

Fatigue Management – Toolbox Talk

SUBJECT	Managing Fatigue
RESOURCES	PowerPoint Presentation National Road Safety Partnership Program Video Fatigue AFRA Driver Fatigue Management Policy

LOAD RESTRAINTS HEAVY VEHICLES

Facilitator: This toolbox talk will cover

- What is fatigue
- Hazards associated with fatigue
- How to prevent fatigue

Question to ask trainee:

What are some signs of fatigue while driving?

Write down the responses on a whiteboard or butcher's paper, and subsequently compare them at the conclusion of the session to determine if their answers and knowledge align.

Terminology meaning:

Circadian rhythms: The natural cycle of physical, mental, and behaviour changes that the body goes through in a 24-hour cycle. Circadian rhythms are mostly affected by light and darkness and are controlled by a small area in the middle of the brain.

Physiological relating to the way in which the body and its systems work, causes of physiological reaction. A physiological reaction is an automatic instinctive unlearned reaction to a stimulus, eg: being scared or getting a fright your heart beats faster.

Psychological experience - A psychological understanding of experience pertains to affective and cognitive functions, including memory, imagination, language, reason, and beliefs. The phenomenological understanding of experience refers to how objects appear in people's sensing, perception, and meaning making, eg: occupational stress, social support or isolation, sleep quality and mental health

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WHAT IS FATIGUE?

Fatigue is a commonly used to describe the experience of being "sleepy", "tired" or "exhausted". Fatigue is both a physiological and a psychological experience.

Fatigue can accumulate over time, and may be caused by:

- Work related factors such as length of time worked, inadequate rest breaks and/or sleep, harsh environment conditions
- Lifestyle factors such as poor quality of sleep, family responsibilities, social life, commuting time to and from work

- A combination of work-related and lifestyle factors

Driver fatigue can severely impair judgement and can affect anyone. It is particularly dangerous because one of the symptoms is decreased ability to judge our own level of tiredness.

It is important to understand the impact of fatigue and know how to manage it. Fatigue is referred to as a silent killer, it hinders decision making, performance, slow reaction times and reduces one's ability to maintain control while driving.

Due to nature of truck drivers work activities and their environment they are at high risk of developing fatigue and even chronic fatigue.

Fatigue is a huge problem for every driver on the road but especially for heavy vehicle drivers in the transport industry. Truck driver fatigue is a serious issue and safety hazard but can also impacts on the safety of those with whom they share the road.

Fatigue has been found to contribute to 20-30% of all road deaths and severe injuries¹. In 2020 8% of all truck large loss crashes in Australia were caused by fatigue².

SIGNS OF FATIGUE: (note: symptoms vary between drivers)

- Inability to concentrate
- Reduced ability to recognise or respond to external stimuli
- Poor judgment or memory
- Making more mistakes than usual
- Drowsiness, or falling asleep, at work (including microsleeps)
- Finding it difficult to keep eyes open
- Needing more frequent naps than usual
- Not feeling refreshed after sleep
- Excessive head-nodding or yawning
- Blurred vision
- Headaches and/or dizziness
- Changes to the person's mental health
- Changes to the person's health or fitness
- Poor or lack of concentration or poor memory
- Restlessness
- Slower reaction time
- Boredom
- Making fewer and larger steering corrections
- Missing road signs
- Having difficulty in staying in the lane
- Slurred speech
- Bloodshot eyes
- Muscle weakness
- Lacking energy
- Bad mood - irritable
- Less tolerance for other road users

HAZARDS ASSOCIATED WITH FATIGUE may include:

- illnesses (such as diabetes)
- sleep disorders (such as insomnia and sleep apnea)
- medications (including over the counter and prescription medications)

- cabin design (such as inadequate sleeping space and blocking out of light)
- outside-of-work activities (such as family life, social events and other physical activities)
- poor diet (such as consuming high-sugar foods and drinks and too much caffeine)
- lifestyle choices (such as alcohol and drugs)
- inconsistent rostering/working nights
- long work hours
- drivers working multiple jobs - day/night driving (such as working a secondary job during business hours then driving at night)
- minimal interaction with other people
- 'pushing through' attitude or fear of repercussion for taking additional rest

LONG TERM EFFECTS OF FATIGUE may include:

- High blood pressure and/or heart disease
- Depression and/or anxiety
- Diabetes and/or gastro-intestinal disorders

THE POTENTIAL SAFETY RISKS RESULTING FROM THESE HAZARDS may include:

- serious or fatal injury to heavy vehicle drivers and other road users
- damage to public and private infrastructure.

POTENTIAL RISKS to business, including:

- financial risks because of disruption to business operations
- risks to reputation due to the negative impacts of poor risk management
- an increase in WorkCover claims

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO REDUCE THE RISK OF FATIGUED RELATED CRASH:

- plan rest breaks
- take a break, get out of the truck and exercise by taking a walk
- getting plenty of sleep before driving
- not driving at times of the day when it is usually sleep time
- stay hydrated and nourished helps maintain energy levels and reduce fatigue
- stopping driving for a short sleep if they notice signs of fatigue or sleepiness (such as yawning, blinking more than usual, or forgetting the last few kilometres of driving). Take power naps, eg: 20 minutes power nap can help improve alertness and reduce fatigue
- when feeling warning signs stop driving, eg: drowsiness, headaches etc.
- Use monitoring technologies

Truck driver fatigue is a physical and mental state of exhaustion that impairs a driver's ability to safely operate a heavy vehicle. Fatigue can result from a variety of reasons, including extended periods of driving, inconsistent sleep schedules and insufficient breaks for rest. When individuals are fatigued, their response times decrease, their cognitive functions are compromised, and they may have difficulties maintaining focus or even fall asleep while driving.

These indicators can contribute to road accidents, posing a significant hazard to both the driver and other road users.

REMEMBER:

- Prioritise sleep — aim for at least 7 hours on a regular basis.
- Do not drive after less than 5 hours of sleep.
- Avoid driving more than 4 hours - try to have at least a 15-minute break or a 20-minute nap every two hours.
- When feeling warning signs stop driving.

RESOURCES

¹National Road Safety Partnership Program (NRSPP), “DriverFatigue - #TBT,” 2018. [Online]. Available: <https://www.nrspp.org.au/resources/driverfatigue-tbt/>.

²National Transport Insurance (NTI), “Major Accident Investigation 2021 Report,” 2021.

National Heavy Vehicle Regulator Fatigue Management - www.nhvr.gov.au/safety-accreditation-compliance/fatigue-management

National Road Safety Partnership Program – www.NRSPP.org.au

Circadian rhythm - www.sleepfoundation.org/circadian-rhythm

AFRA Driver Fatigue Management Plan Policy

Video (Optional): National Road Safety Partnership Program – Fatigue - <https://youtu.be/hzOAbUtrjUI>



FATIGUE MANAGEMENT

Items Raised/Corrective Action	Action By	Action completed	
		Sign off	Date

DATE:

FACILITATOR SIGNATURE

Managing Fatigue Policy

<Company name> (the company) has a commitment to the safety of all its employees, road users and the general public. We will provide our staff with resources and training on compliance with regulation and legislation to provide a safe employment environment and industry as a whole. As part of this commitment, the company understands and will provide policy, procedures and resources to staff to ensure compliance with Fatigue Management regulations and requirements. Management will ensure that allocated work will not breach applicable legislation or regulation with regard to driver fatigue. We will also not undertake work or allocate to employees or other parties within our supply chain that will result in, encourage, incentivise or cause a person to drive or operate machinery whilst fatigued.

Management will also be trained and resourced to assist in assessing fitness for work for staff.

Drivers must, at all times, present themselves for work, unimpaired by fatigue, alcohol or drugs.

Work hours include the time required to undertake duties to complete a work-related task, e.g. loading and unloading, packing and unpacking, moving furniture etc.

Specific Responsibilities

Driver

Company drivers are responsible for conducting themselves within legislative requirements and ensuring that they always execute company policies and procedures and understand their responsibilities with regard to fatigue management.

If the driver does not believe that they are fit to drive or that the journey or work cannot be completed without a breach of Fatigue Management regulations, their concerns should be discussed with their direct report prior to departing the depot and if necessary, a revised journey plan/work diary will be completed.

In the event that an unforeseen incident creates a situation where a breach may occur on route or at the work site, the driver is to contact their direct report as soon as it is practical and legally safe to do so and advise the incident details so as a review to the journey plan/work diary can be undertaken. This information is to be communicated to all relevant parties, including the customer, as soon as possible.

The driver must not operate a vehicle in breach of the work hours/rest time requirements or if they are fatigued.

Other Staff

The positions that have been identified within the company that will have direct accountabilities to ensure compliance with fatigue management regulation and company policy are:

- Operations Manager

- Fleet Controller
- Scheduler
- Other (state position title)

Again, work will be allocated to ensure that rosters, schedules, routes and time lines will not result, encourage or incentivise any driver to work whilst fatigued. Supervisors/managers should be aware of any indications that the driver may be fatigued or possibly unsuitable to operate a vehicle. In the event of suspected influence of drugs, alcohol or any other medication, reference should be made to the company policy on appropriate procedures and protocols to follow in such situations.

Standard Fatigue Management requirements for solo drivers are:

In any period of...	A driver must not work for more than a maximum of...	And must have the rest of that period off work with at least a minimum rest break of...
5 ½ hours	5 ¼ hours work time	15 continuous minutes rest time
8 hours	7 ½ hours work time	30 minutes rest time in blocks of 15 continuous minutes
11 hours	10 hours work time	60 minutes rest time in blocks of 15 continuous minutes
24 hours	12 hours work time	7 continuous hours stationary rest time*
7 days	72 hours work time	24 continuous hours stationary rest time
14 days	144 hours work time	2 x night rest breaks# and 2 x night rest breaks taken on consecutive days

*Stationary rest time is the time a driver spends out of a heavy vehicle or in an approved sleeper berth of a stationary heavy vehicle.

#Night rest breaks are 7 continuous hours stationary rest time taken between the hours of 10pm on a day and 8am on the next day (using the time zone of the base of the driver) or a 24 continuous hours stationary rest break.

Standard Fatigue Management requirements for two up drivers are:

In any period of...	A driver must not work for more than a maximum of...	And must have the rest of that period off work with at least a minimum rest break of...
5 1/2 hours	5 1/4 hours work time	15 continuous minutes rest time
8 hours	7 1/2 hours work time	30 minutes rest time in blocks of 15 continuous minutes
11 hours	10 hours work time	60 minutes rest time in blocks of 15 continuous minutes

24 hours	12 hours work time	5 continuous hours stationary rest time* or 5 hours continuous rest time in an approved sleeper berth while the vehicle is moving
52 hours		10 continuous hours stationary rest time
7 days	60 hours work time	24 continuous hours stationary rest time and 24 hours stationary rest time in blocks of at least 7 continuous hours of stationary rest time
14 days	120 hours work time	2 x night rest breaks# and 2 x night rest breaks taken on consecutive days

**Stationary rest time is the time a driver spends out of a heavy vehicle or in an approved sleeper berth of a stationary heavy vehicle.*

#Night rest breaks are 7 continuous hours stationary rest time taken between the hours of 10pm on a day and 8am on the next day (using the time zone of the base of the driver) or a 24 continuous hours stationary rest break.

Considerations should also be made for personal use exemption of heavy vehicles as per National Heavy Vehicle Work and Rest Hours Exemption (Personal Use) Notice 2018 (No.1). Reference is also made to document no xx for application and clarification.

Drivers of Fatigue Related Heavy Vehicles working under Standard Fatigue Management may be able to work for one additional hour within a twenty-four-hour period counting period for permitted personal activities (private/non-commercial) use as defined by the NHVR. The extra time must be taken in a single period of work and cannot be conducted in the first or last three hours of any twenty-four-hour rest break.

The NHVR Advisory Publication 1701 is attached as schedule “A” for reference which includes a checklist to assist with the application of any exemption.

Record keeping requirements

In accordance with NHVR requirements, record keepers must keep a record of specific information for drivers of fatigue regulated heavy vehicles. A record keeper may be the:

- employer, if the driver is employed
- accredited operator, if the driver is working under Basic Fatigue Management or Advanced Fatigue Management accreditation
- driver (as a self-employed or owner driver).

For each driver the record keeper must keep:

- the driver’s name, licence number and contact details
- the dates fatigue regulated heavy vehicles were driven
- the registration number of the vehicle(s) driven
- the total of each driver’s work and rest times for each day and each week
- copies of duplicate work diary daily sheets (if applicable)

- driver's rosters and trip schedules (including changeovers)
- driver timesheets and pay records
- any other information as required as a condition of an accreditation or exemption (such as driver training and health assessments).

Drivers must provide their record keeper with their relevant work and rest hours totals and any other relevant vehicle information the record keeper may not reasonably have access to (registration numbers, dates the driver worked, etc.).

The record location is determined by the record keeper and notified to the driver. The record location is usually the driver's base.

All records must be:

- kept for three years after they are created
- kept at a location accessible to an authorised officer for audit or investigation purposes
- in a format that is readable and reasonably assumed it will be readable in at least three years from the date of its creation.