

# FATIGUE MANAGEMENT POLICY

## Objective

This essential standard offers guidance to managers, supervisors and those planning and scheduling work activities of Clipfine with regards to discharging the duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 relating to the management of work, work patterns and travel time.

There is no single agreed definition of fatigue, but for the purposes of this guidance fatigue will be considered as “a state of perceived weariness that can result from prolonged working, heavy workload, insufficient rest and inadequate sleep”. It involves a general feeling of tiredness, resulting in a reduced ability to perform work effectively.

A fatigued person will be less alert, less able to process information, will take longer to react and make decisions, and will have less interest in working compared to a person who is not fatigued.

Fatigued staff may not adequately perceive risk and may tolerate risks they would usually find unacceptable and therefore accepting lower standards of performance and safety.

Fatigue can be hard to detect in staff – unlike other causes of temporary mental impairment such as drugs and alcohol, there is no “blood test” for fatigue. These issues make fatigue a particular concern in any safety critical work.

## Key Messages

The Working Time Regulations 1998 detail limits on working hours and specify break times. It is common to hear people referring to opting out of the working time regulations.

There is only one aspect that workers can choose to opt out from and that is the 48 Hours rule or choosing to work over 48 hours a week and up to the maximum of 72 daytime hours per week. Workers cannot opt out of the following:

## Summary of working time regulations

- Hours are limited to 72 within a seven day period (e.g. 6 x12 hour shifts or 7 x 10 hour shifts) for those working in the day.
- Hours are limited to an average eight hours in any 24-hour period for night workers (those working at least three hours between 11:00 and 18:00).
- Night workers are entitled to receive regular health assessments.
- The duration of shifts is to be no more than 12 hours including overtime.
- Employees are to have 5.6 weeks paid leave a year.
- Employees are to have 11 consecutive hours rest in any 24-hour period (commuting is not counted as work and therefore is considered as rest time).
- Employees are to have a 20-minute rest break if the working day is longer than six hours and one day off each week.

## This Clipfine guidance is intended to:

- Provide information intended to improve safety and wellbeing by considering fatigue when planning work and shift patterns.
- Summarise cross industry good practice and guidance from professional bodies to determine safe work and rest patterns.
- Assist employers in managing and restricting working and commuting times with consideration given to fatigue and in line with other construction industry sectors.
- Assist employers in measuring working and commuting times in order to better understand the risks of fatigue within those organisations and across the supply chain.
- Commence the implementation of good practice across all associated organisations.

## Guidance and Requirements

### Risk Assessment

Line management and supervisory personnel should undertake a risk assessment to consider the effects of fatigue on all activities within their scope of works. The following recommendations will assist in the planning and scheduling of activities.

### 14 Hour door to door policy

In line with similar mandatory requirements within Network Rail and the Highways Agency, restrict commuting and work period to a maximum of 14 hours.

There should be a minimum period of 10 hours rest between commutes.

As a result of the transient nature of the construction industry it is common for people to commute greater than average distances to and from work. Therefore, in order to reduce the likelihood of fatigue and align with other national infrastructure clients, a door to door measure is more holistic approach. The door to door measure aims to limit personnel to a 14-hour day from leaving home (or temporary accommodation)

The management team of all companies, activities or projects will maintain a log of the hours worked for that site as part of the weekly wage/time sheet submission. This log, as well as the daily signing in registers will be reviewed weekly by the site management team to identify any exceedances, or potential exceedances in terms of consecutive number of shifts.

Where exceedances are continuing to occur, the individuals will be stood down as soon as is reasonably practical and a sufficient rest break allowed.

### 12 Hour maximum day shift work period

Daytime shifts and daytime working patterns should not be planned or designed to exceed 12 hours

Typically, with periods of the work scheduled within standard daytime hours (0700-1900hrs)

### 10 Hour maximum night shift period

Night shifts and night shift working patterns should not be planned and designed to exceed 10 hours

Night work defined as; typically, with periods of the work scheduled outside standard daytime hours (0700-1900hrs)

Research has shown that the duration of the shift is a key factor influencing fatigue, and long shifts have been linked with an increased risk of accidents.

There is a strong case for limiting the duration of a shift to 12 hours, with further restrictions on duties, such as nights and early starts that impinge significantly on the normal hours of sleep. For example, while it may be acceptable to work a 12-hour day shift, lower limits such as 10 hours should be considered where night shifts or early morning start times are planned.

### Maximum shifts per “tour of duty”

Work patterns should be maximum twelve working shifts within any 14-day period and there should be a minimum rest period of 24 hours before recommencement of a further shift pattern.

When changing shifts or after 12 consecutive shifts, it is not acceptable for an individual to complete a shift or arrive home from a day shift at 1900hrs and then commence work at 0700hrs the following day. This is not a sufficient break between shifts following 12 consecutive working periods.

### Management of Exceedance (emergency situations)

No employee or contractor should be planned to work more than a 12-hour shift.

In an emergency, if it becomes apparent that during a period of work or during a shift, that the work and travel would exceed the 14 hours door to door policy.

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Where an exceedance in working hours is necessary under an emergency situation, and it has been documented and approved in accordance with the fatigue risk assessment at Appendix 2 below, the original assessment and approval forms will be maintained within the site records, and matched up against any exceedances identified by this site management team review.

The management team will maintain working time records and will report centrally on authorised and unauthorised exceedances in working hours.

Before the Line Manager agrees the employee or employees are safe to work extended hours, consideration should be given to the following factors:

- Time the working shift commenced
- Previous shift patterns
- The employee's susceptibility to accidents and incidents
- The employee's previous accident and incident history
- The activities undertaken during the shift of work
- The nature of the exceedance
- The next booked turn of duty after this one
- The travelling time to and from the site of work
- The amount of breaks during the shift of work
- The facilities and Work-site conditions provided during the shift of work
- The weather conditions

## **Further guidance:**

### **Rest periods**

In order to work safely it is important that all personnel get sufficient rest.

Working time regulations state that...workers over 18 are usually entitled to three types of rest breaks:

- Rest breaks at work – If they work more than 6 hours a day, they have the right to one uninterrupted 20 minute rest break during their working day (this could be a tea or lunch break).
- Daily rest – Workers have the right to 11 hours rest between working days (eg if they finish work at 20:00, they shouldn't start work again until 07:00 the next day).
- Weekly rest – Workers have the right to an uninterrupted 24 hours without any work each week or 48 hours each fortnight.

Where employees are receiving an allowance from their employer for accommodation local to the site, steps should be taken to ensure that this allowance is used for the intended purpose, for example checking accommodation receipts. Employees should not be permitted to sleep in vans etc overnight in order to retain their accommodation allowance as the quality of rest is unlikely to be adequate.

Commercial drivers must comply with breaks as recorded on their tachograph; other drivers should plan a break every two hours when driving.

## Work demands

It is not only the hours that an individual works that can lead to fatigue; the demands within those hours can affect people in different ways. Some pressure can act as a motivator; however, excessive pressure can lead to physical and mental harm.

In order to reduce the risk of fatigue the following points should be considered when developing a risk assessment:

- Introduce a variety of tasks to minimise physical and mental demands and assist in maintaining alertness during a shift.
- Use plant, machinery and equipment (such as lifting equipment) to eliminate or reduce excessive physical demands.
- Introducing job rotation to limit a build-up of mental and physical fatigue.
- Using regular rest periods in addition to scheduled meal breaks.

## Work environment

The work environment can influence the likelihood of fatigue and this can change on a daily basis, for example, a ground worker is more likely to become fatigued in hot weather, even though they may be conducting a task they are familiar with.

In order to reduce the risk of fatigue the following points should be considered when developing a risk assessment:

- Avoid physically demanding work during periods of extreme temperature or increasing the frequency of breaks.
- Use heating/cooling devices in extreme temperature work environments (where appropriate) and/or providing appropriate work clothing and shelter.
- Install ventilation/cooling devices in hot, confined work environments such as vehicle cabins.
- Provide access to facilities for rest, meal breaks and other essential requirements such as bathroom facilities.
- Provide access to accommodation when workers need to work away from home, where the sleep environment is conducive to restorative sleep (i.e. quiet, dark, cool).
- Monitor exposure to noise, temperature and chemicals and enforcing strict controls to ensure that exposure is limited.
- Provide personal protective equipment and ensuring correct use.
- Rotate workers through different tasks to reduce the effects of environmental factors on fatigue.

## Work scheduling/planning

The risk from fatigue can be minimised through thorough scheduling and planning.

The following points should be considered when developing a risk assessment:

- Manage deadlines so workload can be safely undertaken, this may be ensuring there is not a rush towards the end of a programme or that there are not incentives to finish a task more quickly than safely.
- Include adequate breaks during a work schedule, especially during a night shift.
- Making sure there are adequate resources to do the job so breaks during and between shifts are not adversely affected and excessive demands are not placed on workers.
- Arrange for vacant positions to be filled in a timely manner to ensure there are sufficient numbers of workers to complete work schedules.
- Plan work tasks so that work demands decrease towards the end of the shift.
- Review supply chain working practices to ensure that double shifting (moonlighting) is not occurring.

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## Non-work factors

Fatigue can be caused by external influences outside the control of the workplace.

Support and assistance should be provided in order to assist the individual and ensure their and their colleague's safety. Points to consider include:

- Briefing workers on fatigue risk factors and their responsibility to present for work as fit for duty.
- Checking that workers are fit-for-work and encouraging them to self-identify where appropriate.
- Following up when a worker self-identifies by identifying difficulties, she/he may have with rostering arrangements, health conditions, family/career responsibilities.
- Assessing applications for secondary employment and approving applications only if they are satisfied that there is no increased risk of fatigue.
- Encouraging workers to seek medical advice to manage both temporary illnesses and chronic health conditions which may lead to higher levels of fatigue.
- Providing new workers and those returning from leave with time to acclimatise to shift arrangements.
- Monitoring leave to ensure workers do not accrue excess annual leave.
- Monitoring sick leave to make sure that workers affected by fatigue are identified and managed appropriately.
- Referring workers who may be experiencing fatigue as a result of personal issues to the organisations employee assistance program.

Individual factors for example medical conditions (e.g. sleep apnoea) should be considered along with support offered through the delivery partner's employee assistance programme for family or study commitments.

Individuals also have a responsibility to manage their sports and social commitments to ensure they are fit for work.

## Consultation with employees

When setting up new shift patterns or changing existing shift patterns employees should be consulted via their workforce representatives. It should be noted that some personnel may wish to work longer but fewer shifts, this could increase the chance of fatigue so should be reviewed to balance operational, personal and health needs.

This policy applies to all employees of Clipfine Limited.

T. MacCarron  
Chairman



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