MINIMUM STANDARD

Flexible Intermediate Bulk Containers (FIBC's)

SHEMS-MST-DPS-0005

The following Minimum Standard is applicable on all projects

Introduction

Large capacity fabric bags, Flexible Intermediate Bulk Containers (FIBC's), are increasingly being used for the delivery of materials to construction sites and are generally designed for single use which means a single filling/discharging of the bag.

Planning

The removal of FIBC's from the delivery vehicle and storage prior to use should be planned to minimise the number of lifts required during the operation.

Procurement

The content of this Minimum Standard must be disseminated to suppliers of materials Suppliers/contractors are to be informed that **FIBC's are only to be used on Unitas sites with bulk granular materials**. Delivery of other materials such as rebar links etc. will result in either the load being turned away from site or they must be directly loaded onto a pallet and the lifting loops cut.

Safe Use of FIBCs

The following requirements must always be followed when lifting FIBC's:

- The bags **must** be checked prior to lifting to check for visible damage caused during loading or transit
- Where lifting restrictions apply, the bags **must** only be unloaded by the delivery vehicle to the ground e.g. into a laydown area
- FIBC's are designed for and **must** only be used for the carriage of bulk granular materials, e.g. sand and aggregates
- Handling instructions on bags **must** always be followed (See example Figures 1)
- All bags **must** be treated as single trip use and destroyed or disposed of after initial discharging, unless handling instructions specify that the bag is approved for multiple use
- Be aware that "Hippo Bags" provided for the disposal of construction waste are designed for single trip use only. This must be considered as part of the risk assessment and safe system of work, where applicable
- In other circumstances appropriate bags may be initially unloaded or subsequently lifted e.g. by crane into their required position

  Note: Such activities are not part of a routine delivery unloading and require additional pre planning as a lifting operation in their own right)
- FIBC's **must not** under any circumstances be lifted over the heads of personnel

Fig 1: Single Trip Handling Instructions

Fig 2: Correct lifting techniques using all loops

FIBC's **must** always be lifted using all the lifting loops provided (See Figure 2). Loops must not be bunched together and slung from a single chain.

When emptying bags the following **must** be observed:

- FIBC's can be emptied by cutting the base of the bag, or where provided by releasing the discharge chute
- Persons **must** never stand under an FIBC during cutting or discharge
- Persons **must** never stand under a suspended FIBC or place their arm beneath an unsupported FIBC

Competence/Training

The slinging and lifting of all loads is to be controlled by a trained and competent slinger/signaller.