

STEEL STOCKHOLDING

(See also: [Abrasive Wheels\(1\)](#); [COSHH\(19\)](#); [Fork Lift Trucks\(32\)](#); [Lifting Plant & Equipment\(45\)](#); [Machinery Safety\(49\)](#); [Manual Handling\(52\)](#); [Metalworking Fluids\(54\)](#); [Noise\(56\)](#); [PPE\(63\)](#); [Safety Signs\(71\)](#); [Skin Diseases\(75\)](#); [Storage of Goods\(81\)](#); [Transport in the Workplace\(83\)](#); [Warehousing\(87\)](#))

INTRODUCTION

Steel stockholding and processing activities pose significant hazards due to the nature of goods stored and machinery/equipment that may be found on site. It is essential therefore that management take appropriate steps to identify all such hazards, assess and control risks and inform/instruct/train employees accordingly.

The National Association of Steel Stockholders (NASS) has produced extensive guidance in its manual 'Safety Guidelines for Steel Stockholders and Processors' from which the following summarised advice is taken. The publication is commended to all steel stockholders and processors.

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

1. HOUSEKEEPING

- Pedestrian/vehicular passageways to be segregated where possible, and kept clear of obstructions.
- Work and storage areas to be clearly defined.
- Maintenance of all work areas in a debris-free condition.
- Provision of suitable storage facilities for equipment (eg slings).
- Maintenance of adequate lighting and safe condition of flooring.

2. STORAGE

- **General** considerations include:
 - permissible floor-loading.
 - level and well maintained storage areas.
 - safe clearances.
 - adequate space for handling equipment to be used safely.
 - safe stacking methods (i.e. no fouling other materials).
 - sufficient strength of banding.
 - particular care in the stocking of oiled sheets.

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- **Free standing** (i.e. directly on the floor)
 - stable stacks.
 - use of suitable wood/metal battens and no undue bow or sag.
 - without fixed support, sheets and plates should only be stacked horizontally.
 - there are special recommended considerations relating to the storage of coil, slit coil and general steel bars.

- **'Supported' or 'racked'** (ie subject to permanent or semi-permanent storage e.g. Toast racking, Tree racking etc.)
 - Basic requirements include:
 - * level and adequate in strength
 - * sufficient space
 - * racks to be of sound design and construction; designed to prevent materials falling and for them to be adequately supported along their lengths.
 - * maximum weight capacity to be displayed.
 - * considerations/precautions regarding use of fork lift trucks etc.
 - * secure fixing to the floor, if practicable.
 - * subject to regular inspection.

 - Specific recommendations are made for Toast Racking, Specialised Plate Racking; Stillage Racking or Portable (Nesting) Racking; Tree Racking; Shelf Racking; Pigeon Hole Racking; Floor Supported and Vertical Stacking.

3. HANDLING

(A) Manual Handling

- In the steel stockholding industry about one half of all injury accidents are as a result of Manual Handling Operations (MHO).

- Advice on MHO can be found in the Manual Handling element of this Information System.

(B) Mechanical Handling

Mechanical handling devices include cranes and fork lift trucks.

- **For cranes**, safety considerations may include:
 - formal training and authorisation procedures.
 - safe access to cab.
 - safe working loads indicated.
 - safe working methods employed, particularly if operated outdoors.
 - adequate guarding and emergency controls/devices.
 - formal safe working procedures for maintenance work.
 - recorded system of planned preventative maintenance.
 - full training of crane drivers and slingers in respective duties. (British Steel Distribution have prepared a useful pocket hand book No 2: Slings and Lifting Operations, Guidance for Safe Use); use of 'standard signals.'
 - recommended that, in a busy multi-crane operation, a full permit -to -work system should be followed for maintenance inspection work on Electric Overhead Travelling Cranes (EOT cranes) or, in less busy environments, a formalised procedure for locking off the crane etc.
 - advice/guidance is also given on remote controlled cranes, Goliath/Semi-Goliath Cranes and Permits to Work.

- Advice regarding the safe use of **forklift trucks** can be found in the ForkLift Trucks element within this Information System.

4. TRANSPORT

- Transport safety is covered in the element 'Transport in the Workplace,' within this Information System.

- The NASS Manual Covers:
 - movement on driveways and service roads.
 - movement inside the warehouse or stockyard.
 - vehicle loading and unloading.
 - vehicle safety checks.
 - vehicle repair and maintenance

5. **PROCESSING**

- Various processing methods have become a familiar aspect of steel stockholding. These include:
 - slitting
 - decoiling and cutting to length.
 - guillotining and shearing.
 - sawing.
 - profiling.
 - straightening
 - polishing
 - shotblasting.
 - painting.
- The NASS guidelines contain advice on all the above methods, confirming the requirement for effective guarding of dangerous parts and safe working procedures.

6. **MISCELLANEOUS**

- Other safety issues addressed in the NASS Guidelines and elsewhere in this Information System include:
 - (i) Management of health and safety.
 - (ii) Risk assessment.
 - (iii) Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare
 - (iv) Fire Safety.
 - (v) Noise.
 - (vi) RIDDOR '95
 - (vii) Electricity.
 - (viii) Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
 - (ix) COSHH
 - (x) Display Screen Equipment

CHECKLIST - STEEL STOCKHOLDING

1. Do you have good standards of housekeeping? YES NO
2. Have you carried out risk assessments and identified/implemented control measures regarding your work activities? i.e.
 - storage. YES NO
 - manual handling. YES NO
 - mechanical handling. YES NO
 - transport in the workplace. YES NO
 - processing of steel stock/use of machinery and equipment. YES NO
3. Have you carried out assessments, as necessary, under:
 - COSHH 1999 YES NO
 - Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992? YES NO
4. Do conditions and facilities comply with the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992? YES NO
5. Do you adequately inform, instruct and train employees in matters of health and safety? YES NO

REFERENCE/FURTHER DETAILS

- *1. Folder 'Safety Guidelines for Steel Stockholders and Processors' published by the National Association of Steel Stockholders, 6th Floor, McLaren Building, Dale End, Birmingham B4 7LN. Telephone number: 0121 200 2288. Fax number: 0121 236 7444.
- *2. Leaflet INDG 313 - Safe unloading of steel stock. HSE. ISBN 0 7176 1765 3.

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- * Available to view by prior arrangement at Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, Environmental Health Services, Council House, Coton Road, Nuneaton. CV11 5AA
- ** Free copy available from Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council at the above address.

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