



Creating extraordinary places on the world's best harbour.

# WHS-PRO-023

## Fatigue and Wellbeing Procedure

WHS-PRO-023 Fatigue and Wellbeing Procedure					
Version	Author	Reviewer/Approver	Date	Amendments	Expiry Date
02	Various	Mary Darwell (CEO)	May 2019	Full review and update of system	May 2020
01	Benchmark OHS Consulting	SHFT Executive	August 2017	Original Version	

## Table of Contents

PURPOSE .....	3
SCOPE .....	3
REFERENCES .....	3
DEFINITIONS .....	3
FORMS .....	3
ACTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES .....	3
Fatigue Causes.....	3
Sydney Harbour Federation Trust Responsibilities .....	4
Employees - Responsibilities in Managing Fatigue .....	4

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to assist with maintaining and improve the lifestyle, fitness and health and safety of all employees and contractor's through promoting wellbeing and ensuring employee fitness for work.

## SCOPE

Applies to the general practical guidance for Sydney Harbour Federation Trust to manage fatigue to ensure it does not contribute to health and safety risks in the workplace.

## REFERENCES

- AS/NZS 4801:2001 Occupational health and safety management systems – 4.3.1 Planning Identification of Hazards, Hazard/Risk Assessment and Control of Hazards/Risks, 4.4.6 Hazard Identification, Hazard/Risk Assessment and Control of Hazards
- SafeWork Guide Managing the Risk of Fatigue

## DEFINITIONS

### **Fatigue**

Fatigue is more than feeling tired and drowsy. In a work context, fatigue is a state of mental and/or physical exhaustion which reduces a person's ability to perform work safely and effectively. It can occur because of prolonged mental or physical activity, sleep loss and/or disruption of the internal body clock. Fatigue can be caused by factors which may be work related, non-work related or a combination of both and can accumulate over time.

## FORMS

### [Forms](#)

## ACTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### **Fatigue Causes**

- Fatigue is a state of physical and/or mental exhaustion which reduces a person's ability to perform work safely and effectively. Fatigue reduces alertness. This may lead to errors, and an increase in workplace incidents and injuries.
- There are various causes of fatigue, some of them inter-related. These include:
  - Work schedules – hours of work, night work and shift work (including breaks between shifts), long work hours, irregular work hours, and schedules that require night work can cause fatigue. These schedules limit the time for a person to physically and mentally recover from work. Working at night interrupts the natural sleeping rhythm, which can cause fatigue.
  - Sleep disruption – everyone needs a particular amount of sleep to stay alert and perform well. People generally need between 7.5 and 9 hours of sleep a night. The most beneficial sleep is deep, undisturbed and taken in a single continuous period. When the length and quality of sleep each day is disrupted, fatigue may result.
  - Environmental conditions - climate extremes (such as working outside in winter), noise and handling vibrating tools place demands on employees and increase fatigue.

- Physical and mental work demands – construction work can be physically demanding which can increase fatigue. Mental demands can also increase fatigue, such as tasks that require periods of intense concentration.
- Emotional well-being – work events can be emotionally tiring and increase fatigue, such as regular criticism or the pressure to complete a task to a deadline. Non-work events can also cause distress and lead to fatigue - for example: when a person faces the loss of a loved one or tries to resolve personal conflicts.

### Sydney Harbour Federation Trust Responsibilities

- Make sure employees take regular, quality, rest breaks in their working day and consider extra rest breaks if the work is demanding.
- Make sure working hours are not too long. If longer working days are required, consider staggered start and finish times, and/or longer rest breaks and periods off work.
- Schedule tasks suitably throughout a work period. A person's ability to be alert or focus attention is not constant throughout the day. For most people, low points occur between 3.00am and 5.00am, and between 3.00pm and 5.00pm. During these low-function times, adopt a conservative approach to safety and avoid critical jobs.
- Monitor and place limits around overtime worked. Avoid incentives to work excessive hours.
- Make sure that rosters comply, wherever possible, with Safe Work GUIDELINES FOR SHIFT DESIGN which are designed to remove any sleep debt. This is due to sleep loss being cumulative.
- Avoid working during periods of extreme temperature, or minimise exposure through job rotation.
- Provide adequate facilities for rest breaks.
- Limit periods of excessive mental or physical demands (i.e. through job rotation).
- Ensure fit for purpose plant, machinery and equipment is used at the workplace.
- Make sure workloads are manageable. Take into account work flow changes due to factors such as machinery breakdowns, unplanned absences or resignations. Avoid impractical deadlines.
- Where possible, be aware of personal circumstances that affect employees and provide support.
- Create a positive work environment where good relationships exist and employees are encouraged and supported. Provide good supervision.
- Make sure anyone can report fatigue-related issues to both supervisors and management, and then improvements will follow. Investigate incidents where fatigue may be involved.

### Employees - Responsibilities in Managing Fatigue

- Employees shall take all practicable steps to keep themselves, and other people around them safe and employees shall:
  - Turn up in a state fit for work, having done everything possible to get a good sleep and rest.
  - Inform their Manager if a task is beyond your capabilities.
- Recognise the signs and symptoms of fatigue which include:
  - feeling (constantly) tired,
  - having little energy,
  - feeling 'sluggish',

- excessive yawning or falling asleep at work,
- less vigilant,
- bad moods,
- forgetfulness,
- inability to concentrate,
- poor communication,
- poor decision-making,
- reduced hand-eye coordination and slower reaction times.
- Other symptoms not so obvious to others include: feeling drowsy, headaches, dizziness, blurred vision or impaired visual perception and a need for extended sleep during days off work.
- Communicate with their Manager if they start showing the signs and symptoms of fatigue.