

1.4. FATIGUE MANAGEMENT POLICY

1. PURPOSE AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

PTC recognises that fatigue affects a person's health and wellbeing, increases the chance of illness and workplace injuries occurring, and reduces performance and productivity within the workplace.

The purpose of this policy is to highlight the effects and risks of employee fatigue, the shared responsibility to manage it appropriately, and the preventative actions that should be planned and taken to minimise associated risks of fatigue-related injuries and incidents in the workplace.

2. SCOPE AND COVERAGE

This policy applies to all PTC employees, contractors and visitors whilst at the workplace or whilst carrying out activities on behalf of PTC, including:

- Workers who undertake significant driving as part of their roles.
- Workers who operate equipment and plant
- Workers who perform High Risk Work as classified by WHS Acts & Regulations
- Workers who undertake significant travel as part of their roles.
- Workers who work at host employers' premises and other sites, particularly remote sites requiring lengthy drives on country roads.

3. DEFINITIONS

It is normal to feel tired after prolonged mental or physical effort at work. Fatigue, however, is more than just feeling tired. Safe Work Australia defines fatigue as an acute and ongoing state of tiredness that leads to mental and/or physical exhaustion and prevents people from functioning within normal boundaries.

3.1 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 environmental conditions
- Lifestyle factors such as; poor quality of sleep, family responsibilities, social life, commuting time to and from work
- A combination of both.

3.2 Signs of fatigue may include:

- Headaches and/or dizziness
- Difficulty keeping eyes open
- Constant yawning
- Muscle weakness
- Lacking energy

3.3 Immediate effects of fatigue may include:

- Lack of concentration
- Reduced short-term memory
- Increased errors
- Slower reaction times
- Impaired decision-making and judgment (including being unaware of the state of fatigue)
- Reduced immune system function

3.4 Longer-term effects of fatigue may include:

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

3.5 Studies show that 17 hours awake has a similar effect on the body as blood alcohol content of .05%, & 24 hours awake is equivalent to a blood alcohol content of 1%.

3.5 Sleep is the only effective long-term strategy to prevent and manage fatigue. While tired muscles can recover with rest, the brain can recover only with sleep. An adult generally requires seven to eight hours of sleep daily, taken in a single continuous period. When individuals get less sleep than they need in a day, they build up a sleep debt. Each additional day without enough sleep increases the debt which, when it becomes large enough, causes fatigue. The only way to reduce or cancel a sleep debt is by sleeping additional hours.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

PTC is committed to providing and maintaining safe systems of work for all its workers, including those whose work involves shifts work, extended hours or on-call arrangements.

PTC operations are sometimes undertaken outside ordinary working hours. Such activities include overtime, shift work, extended hours and on-call arrangements. These working arrangements may contribute to fatigue if not managed appropriately.

Fatigue can be caused by both work and non-work related factors. Non-work factors include family responsibilities, social activities, health issues—such as sleep disorders—study commitments and sporting commitments. Work factors include shift work—especially night shift—and working extended hours.

While everyone doesn't respond to fatigue in the same way, fatigue can cause reduced concentration, impaired coordination, compromised judgement and slower reaction times, which ultimately increase the risk of incidents and injuries.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

Managers and workers of PTC have a responsibility to ensure that fatigue does not impact the safety, health and well-being of themselves and others.

Managers and supervisors are responsible for:

- Applying risk management in consultation with staff and in accordance with the fatigue risk management system.
- Ensuring systems of work that minimize the risk of fatigue—for example, reasonable rosters, reasonable overtime practices and adequate recuperation between shifts.
- Providing opportunities for workers to obtain adequate rest from work.
- Monitoring workloads, work patterns and rostering arrangements to ensure workers are not placed at risk from fatigue.
- Consulting with workers when introducing shift work or new rostering systems.
- Providing information, instruction and training about risks to health, safety or welfare of workers involved with shift work, extended hours and on-call arrangements.
- Ensuring workers performing shift work are properly supervised and that tasks are undertaken safely.

Workers are responsible for:

- Participating in risk management processes.
- Using time off from work to recuperate to be fit and able for the next shift.
- Participating in education and training to gain an understanding of fatigue.
- Avoiding behaviours and practices that contribute to fatigue and which could place themselves and others at risk—for example, secondary employment or not using time off work to recuperate.
- Recognising signs of fatigue that could place the health, safety and well-being of themselves or others at risk and reporting this to their manager or supervisor.

6. RESULTS OF BREACHES OF POLICY

Breaches of this policy and/or any of its associated procedures may result in disciplinary action being initiated in accordance with PTC Discipline Policy.