



MANAGING FATIGUE

This quick reference guide is designed to raise awareness around managing fatigue in the workplace. It is a summary document only.

SIGNS OF FATIGUE

- Tiredness even after sleep;
- Reduced hand-eye coordination or slow reflexes;
- Short term memory problems and an inability to concentrate;
- Blurred vision or impaired visual perception;
- Headaches, dizziness, sore/aching muscles;
- Sleeping for extended periods of time during days off work.

COMMON CAUSES OF FATIGUE

- Poor or lack of sleep;
- Work related stress;
- Lack of downtime between shifts to recover;
- Work scheduling/rosters;
- Travel;
- Personal stress or changes such as financial concerns, new baby, family death or sickness;
- Prolonged or intense mental or physical activity;
- Exceptionally hot or cold working environments;
- Long commuting times;
- Anxiety or other related illnesses;
- Diet/food choices such as a high carb lunch.

Causes of fatigue aren't just work related, there are influences that are outside of an employer's control but within its influence (i.e. introducing and promoting a fitness for work policy that enables workers to declare themselves unfit for work, fatigue management awareness training, technology to monitor fatigue and time in field getting to know your teams)

THE IMPACT OF FATIGUE

Working fatigued has the potential to impact the individual, work colleagues and other people who interact with a fatigued worker, including members of the public. It can result in a lack of alertness, slower reaction and the workers ability to make safe choices which can increase the risk of incidents and injuries when:

- Driving vehicles or operating mobile/high risk plant;
- Working at heights;
- Working with flammable or explosive substances;
- Working around hazardous activities such as mobile plant and traffic movements.



TIPS TO MANAGE FATIGUE



ANALYSE DATA: Review workplace incident data (near misses, injuries etc) to determine any trends or investigation findings that identified fatigue as the root cause or a contributing factor.

Consider: *Time of incidents, health, personal factors, work factors. If your investigations do not provide this level of detail then investigation training may be required.*



CONSULTATION: Consult with your workers to identify any factors that may cause fatigue in the workplace – this also should include managers, supervisors, HSRs.

Consider: *Create a safe environment for individuals to talk openly about impact of shifts, time pressures, training quality etc.*



REVIEW: Review feedback and also controls that can be put in place around work scheduling, fitness for work policy, employee assistance programs, shift work & roster reviews and environmental factors.



TIME IN FIELD: Develop a lead indicator assurance program that promotes time in field from supervisors and managers. As well as providing confidence that controls are in place, it also demonstrates leadership and this face time will help build relationships and a culture of trust.

If you require assistance with the development of fatigue management plans and programs of work or any other aspect of managing safety & wellbeing in the workplace then please contact S3.

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