Speaker's Notes - Better Backs in Construction Presentation

Slide 1	This presentation has been produced to support the Better Backs campaign as implemented in HSE's Construction Division. It is a joint HSE and local authority initiative (and so is jointly badged) LACoRS (the Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services) provides advice and guidance to help support local authority regulatory and related services
Slide 2	More people are off work because of MSDs than any other type of work related ill health. One in 5 people with work related ill health suffer from back pain, accounting for 1 in 4 days lost, despite everyone's best efforts to date. This is why we need to do something more and something different. We can't tackle every MSD in one go, and most of the population don't know what an MSD is, but everyone knows what a bad back is – and as bad backs are the biggest cause of MSD where better to start a three year campaign.
Slide 3	Construction industry has the highest rate of MSDs. That is musculoskeletal disorders – conditions causing injury and pain to the muscles, bones, tendon, ligaments etc Most of these are bad backs. Figures self reported (SWI 04/05) and RIDDOR 04/05
Slide 4	The Better Backs campaign is in year 2 of a three-year campaign HSE is coordinating. The initiative will contribute particularly to the reduction of Manual Handling incidents which will contribute to reduction in the incidence, the number of new cases of MSDs that in turn should reduce the number of days lost. The Better Backs initiative aims to help prevent new cases of back pain through sensible workplace precautions. To do this it will promote good practices and the use of lifting aids. It also reflects that not all back pain is preventable – the medical profession tells us this very clearly, so we have to do more to limit the effects of back pain. Better Backs will also promote staying active with back pain as a very good therapy for most cases of back pain – and staying active at work is best for everyone. It will also encourage employers and employees to work together to help employees with back pain back to normal activities.
Slide 5	We know that to make the biggest impact and the greatest difference we cannot go it alone, it is only by everyone working together we can make the biggest difference. From the information received from accident reports and other sources we know there is still a long way to go in preventing back injuries and that in many cases simple practical precautions in the form of lifting and handling aids would

	make a big difference. Sometimes it is not about buying new equipment but by making sure equipment is maintained and people trained to use it properly, other times it might involve hiring in equipment for short term jobs rather than expecting individuals to struggle with manual handling.
Slide 6	Medical professionals agree that staying active with back pain/ if you suffer from back pain the best advice is to stay active. Evidence from around the world supports staying active and getting back to normal activities including work as soon as possible. That's where sensible policies on sickness absence and return to work come in. The Better Backs campaign aims to raise awareness and change behaviour to make a difference.
Slide 7	No Notes
Slide 8	Further information on what various dutyholders under Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 1994 should consider can be found in a separate presentation.
Slide 9	No Notes
Slide 10	There are a number of ways that we can deal with manual handling risk – where reasonably practicable it should be avoided. Where this cannot be done then it should be controlled. Control can be achieved in a number of ways – handling aids used, tasks altered, loads changed to reduce weight or improve the grip, the work area improved to make room for the handling and finally workers can be trained
Slide 11	These issues are mainly linked to projects that are part of HSE Construction Division's Supply Chain Initiative
Slide 12	Further Guidance in Construction Information Sheet 57 "Handling Kerbs: reducing the risk of musculoskeletal disorders"
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Slide 17	Carrying has been encountered up 6 flights of stairs - the boards wouldn't fit in the lift – between 1 and 3 boards were being carried by the individuals, the only control provided by the contractor company was the provision of gloves with good grip! Or up 7 flights - the lifts hadn't been installed but the external cladding was on and the crane had gone from site, so there was "no other way to get the boards onto the site". In Housing to get the boards up the stairs can entail the

	removal of the hand rails on landings and stairs leading to fall from height risks as well as the manual handling ones. Good planning at the detailed design stage is needed.
Slide 18	However smaller boards may cost more in terms of area covered, more taping and jointing and more studwork. However in some areas especially housing where narrow staircases are present they may provide one solution For a carrying operation it would often reduce MAC factors B, C and D (distance, asymmetry and postural constraints) from red to amber, or amber to green.
Slide 19	Panels can be moved using panel trolleys which still involve manual handling but greatly reduce the risk. This is a good solution for facilities with less scope for long production runs, room for fork truck access, needing more flexibility etc Another alternative is to use a device which aids better posture, by allowing longer reach. Manual handling is not reduced but posture is improved.
Slide 20	
Slide 21	Forming ceilings requires 2 workers adopting static postures to hold the board in place while it is secured. This solution enables one worker to do the job. Awkward and static postures from installation of building services can be reduced by modular assembly offsite.
Slide 22	In this case there were 150 lintels each weighing 115 kg. The firm calculated each lift needed a team of 5, which was not physically possible! They identified that a lift truck could be used. An alternative is to specify lightweight steel lintels where possible.
Slide 23	Lifting equipment avoids the manual lift
Slide 24	25kg limit as repetition with bags of aggregate is likely to be less than with blocks
Slide 25	These are some top tips are from the Better Backs campaign o Do things that will work in your business to make a difference o Identify activities which present a risk and examine how these can be made safer - the MAC tool can help o Prioritise action – sort out the things that will have most impact first o Keep it simple – choose sensible approaches and solutions o Involve workers or their representatives in : o Assessing risk o Choosing solutions o Monitoring and feeding back on how well solutions work

Slide 26	This summarises the main points: Sensible precautions in the workplace to reduce the incidence and impact of back pain. Encouraging people with back pain to stay active which is often the best therapy. (This is continuing to do normal things for them – not taking strenuous exercise) This applies to everyone not just people in “high risk” occupations.