes of practice, better known as “Approved Codes of Practice (ACOPs)” it is important to note and be aware of the differences between UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance and a UK HSE issued ACOP. UK HSE clarifies the differences here: [Legal status of HSE guidance and ACOPs](#).

When reading a UK HSE published ACOP, individuals and organisations should be aware of the presentation convention; which is normally explained within the documentation. A common standard is that ACOP text is set out in bold, accompanying guidance in normal type, with the text of the actual Regulations in italics.

It should also be noted that whilst certain UK Regulations have an associated ACOP, others only have guidance. As an example there is no longer an ACOP for the **UK Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (CDM) 2015**; it was replaced by guidance when the regulations were last updated.

Using UK HSE Guidance Documents with IOM legislation

When referring to UK ACOPs and guidance to assist with compliance of IOM legislation, individuals and organisations must be aware that whilst the intent is to align with the UK best practice, there may still be specific elements of the IOM legislation that are different to UK legislation. Examples being different paragraph and section/article numbering or

elements of the UK legislation being omitted (e.g. if UK is referring to legislation not currently in place or applicable on the IOM).

Relevant UK ACOP or Guidance

The key UK ACOP and guidance documents relevant to the IOM's **Manual Handling Regulations 2025** are as follows:

- [L23-Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992: Guidance on Regulations](#)
 - HSE L23 provides official interpretation of the UK MHOR 1992 Regulations and explains how employers must: avoid hazardous handling, assess risks, and reduce them.]
- [IN DG143 \(Rev4\) - Manual handling at Work](#)
 - This revised leaflet is aimed at employers. It explains the problems associated with manual handling and includes guidance on how to deal with them. It gives useful practical advice on reducing the risk of injury from manual handling and will help employers carry out their duties.
- [UK HSE Manual Handling Guidance Website:](#)
 - Includes structured guidance, checklists, and reflects amendments such as duties on self-employed persons.

Summary

The draft IOM **Manual Handling Operations Regulations 2025** set out minimum health and safety requirements for manual handling tasks to prevent injuries, particularly musculoskeletal and back injuries. They require employers to avoid hazardous manual handling where reasonably practicable, and if unavoidable, to assess risks using specified factors, implement measures to reduce those risks to the lowest level reasonably practicable, and provide information on load weight and centre of gravity. Employees must follow safe systems of work. The regulations also extend duties to self-employed persons, exclude normal shipboard activities, allow exemptions for national security, and apply to certain activities in the territorial sea.

Why your views matter

This consultation gives stakeholders, industry, and the public the chance to provide feedback on the proposed “draft Regulations”. Your views will help ensure that the legislation is clear, practical, and effective in protecting workers’ health.

Reasonable adjustments and alternative formats

The Department is committed to equal opportunities and our aim is to make our documents easy to use and accessible to all. The Department will take steps to accommodate any

reasonable adjustments and provide such assistance as may reasonably be required to enable access or reply to this consultation. If this document is required in another format or assistance is required with accessing or replying to this consultation, please email DEFAOffshore@gov.im.

Responding to this consultation and questions

This consultation can be responded to by clicking on the 'Online Survey' link below. Alternatively you can download a paper version of this consultation from the links on the consultation hub and email it to DEFAOffshore@gov.im or post it to:

The Offshore Team

Department of Environment Food and Agriculture,
Regulation Directorate,

Thie Slieau Whallian, Foxdale Road, St Johns, Isle of Man, IM4 3AS.

About you

1. Which option best describes your interest in responding to this consultation?

- ☐ Member of public
- ☐ Isle of Man Government
- ☐ Business owner or Stakeholder
- ☐ Member of Tynwald
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Other:

2. Are you responding on behalf of an organisation or industry?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Organisation / industry:

Number of people or organisations represented:

3. Are you happy for us to contact you regarding your response if we need to?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes then please add your name and contact email address.

Name:

Email:

4. May we publish your response?

Please read our Privacy Policy for more details and your rights.

More Information:

- **Publish in full** – your organisation name, or the industry you represent, along with full answers will be published on the hub (your email will not be published)
- **Publish anonymously** – only your responses will be published on the hub (your organisation name, or the industry you represent, and email will not be published)
- **Do not publish** – nothing will be published publically on the hub (your response will only be part of a larger summary response document)

(An answer is required)

- ☐ Yes, you can publish my response in full
- ☐ Yes, you may publish my response anonymously
- ☐ No, please do not publish my response

Consultation Questions

1. Do you agree that the Isle of Man should follow UK standards and processes for health and safety laws and its regulation?
(Yes/No – Please tell us why you agree or disagree).
2. Are there any parts of the legislation being consulted upon that require more clarity to aid understanding and assist with compliance?
(Yes/No – If yes, please tell us which areas and why).
3. Is the proposed implementation strategy and timescale for the introduction of the IOM **Manual Handling Regulations 2025** appropriate for industry readiness?
(Yes/No – Please add any comments you may have).
4. Are there any specific support mechanisms (e.g., guidance, training, transitional arrangements) that would help you or your organisation prepare for the new legislation? *(Yes/No – If yes, please tell us what kind of support would be most helpful).*
5. Do you have any other comments on the draft IOM **Manual Handling Regulations 2025** legislation attached to this stage of the overall consultation process?
(Comment Box)
6. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about the proposed changes or the consultation process?
(Comment Box)