
AN AWARENESS GUIDE FOR COMPANIES AND CLIENTS

Zurich Engineering receives regular enquiries from its clients on how they can comply with various pieces legislation. One of the more common questions being; “which items of work equipment need to be inspected to meet the requirements of PUWER98?” The following guidance provides a brief overview of PUWER 98 and the duties placed on the employer with regard to inspection.

WHAT IS PUWER 98?

PUWER 98 is the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998.

The primary objective of PUWER 98 is to ensure that work equipment should not result in health and safety risks, regardless of its age, condition or origin.

ARE OTHER REGULATIONS APPLICABLE?

Yes, all work equipment falls under the Health and Safety at Work Act and requires risk assessments under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations.

WHAT IS WORK EQUIPMENT?

The scope of “work equipment” is extremely wide and covers equipment ranging from a simple steel rule, through to a passenger goods lift.

Generally, any equipment which is used by an employee at work is covered.

If employers allow employees to provide their own work equipment, it too will be subject to the requirements of PUWER, and the employers will need to ensure it complies.

WHAT DO REGULATIONS REQUIRE?

Employers must ensure the work equipment they provide meets the requirements of PUWER 98, in doing so it should be ensured that it is:

- Suitable for, its intended use, the environment it is to be used in and is ergonomically friendly;
- Maintained in a safe condition for use so that peoples health and safety are not at risk;
- And inspected in certain circumstances to ensure that it is, and continues to be safe.

Employers should also ensure risks created by the use of the equipment, are eliminated where possible or controlled by suitable “hardware” and “software” measures.

WHAT TYPE OF EQUIPMENT SHOULD BE INSPECTED?

Examples of typical work equipment which may require inspection under regulation 6 are listed below;

Dock Levellers, Pallet Trucks, Racking, Roller shutter doors, Ladders, etc.
WHEN SHOULD WORK EQUIPMENT BE INSPECTED?

Regulation 6 of PUWER 98 details the criteria of when work equipment should be inspected.

Regulation 6(1), states,

“Every employer shall ensure that, where the safety of work equipment depends on the installation conditions, it is inspected—

(a) after installation and before being put into service for the first time; OR
(b) after assembly at a new site or in a new location,

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to ensure that it has been installed correctly and is safe to operate.”

Regulation 6(2), states,

“Every employer shall ensure that work equipment exposed to conditions causing deterioration which is liable to result in dangerous situations is inspected—

(a) at suitable intervals; and
(b) each time that exceptional circumstances which are liable to jeopardise the safety of the work equipment have occurred, to ensure that health and safety conditions are maintained and that any deterioration can be detected and remedied in good time.”

Furthermore, Reg6 (3), requires that the result of an inspection made under these regulations is recorded and kept until the next inspection.

INSPECTION

The term ‘inspection’ is used in PUWER 98. The purpose of the inspection is to identify whether the equipment can be operated, adjusted and maintained safely and that any deterioration (for example, defect, damage, wear) can be detected and remedied before it results in unacceptable risks.

Lifting equipment is exempt from regulation 6 of PUWER 98 as it requires thorough examination under Regulation 9 of LOLER 98 however, lifting equipment must be assessed against all other requirements of PUWER 98.

WHO SHOULD DETERMINE THE NATURE OF THE INSPECTION REQUIRED?

The employer should ensure that a person who is competent to do so is used to determine the nature of the inspections, extent of the inspections required and who should carry them out.

WHO SHOULD UNDERTAKE THE INSPECTION?

The competent persons should have the necessary knowledge and experience. The person carrying out the inspection would not usually be the same person who determines the nature of the inspection. Their competence to carry out the task would also need to be demonstrated.

HOW CAN ZURICH HELP?

We can undertake inspections on your behalf; we have nationwide coverage of Engineer Surveyors who are competent and trained to undertake this work.

We can also offer bespoke training packages to help you understand and comply with the requirements of PUWER 98.

Should you require any further guidance, please contact:

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