

Report 601-00508 September 2016

# **Ergonomic Assessment of the Cylinder Lifter**

Dr Joanne O. Crawford





## **OUR IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT**

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## **REPORT TO CLIENT**

Dated : 14<sup>th</sup> September 2016

Specialist field : Ergonomics

On behalf of : EFP-ME UK Ltd

Reference : 603-00508



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#### 1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this ergonomic assessment was to evaluate the use of the Cylinder Lifter compared to other methods of manually handling cylinders including churning and lifting them. The cylinder lifter has been designed to reduce the need to lift the cylinders when positioning them on welding sets or other raised platforms as well as improve manoeuvrability when they need to be moved around a workplace.

#### 2 THE ISSUES

Manual handling of cylinders has long been associated with risk of injury mainly due to the weights being handled and the difficulty in gripping a cylindrical shape. For large scale operations, a number of different solutions have been developed including vacuum lifting equipment, crates that are used to move multiple cylinders using a fork-lift and other such devices. However, these are not helpful when only one or two cylinders are used in a working environment.

Where cylinders do still need to be lifted into position, there is a need to lift a heavy object which in relation to manual handling is a risk especially for larger cylinders due to the weight, the bulkiness of the load and the lack of a good gripping area.

#### 2.1 THE CYLINDER LIFTER

The cylinder lifter has been designed to remove the need for the manual handling or lifting of cylinders and can be seen in Figure 1.

An evaluation was carried out between manually handling two cylinders, a large one of 85 kg and a smaller one of 63 kg. Both cylinders were manoeuvred on to platform approximately 20 cm above the floor surface height.





Figure 1 Cylinder Lifter

## 2.2 EVALUATION OF THE CYLINDER LIFTER VERSUS MANUAL HANDLING

Examination was made of the cylinder lift of the 85 kg cylinder and this was evaluated using the HSE Manual Handling Assessment Checklist (MAC tool) and the Rapid Entire Body Assessment tool (REBA). These are recognised tools that enable evaluation to be made in workplaces when a change is made to the work process. In this case, evaluating the manual movement of cylinders and the use of the cylinder lifter to manoeuvre cylinders.

To move cylinders without assistive devices most often involves the use of churning which according to BCGA GN 3. REV 3;2016 should only be carried out over a distance of 5 metres.

The difficulty with cylinder handling is manoeuvring them into brackets or cages where often the only solution is to lift the cylinder. This in itself is a major risk of injury due to both the weight of the cylinder and the shape and size of each cylinder.

The use of assistive devices has been researched previously including the hand-handle interface tool (Devereux et al., 1998) and handle designs for cylinder trolleys (Okunribido and Haslegrave 1999). The Cylinder Lifter has been designed to remove the need for lifting and manoeuvring of the cylinders by hand.

When using the Cylinder Lifter, the tasks involved including the following:

• Lining the Cylinder Lifter up with the Cylinder



- Attaching and tightening the security strap around the cylinder
- Tilting the cylinder within the lifter using hand and foot
- Positioning the cylinder where required
- Placing safety chain on cylinder
- Removing security strap
- Removing the Cylinder Lifter

#### 2.2.1 The MAC Assessment

A copy of the MAC assessment chart is presented in Appendix 1. The assessment was carried out on two cylinders with weights of 85 kg and 63 kg under two conditions of moving the cylinders by hand and moving the cylinders using the Cylinder Lifter. The postures adopted during the cylinder movement are presented in Figures 2 to 7.

Table 1. MAC Scores

	63 kg Cylinder	85 kg Cylinder
MAC Score for manual movement onto stand	15	15
MAC Score for manual movement from stand	15	15
MAC Score for Cylinder Lifter on to stand	3	3
MAC Score for Cylinder Lifter from stand	3	3





Figure 2. Manual lifting of the 85 kg cylinder onto welding set platform



Figure 3. 85 kg cylinder ready to be lifted onto welding set platform





Figure 4. Loading of the 85 kg cylinder using the Cylinder Lifter onto a welding set platform



Figure 5. Manual lifting of the 63 kg cylinder onto a welding platform





Figure 6. 63 kg cylinder ready to be lifted onto welding set platform



Figure 7. Loading of the 63 kg cylinder using the Cylinder Lifter onto a welding set platform



#### 2.2.2 The REBA Assessment

The REBA assessment was carried out to allow a different assessment tool to be used to examine changes between manually handling cylinders and using the Cylinder Lifter. The REBA tool allows for a more in-depth analysis of posture across different body sections, coupling to loads and the weights of the loads.

Table 2. REBA Scores

	63 kg Cylinder	85 kg Cylinder
REBA Score for manual movement onto stand	9	10
REBA Score for manual movement from stand	8	10
REBA Score for Cylinder Lifter on to stand	1	3
REBA Score for Cylinder Lifter from stand	3	3

The scores for REBA are then categorised into the following priority groupings.

REBA Score	Risk Level	Action
1	Negligible	None necessary
2 - 3	Low	May be necessary
4 - 7	Medium	Necessary
8 - 10	High	Necessary soon
11 - 15	Very High	Necessary now

As can be seen from the scores above, the cylinder lifter significantly reduces the score to a lower level for both cylinder types from a high risk/very high risk level to a low/negligible level.

The difference in the REBA scores between the 63 kg and 85 kg cylinders using the cylinder lifter is due to the number of changes in posture required. These included having to bend forward when loading the cylinder due to the handle height and reaching upwards to support the taller (85 kg cylinder) when tilting the cylinder.

#### 3 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation of using the cylinder lifter as compared to the manual handling of cylinders has identified that risks are significantly reduced when using the Cylinder Lifter. Much of this is down to the loss of the need to lift the cylinder at any point.

There are potentially some other factors which need to be considered as part of this evaluation and that is the tests were carried out in a controlled



environment where cylinders were placed onto a stand above ground level. This is not necessarily the case in reality where cylinders are often stored and positioned at ground level. The advantage that the Cylinder Lifter can give is that cylinders can be manoeuvred into small spaces without the need to churn or lift into position.

When raising the cylinder before moving it, whole body weight can be used to tilt the cylinder in the lifter. While this is a large advantage compared to lifting, some thought may need to be given to advising users on the need to wear boots with good grips (toe protection should already be in place) and ensuring the surrounding environment is dry and well maintained.

#### **Conclusions**

The use of the Cylinder Lifter compared to manually move and lift cylinders significantly reduces the risks identified using the MAC tool and the Rapid Entire Body Assessment.

Whilst carrying out the assessment with the 63 kg cylinder it was assumed by the client that the attached handle was a suitable lifting point. It has since been confirmed by the cylinder manufactures, that this is not the case where handle is there to protect the valve (Figure 8) and does have a warning on it to not use it for lifting (Figure 9)



Figure 8. Handle to protect valve and NOT for lifting, dragging or churning cylinder





Figure 9. Handle assembly on cylinder with icon indicating that the handle is not for lifting

The requirement to lift any of the cylinder weights stated in the report by any individual in the workplace would be difficult to defend. When carrying out a manual handling assessment, the lifting of such weights would be identified as highly risky especially with the poor grip associated with the larger cylinders. Lifting such weights has been identified as a high risk of injury with the types of injury induced including back, shoulder and elbow injuries.



#### 4 REFERENCE SOURCES

British Compressed Gases Association (2016). Guidance Note 3: Safe cylinder handling and the application of the manual handling operations regulations to gas cylinders Revision 3.

Devereux J, Buckle P, Haisman M. (1998). The evaluation of a hand-handle interface tool (HHIT) for reducing musculoskeletal discomfort associated with the manual handling of gas cylinders. *International Journal of Industrial Ergonomics*; 21: 23-34.

Lloyds British (2015) Test report on Gas Cylinder Lifter Cranked Handle. Report No 249594.

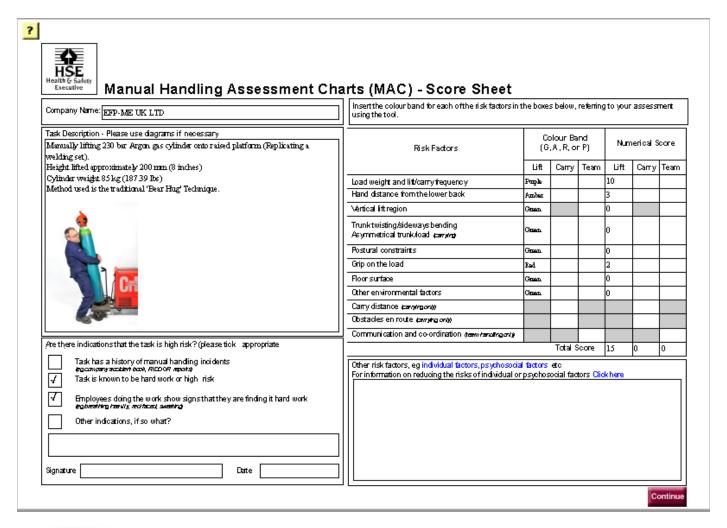
Okunribido OO, Haslegrave CM. (1999) Effect of handle design for cylinder trolleys. *Applied Ergonomics*; 30: 407-419.



## **APPENDIX 1 MAC SCORES**

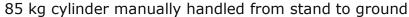


### 85 kg cylinder manually handled onto stand



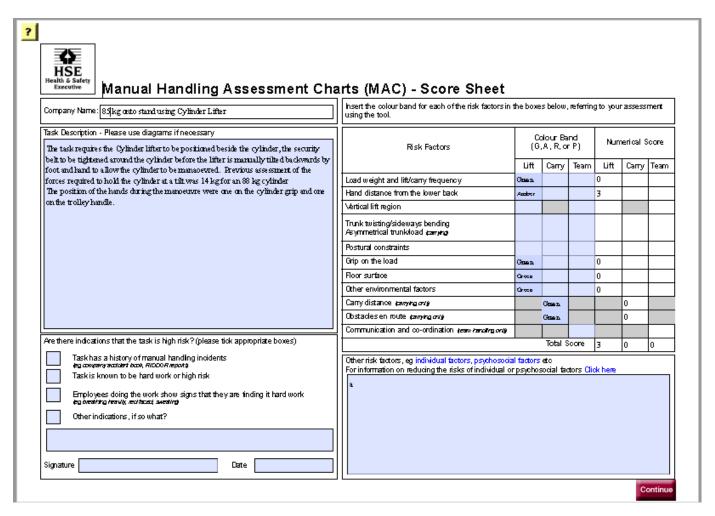


#### ? **4)** HSE Manual Handling Assessment Charts (MAC) - Score Sheet insert the colour band for each of the risk factors in the boxes below, referring to your assessment Company Name: EFP-ME UK LTD using the tool. Task Description - Please use diagrams if necessary Colour Band Numerical Score (G, A, R, or P) Manually lifting gas cylinder from platform(Replicating a welding set) to the ground. Risk Factors Platform height approximately 200 mm. Cylinder weight 85 kg. Method used; Traditional 'Bear Hug' technique. Lift Carry Team Lift Carry Team PURPLE 10 Load weight and lift/carry frequency Hand distance from the lower back AMBER 3 0 Vertical lift region GREEN Trunk twisting/sideways bending GREEN 0 Asymmetrical trunk/load (corping) Postural constraints OREEN 0 Grip on the load RED 2 Floor surface 0 Other environmental factors GREEN 0 Carry distance (conying only) Obstacles en route (carning only) Communication and co-ordination peam transling only) Are there indications that the task is high risk? (please tick appropriate boxes) 15 0 Total Score Task has a history of manual handling incidents (eg company accident book, RICDOR reports) Other risk factors, eg individual factors, psychosocial factors etc For information on reducing the risks of individual or psychosocial factors Click here V Task is known to be hard work or high risk Employees doing the work show signs that they are finding it hard work Other indications, if so what? Signature | Dr Joanne Crawford Date 8/9/2016



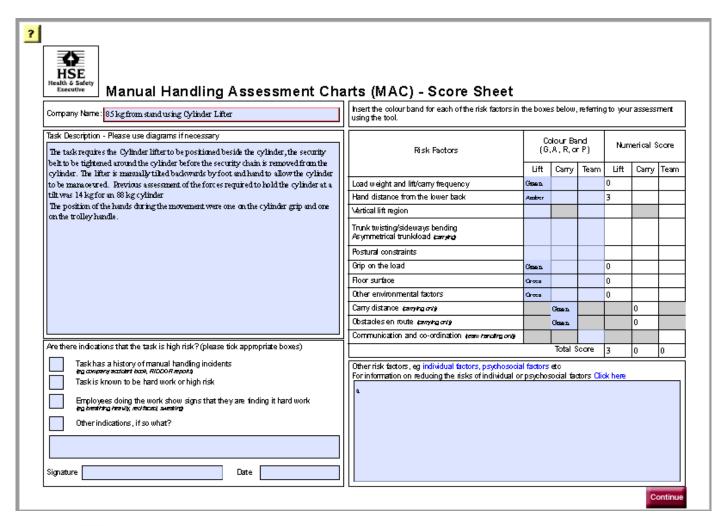


### 85 kg cylinder moved onto stand using the cylinder lifter

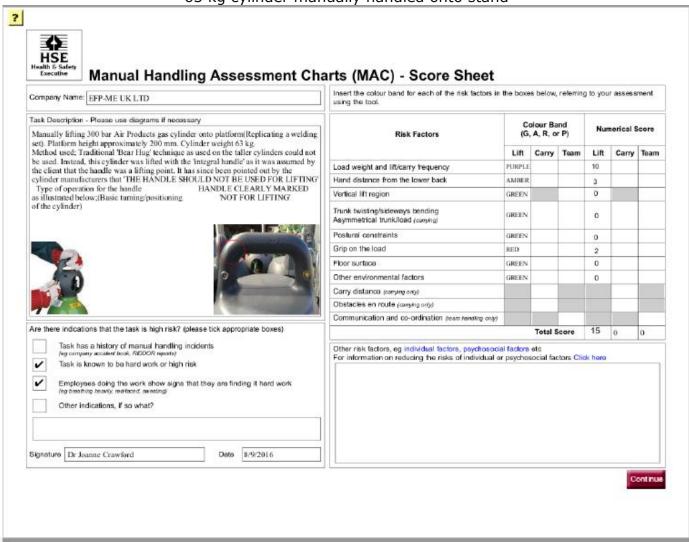


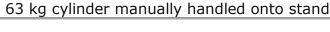


#### 85 kg cylinder moved from stand using the Cylinder Lifter



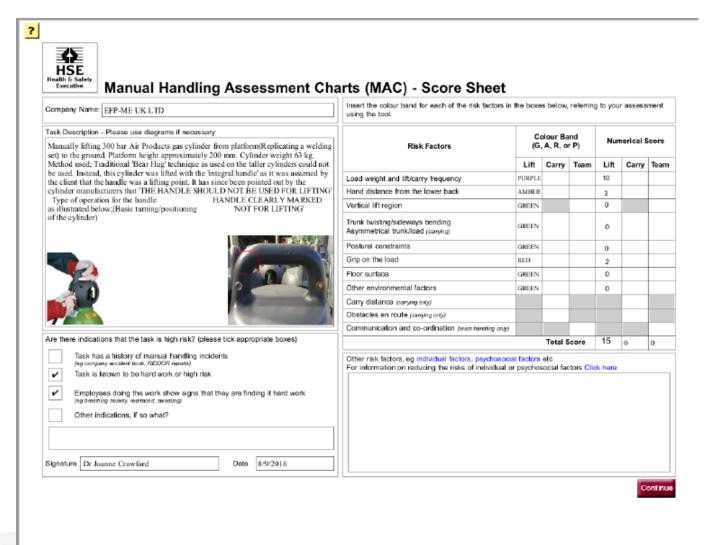






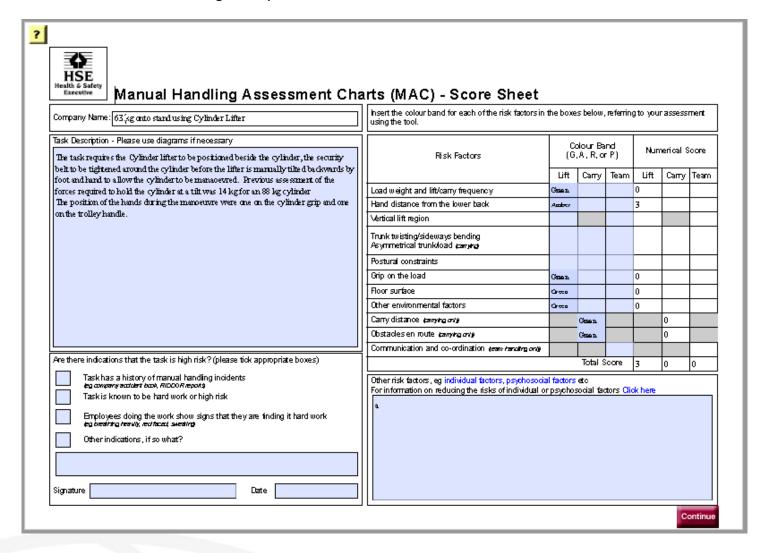


#### 63 kg cylinder manually handled from stand onto ground



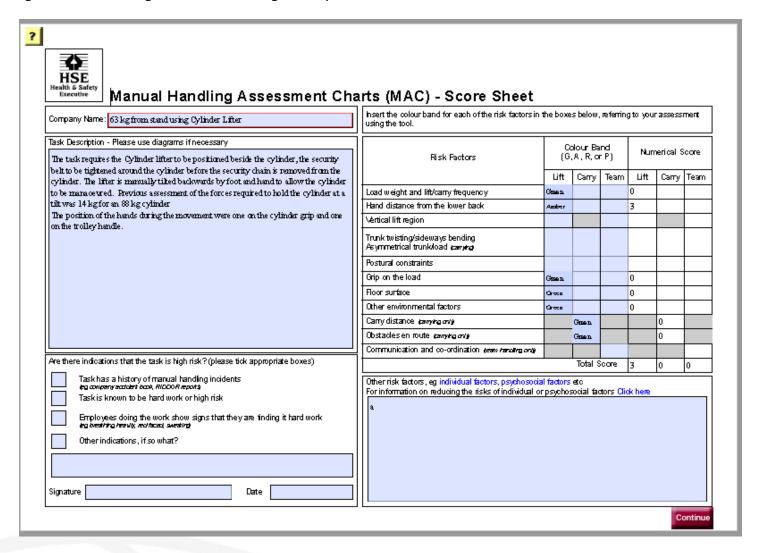


63 kg cylinder moved onto stand using the cylinder lifter





63 kg moving from stand to ground level using the Cylinder Lifter





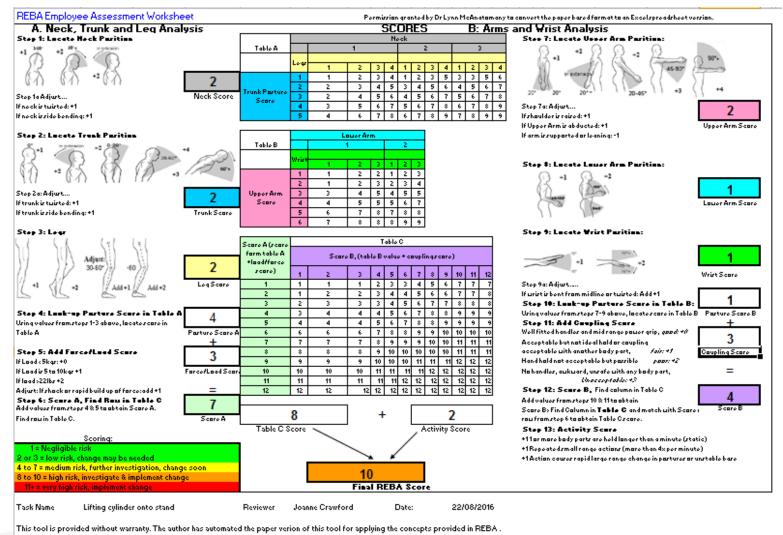
## **APPENDIX 2 REBA CHARTS**



#### 85 kg Manual Cylinder Lift from ground onto stand REBA Employee Assessment Worksheet Permission granted by Dr Lynn McAnatomany to convert the paper based format to an Excelspreadsheet version. A. Neck, Trunk and Leg Analysis SCORES B: Arms and Wrist Analysis Step 1: Lucate Heck Parities Stee 7: Lucate Useer Arm Parities: Table A 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 3 4 1 2 3 5 3 3 5 6 4 5 3 4 5 6 4 5 6 7 4 5 6 4 5 6 7 5 6 7 8 Neck Score Stop 1a Adjurt... Scare If neck ir tuirted: +1 6 7 5 6 7 8 6 7 8 9 Stop 7a: Adjurt... If neck irside bending: +1 6 7 8 6 7 8 9 7 8 9 9 lfshaulderisraised:+1 If Upper Arm is abducted: +1 Upper Arm Scare Step 2: Lucete Trunk Paritian If arm is supported or leaning: -1 Table B Step #: Lucate Luuer Arm Paritian: 2 2 1 2 3 2 2 3 2 3 Stop Za: Adjurt... Upper Arm If trunk is twisted: +1 Score 4 4 5 5 5 6 7 Lauer Arm Scare If trunk irside bending: +1 Trunk Scare 5 7 8 7 8 8 Step 3: Legs Step 9: Lucate Wrist Pasition: Table C Score A (score form table A Score B, (table B value + couplingscore) +load/force score) Wrist Score Log Scaro 1 2 3 3 4 5 6 7 7 Stop 9a: Adjurt.... 1 If writt it bent from midline or twirted: Add+1 2 Step 10: Lauk-up Parture Scare in Table B: 3 4 4 5 6 7 8 8 9 9 Using values from steps 7-9 above, locates core in Table B Posture Score B Step 4: Lunk-up Parture Scare in Table i Uring values from stops 1-3 above, locates core in 4 4 5 6 7 8 8 9 9 9 Step 11: Add Coupling Score Table A Parturo Scaro 6 6 6 7 8 8 9 9 10 10 10 Woll fitted handler and mid range pawer grip, quad ≠0° Acceptable but not ideal hold or coupling 7 7 8 9 9 9 10 10 11 11 11 Step 5: A44 Force/Load Score \* 8 9 10 10 10 10 10 11 11 acceptable with another body part, Caupling Scare 3 lf Load < 5kgr: +0 9 9 10 10 10 11 11 11 12 12 12 10 11 11 11 11 12 12 12 12 12 No handlor, awkward, unrafo with any body part, If Load is 5 to 10kgs +1 Force/Load Scor 10 10 10 If load>22lbr+2 11 11 11 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 Unacceptable +3 11 Step 12: Scure B, Find column in Table C 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 Adjust: If shack are apid build up of force: add +1 12 12 12 Step 6: Score A, Find Rou in Table C Add values from stops 10 & 11 to obtain Addivatues from stoos 4 % 5 to obtain Score A. Scare By Find Calumn in Table C and match with Scare i 8 Find row in Table C. ScoreA rou from stop 6 to obtain Table Oscore. Table C Score Activity Score Step 13: Activity Scare Scoring: +11ar mare bady parts are held langer than a minute (static) 1 = Negligible risk +1Repeatedsmall range actions (more than 4x per minute). 2 or 3 = low risk, change may be needed +1 Action causes rapid large range change in postures or unstable base 4 to 7 = medium risk, further investigation, change soon 10 8 to 10 = high risk, investigate & implement change Final REBA Score Task Name Lifting cylinder onto stand Reviewer Joanne Crawford 22/08/2016 This tool is provided without warranty. The author has automated the paper verion of this tool for applying the concepts provided in REBA.



## 85 kg Manual Cylinder Lift from stand to ground level





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#### 63 kg Manual handling cylinder onto stand REBA Employee Assessment Worksheet Permission granted by Dr Lynn McAnatomany to convert the paper based format to an Excel spreadsheet version. A. Neck, Trunk and Leg Analysis SCORES B: Arms and Wrist Analysis Neck Stee 7: Lucete Useer Arm Parities: Table A 2 3 4 1 2 3 5 3 3 5 6 3 4 5 3 4 5 6 4 5 6 7 Neck Score Stop 1a Adjurt... 4 5 6 4 5 6 7 5 6 7 8 If nock ir tuirtod: +1 5 6 7 5 6 7 8 6 7 8 9 Stop 7a: Adjurt... If nock ir side bonding: +1 6 7 8 6 7 8 9 7 8 9 9 lfshaulder is raised: +1 If Upper Arm is abducted: +1 Upper Arm Scare Stop 2: Luceto Trunk Paritian If arm ir supported or leaning: -1 Louist Arm Table B Step #: Lucete Luuer Arm Paritius: 2 2 1 2 3 3 4 5 4 5 5 If trunk is tuisted: +1 Score 4 5 5 5 6 7 Lauer Arm Scare If trunk ir side bending: +1 Trunk Score 7 8 7 8 8 8 8 8 9 9 Step 3: Lear Step 9: Lucate Wrist Parities: Table C Score A (reore form table A Score B, (table B value + couplingscore) +load/force 3 30,505 score) Wrist Score LogScaro 1 1 1 2 3 3 4 5 6 7 7 7 Stop 9a: Adjurt.... 1 If wrist is bont from midling or twisted: Add +1 2 Step 10: Lunk-up Parture Scure in Table B: 4 4 5 6 7 8 8 9 9 3 Using values from steps 7-9 above, locates core in Table B Posture Score B Stop 4: Lunk-up Parture Scure in Table 6 Uring values from stops 1-3 above, locates core in 4 4 5 6 7 8 8 9 9 9 Step 11: Add Coupling Score Woll fitted handler and mid range pawer grip, quod ≠// Table A Parture Scare 6 6 7 8 8 9 9 10 10 10 10 7 7 8 9 9 9 10 10 11 11 1 Acceptable but not ideal hold or coupling Step 5: Add Force/Load Score 9 10 10 10 10 10 11 11 1 accoptablo with anothor body part, Caupling Scare 3 9 10 10 10 11 11 11 12 12 12 If Load < 5kgr: +0 9 If Load ir 5 to 10 kgr +1 10 11 11 11 11 12 12 12 12 12 Force/Load Scor 10 10 No handler, aukward, unrafe uith any body part, Unacceptable 43 11 11 11 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 If Imad>22lbr+2 11 11 11 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 Step 12: Scare B. Find column in Table C Adjurt: If shock or rapid build up of force: add +1 12 12 Step 6: Score A, Find Rou in Table C Add values from stops 10 % 11 to obtain Add values from stops 4 % 5 to obtain Score A. Scare By Find Calumn in Table C and match with Scare i Findrawin Table C. row from stop 6 to obtain Table Cscore. Table C Score Activity Score Step 13: Activity Scure Scoring: +11 or more body parts are held longer than a minute (static) +1Repeatedsmall range actions (more than 4x per minute) 2 or 3 = low risk, change may be needed +1 Action course rapid large range change in portures or unstable base 4 to 7 = medium risk, further investigation, change soon 8 to 10 = high risk, investigate & implement change Final REBA Score 11+ = very high risk, implement change Task Name Lifting cylinder onto stand Reviewer Joanne Crawford 22/08/2016 This tool is provided without warranty. The author has automated the paper verion of this tool for applying the concepts provided in REBA.



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