



1300 apprentice

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SAFETY ALERT Fatigue in the Workplace

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As a PCBU we are constantly assessing workplaces for risks and hazards to our workers. Fatigue is considered a hazard in the workplace and it is monitored constantly through our WHS Section, Payroll department and Field Officers.

1300apprentice recognises that with the age range of our workers and the types of industries in which they are exposed, fatigue is a significant hazard that 1300apprentice and the host employer need to manage and mitigate.



Working under fatigue is as dangerous as working whilst under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.

Did you know:

- Being awake for 17 hours impairs performance to the same level as having 0.05 blood alcohol content.
- Being awake for 20 hours impairs performance to the same level as having 0.1 blood alcohol content.

Fatigue has both short term effects and long term effects on individuals. Some of the effects are listed below:

Short Term effects of Fatigue

- Find it hard to concentrate and avoid distraction
- Difficult to think laterally and analytically
- Difficult to make decisions
- Difficult to remember and recall events and their sequences
- Difficulties in maintaining vigilance
- Unable to control emotions
- Cannot appreciate complex situations
- **Inability to recognise risks**
- Finds it difficult to coordinate hand-eye movements, and
- Inability to communicate effectively.

Long Term Effects of Fatigue

- heart disease
- diabetes
- high blood pressure
- gastrointestinal disorders



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- depression, and
- anxiety

Factors that contribute to Fatigue

Work Related

- roster patterns
- length of shifts
- poor work scheduling and planning
- length of time worked
- timing of shifts (e.g. night shift) proportionally increases the impact of fatigue
- insufficient recovery time between shifts
- long periods of time awake
- harsh environmental conditions
- type of work being undertaken (e.g. under-demand/over demand)
- mentally or physically demanding work
- inadequate rest breaks
- Not taking regular leave breaks when they fall due

Non Work Related Factors

- poor quality of sleep
- sleep loss
- social life
- family needs
- other employment
- travel time
- sleep disorders

Both the host employer (PCBU) and 1300apprentice have an obligation under the WHS Act to keep our workers safe.

A manager of a PCBU who is unsure of fatigue in the workplace should ask themselves the following questions:

1. Are my workers working excessive hours?
2. Are my workers working shift work regularly?
3. Are my workers working in hot conditions?
4. Are my workers traveling long distances?
5. Are my workers starting work early?
6. Are my workers working in physically demanding work?
7. Do any of my workers have an excessive leave balance?
8. When was the last time my worker had a significant break away from work?

If any of the above is answered in the affirmative a risk assessment should be undertaken to determine the factors resulting in this and to mitigate the risks associated with fatigue.

Safety.....It's Everyone's Job

For further information contact: Darren Gibson – WHS Manager 1300apprentice