Fatigue Management
Program Guidelines

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Alberta Roadbuilders & Heavy Construction Association

FATIGUE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The purpose of a Fatigue Management Program (FMP) is to ensure management, supervisory personnel and employees understand what fatigue is, how extended hours of work or consecutive days of work can affect fatigue and the proper proactive methods of effectively dealing with worker fatigue. An effective FMP will include awareness of and response to fatigue issues in the workplace.

A policy and set of guidelines should be established so that management and employees have a thorough understanding of the company’s position on fatigue in the workplace.

Workplace practice:
A Company recognizes that fatigue is a factor, which may affect a worker’s ability to perform mental and physical tasks. The nature of work in the roadbuilding industry requires an extension to the working hours of its employees. All management and supervisory personnel must be able to recognize and respond to the signs and symptoms of fatigue that might impair the worker’s performance.

Training will be provided to recognize and respond to fatigue issues in the field.

It is the responsibility of the supervisor to make corresponding changes to work requirements if fatigue impairment signs are evident. All concerns should be communicated to management and corresponding changes should be documented for review and follow-up.

The development, implementation and continual monitoring of an FMP will help ensure employers are providing a safe and healthy work environment for all workers.

Training
All Company employees are required to attend FMP training. Training will consist of some or all of the following aspects, dependent upon the employee’s responsibilities.
- What is fatigue
- Signs, symptoms and consequences of fatigue
- Roles and responsibilities
- Preventive methods for dealing with fatigue
- Reporting procedures
- Monitoring methods
- Program review processes

Fatigue
As defined by Alberta Workplace Health & Safety, “Fatigue is a state of being tired. It can be caused by long hours of work, long hours of physical or mental activity, inadequate rest, excessive stress, and combinations of these factors.” The signs, symptoms and affect fatigue has on workers varies from one person to the next, however fatigue commonly affects the individual worker’s ability to perform mental and physical tasks.
Signs, symptoms, factors and performance impairments

Some of the possible physical signs and symptoms are as follows (courtesy of Alberta Workplace Health & Safety):

- Tiredness
- Sleepiness
- Irritability
- Depression
- Giddiness
- Loss of appetite
- Digestive problems
- An increased susceptibility to illness

Some possible performance impairments

- Slowed reactions - physical reaction speed and speed of thought
- Failure to respond - to stimuli, changes in the surroundings, information provided
- Incorrect actions - either physical or mental
- Flawed logic and judgment and an increase in memory errors, including forgetfulness
- Decreased vigilance
- Reduced motivation
- Increased tendency for risk-taking

Factors which may have an influence on fatigue

- Time of day
- Temperature
- Working alone
- Repetitive or “boring” functions
- Being inactive
- Length and frequency of breaks
- Availability of food and water
- Duration of the extended hours/consecutive days
- Days off
- Type of work
- Job stress
- Home stress
- Non-effective use of personal time

Fatigue Danger signs while driving

- If you experience any of the following symptoms while driving, consider them as a warning that you could fall asleep without meaning to (Source: National Sleep Foundation): Your eyes close or go out of focus by themselves
- You can’t stop yawning or have trouble keeping your head up
- You have wandering, disconnected thoughts
- You drift between lanes, miss traffic signs, or keep jerking the vehicle back into the lane
- You don’t remember driving the last few kilometers, or have drifted off the road and narrowly missed crashing

If you have even one of these symptoms, you may be in danger of falling asleep. Pull off the road and take a nap.
The following parts of the Fatigue Management Program are general guidelines, which may be adopted in whole or in part for individual companies. Each company must determine which aspects are operationally and structurally feasible for its situation and implement them accordingly.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Management
- Ensure the FMP is implemented throughout the company
- Provide the necessary information about fatigue
- Provide instruction and training
- Communicate employer expectations
- Monitor the effects of extended work hours
- Support employees who are experiencing concerns with fatigue
- Assist and advise line Supervisors
- Investigate any problems and/or concerns
- Inspect the workplace and review FMP with employees
- Review the FMP

Supervisors
- Ensure all crewmembers understand the FMP
- Conduct safety meetings discussing fatigue and the FMP
- Promote the FMP
- Ensure tasks are performed in safe and healthy manner
- Be aware of the possible risks associated with extended hours and/or consecutive days of work
- Give workers as much notice as possible if extended hours are anticipated
- Observe and record how individuals respond to extended hours
- Recognize symptoms of fatigue
- Get feedback from individual crewmembers and the crew as a whole
- Take prompt action if a risk develops
- Relay information to and from management & employees
- Report any FMP problems, concerns and/or issues

Employees
- Actively participate in FMP training
- Recognize symptoms of fatigue
- Promptly report any fatigue related concerns
- Report any individual medical or personal situations, which may have an affect on fatigue
- Get proper rest during time off
- Identify personal stress and seek assistance if required
PREVENTIVE METHODS FOR DEALING WITH FATIGUE

• Inform and educate all workers about the FMP
• Minimize extended hours of work when possible
• Schedule rest days
• Assess and control hazards and risks
• Provide an honest, open and healthy work environment
• Provide information and assistance
• Recognize individual and crew fatigue
• Give as much advance notice of extended hours as possible
• Define whether the work is urgent or not
• Ensure crewmembers have access to food and water
• Take short and frequent breaks
• Provide employees with options such as transfers, job sharing, etc.
• Solicit short-term help to minimize the need for extended hours
• Have crewmembers rotate and perform various functions of short duration during extended hours
• Perform complex tasks earlier in the shift, if possible
• After a long day, possibly start later the next day
• Utilize the buddy system
• Account for employees returning from sickness, absences and/or modified work
• In conjunction with employees, identify health problems which may affect an employee’s ability to work extended hours i.e. diabetes
• Be flexible and supportive when dealing with an employee with problems at home
• Consider any options to limit travel time to and from work

REPORTING PROCEDURES

• Report any unsafe acts
• Report all incidents and near misses
• Inform Management if a worker or crew is concerned about working extended hours
• Develop a process to identify and report when a crew or an individual is working extended hours and/or excessive consecutive days

MONITORING METHODS

• Management/supervisors to monitor crew’s hours of work
• Management/supervisors to determine the need for extended hours
• Management/supervisors are to monitor crews when working extended hours for fatigue related concerns
• Management/supervisors are to address crewmember concerns regarding working extended hours
• Management are to monitor supervisor/employee relationships
• Ensure everyone has been trained in the FMP
PROGRAM REVIEW PROCESSES

- Periodically review FMP policy and procedures
- Compare ratio of crews working extended hours to those not working extended hours
- Determine and review the reasons & factors for working extended hours
- Perform and review employee/Supervisor extended hours of work survey
- Review the effectiveness of the FMP training program
- Review the factors affecting the need for extended hours
- Discuss possible alternatives to extended hours of work

SOURCES AND RESOURCES

You may find the following websites and documents useful for additional information.

Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission
 http://www.aadac.com

Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry, Workplace Health and Safety
 - Fatigue and Safety at the Workplace
 - Fatigue, Extended Work Hours, and Safety in the Workplace

Alberta Mental Health Board
 http://www.amhb.ab.ca

Alberta Motor Association – Crash Causes
 http://www.ama.ab.ca/cps/rde/xchg/ama/web/advocacy_safety_Crash-Causes.htm

Better Sleep Council Canada
 http://www.bettersleep.ca/

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety
 - What is Fatigue?
   http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/fatigue.html
 - Extended Work Day: Health and Safety Issues
   http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/work_schedules/workday.html
 - Health Promotion/ Wellness/ Psychological – Substance Abuse in the Workplace
   http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/substance.html
 - Health Promotion/ Wellness/ Psychological – Work/Life Balance
   http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/worklife_balance.html

Canadian Mental Health Association
 http://www.cmha.ca
Enform
- Guide to Safe Work: Fatigue Management

Global Business and Economic Roundtable on Addiction and Mental Health
  http://mentalhealthroundtable.ca

Mental Health First Aid Canada
  http://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.ca

National Sleep Foundation
  http://www.sleepfoundation.org

OHS Canada (OHS Canada Magazine)
  http://www.ohscanada.com/issues/ISarticle.asp?id=80242&story_id=&issue=02152008&PC

The Safety Library (Managerial Technologies Corporation)

Workers’ Compensation Board of Alberta
- Working Safely Behind the Wheel
  http://www.wcb.ab.ca/pdfs/driving_safely.pdf

Work Safe Alberta
- Addressing Workplace Impairment in Alberta
- Exhausted or Drunk - Behind the Wheel It Makes No Difference