

Pest Control Foot Personnel

A BPCA Code of Best Practice (COBP) is a set of written rules which explains how people working in our industry should behave in a particular situation. It encompasses relevant legislation but is not law in itself. However, were a member to act outside of the norms outlined in the COBP, they may be

subject to disciplinary action and/or be in breach of legislation. BPCA Members must abide by Codes of Best Practice in their day-to-day work. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the Association.

In larger cities and towns there has long been a need for pest control personnel to carry out their visits via foot and using public transport including overground trains, underground train networks, buses and taxis for a few reasons, largely to reduce their carbon footprint and for better ease of travel in highly populated areas.

As pest control work is diverse and demands a variety of different products and equipment, it is necessary for a foot operative to carry an appropriate bag for the transportation of these products and equipment. Safety for the personnel as well as the people around them is of utmost importance, and so this code aims to address this.

Related legislation

- Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- COSHH Regulations 2002
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- Control of Pesticides Regulations (COPR) 1986 and the Control of Pesticides (Amendment) Regulations 1997
- EU Biocidal Products Regulations (BPR)
- Local public transport conditions of carriage (COC).

1. Preparation

It is important that you take the time to plan the implementation of a foot personnel to ensure that not only the proper risk assessing has been done but that the work is also allocated to a capable individual with the appropriate competence.

Risk assessing

A competent person must complete a risk-assessing process, making sure hazards are identified:

- Who could be harmed and how?

- What are the associated risks to health?

Decide on precautions and then record and implement them.

Hazards for consideration should include:

- Is the load being carried appropriate for the individual (weight and mass)?
- Has the foot personnel received regular manual handling awareness training?
- Is the bag/container appropriate to support the load in a manageable way?
- Consider the material of the bag vs the chemical contents - can the bag contain a liquid/chemical spillage?
- Lone working
- Security of the contents
- Do the personnel use public transport - if yes, check local conditions of carriage (COC)?

Conditions of carriage (COC) for the London Underground

For the London Underground, COC states that pest controllers may carry any items so long as they are in sealed containers and marked with the product label and have the MSDS with them. They must also be in a covered bag (not on display), no more than 2m long and nothing flammable. Make sure you check aerosols as these are usually flammable.

Appropriate equipment and guidance

Your risk assessing and planning process should highlight safety and comfort equipment (plus safety documentation that may be needed).

Example of what your foot personnel might carry:

A. Suitable footwear

B. Bag

Carrying bag of an appropriate size, volume, and padding.

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C. Spillage kit

Ways to contain any liquid spillages/clean it up, for example, a spill kit appropriate for the bag size. We advise that liquid pesticides should be in a sealed, impermeable bag to contain any leaks (bund).

D. First aid equipment

Look at using a risk assessment and MSDS for guidance on what to carry.

E. Cutting equipment

Sometimes pest operatives may require tools to cut cables, etc and so be sure to check local police advice on carrying sharps.

F. PPE/RPE carrying capability

Keep RPE clean and separate from pesticides.

G. Equipment and product register

Having a list of the items in personnel's bags can help keep track of important materials and products as well as serve as information to any potential emergency service personnel.

H. Labels

Product labels must be attached to any decanted pesticides.

Other considerations

It is recommended a company policy is created to cover foot personnel specifically.

2. Implementation

Ensure initial training and consultation is given to foot personnel ensuring that all safety information is shared and discussed, equipment and tools are appropriate for the individual, and any questions or concerns are addressed. This should be recorded.

Ongoing and daily planning should consider precise daily workloads so that the carry bag contents can be planned for only the work at hand. Routes of travel,

where possible, should also be planned.

If appropriate, a safe and secure storage location should be available nearby for any top up of products - this will help reduce carrying amounts.

Other considerations

- Only carry empty sprayers. You should make up pesticide preparations on site.
- Carry the lightest possible load
- Keep the bag in sight at all times and do not leave unattended in public places
- Never carry a bag on one shoulder, this could cause long-term muscle injury.

3. Management and monitoring

Ensure regular consultations and meetings are arranged with foot personnel to ensure the continuation of safety measures and individual competence for the role. These should be recorded.

Manual handling awareness should be an integral part of foot operatives ongoing training.

Regular checks of carrying bags and its efficiency should be done. A checklist should be devised and an appropriate amount of recorded checks implemented (recommended every 1 month).

Important information and links:

Transport for London
content.tfl.gov.uk/tfl-conditions-of-carriage.pdf

Other cities and towns will have their own COC so ensure these are checked.

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