

OVERVIEW

This Safety Practice describes the requirements for identifying, assessing, and managing the risks associated with work-related fatigue on Perkins Builders projects.

Fatigue can reduce a person's ability to work safely and may increase the risk of injury, incidents, and reduced performance. Factors such as work hours, shift patterns, travel, environmental conditions, workload, and personal wellbeing must be considered to ensure workers remain fit for work and fatigue risks are effectively managed.

DEFINITIONS:

Fatigue	An impaired physical and mental condition, which arises from an individual's exposure to physical and mental exertion and inadequate or disturbed sleep
Extended Work Hours	Any work hours in excess of established scheduled hours and includes overtime.
Circadian Rhythm	A 24-hour cycle of the body reflecting functions such as temperature variations, hormone production levels and natural periods of sleep and attention peaks/troughs etc.
Work Shifts	The hours of work between the start and finish of a shift, excluding overtime and overtime or shift change over period worked.
Work Schedule	The hours to be worked each day, shift, week, month and year as scheduled by the Employer.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Project Manager	Ensure work activities, schedules, and resources are planned to minimise fatigue risks and that any extended work hours or non-standard shifts are appropriately authorised.
Site Manager / Supervisor	Monitor workers for signs of fatigue, implement appropriate control measures, and ensure work schedules, breaks, and task allocation support worker health and safety. Review fatigue risks when work conditions or schedules change.
HSEQ Team	Provide advice on fatigue management requirements, support risk assessments, and assist with inspections, incident investigations, and review of fatigue controls.
Workers and Subcontractors	Present fit for work, take reasonable care of their own health and safety, comply with fatigue management requirements, use rest breaks appropriately, and report fatigue or any concerns that may affect their ability to work safely.

1. EVALUATION

Guidance:

For tasks requiring personnel to work extended hours on various shifts/days, it is a Perkins Builders requirement that authorisation be obtained from the General Manager prior to the extended work.

2. RISK ASSESSMENT

Guidance:

The scope of work and schedule will impact upon the type and duration of shifts implemented during the Project. Additionally, recognition and evaluation of fatigue management strategies require:

- supervisory staff to monitor and task work activities; and
- adequate and sufficient breaks to recover from fatigue.

All risks, including fatigue are assessed prior to project commencement and documented in the [Project Risk Register \(Form 996\)](#) and the [HSE Management Plan \(Form 967\)](#). Additional risk assessments may be completed throughout the project should it be subject to significant change in scope etc.

The risk assessment will aim to identify, assess and control fatigue hazards through the use of the hierarchy of control.

3. FITNESS FOR WORK

Guidance:

Each individual is responsible for maintaining his or her personal Fitness for Work, including the management of personal fatigue. People should adopt both preventive and remedial strategies in managing personal fatigue.

Preventive strategies can include maintaining adequate health and fitness, planning time around adequate rest and sleep, reducing activities that generate fatigue in time-off periods (e.g. additional work/employment during rostered days off).

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Owner: HSEQ

Page 1 of 4

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Remedial strategies in the workplace can include taking short breaks, rotating tasks or reporting personal fatigue to supervisors.

4. CONTROL MEASURES

Guidance:

Shift length, work activity, travel distance, diet, rest breaks and accommodation facilities all play a significant role in controlling the potential exposure of employees to conditions, which produce fatigue.

Control measures shall be considered to minimise the risk of fatigue. These may include:

Working Hours

Staff on site are expected to work 40 hours a week, and no more than 14 hours (including travel/commute) on any given day.

A shift must not start between 12.00 midnight and 6.00 am without being risk assessed and without the prior approval of the General Manager.

A minimum of 10 hours is expected between back-to-back shifts other than in the case of broken shifts where no more than 10 hours should be worked in any 24 hour period with at least one 10 hour break to be provided.

Night Shift

It is critical for all staff on site to understand that nightshift operations will disrupt a person's circadian rhythm and performance level. All project personnel are responsible to control and minimise the effects of fatigue.

Control measures for the implementation of nightshift operations may include, but are not limited to:

- Ensure job rotation on night shift to ensure work interest is stimulated.
- Encourage breaks and where possible self-selection of breaks for personnel on night shift.

Type of Work

Staff on site may experience fatigue when exposed to the following:

- Physically and demanding tasks
- Monotonous tasks
- Mentally demanding tasks
- Working in confined spaces
- Working at height; or
- Working in a hot environment.

Supervision and management should implement the following control measures to limit risk:

- Job Rotation
- Adequate breaks
- Adequate rehydration supplies on hand; and
- Task Rotation.

Commuting

The commuting distance and time spent commuting between place of residence and home base should be considered as part of the working hours regardless of payment.

Excessive commuting time combined with extended work hours may reduce the time available for adequate recovery periods and therefore, substantially increase fatigue.

Control measures to address this issue may include, but are not limited to:

- Suitable travel arrangements
- Adjustment of work shift hours
- Inclusion of transportation hours in the calculation of the overall work schedule hour's etc.; and
- Adjustment of the daily shift length.

Environmental and Climatic Conditions

Continued work over extended periods in extreme temperatures and climatic conditions is physically demanding.

Potential control measures may include:

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ID: Safety Practice
90.02.17

Version: 2.0

Last Review date:
30/06/2026

Owner: HSEQ

Page 2 of 4

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- scheduling physically demanding tasks to cooler or less stressful periods of the day
- Planning work activities with suitable control measures such as canopies and regular rest breaks

Nutrition And Lifestyle

All personnel through induction, training and information sessions should be advised and reminded of the benefits to their fitness to work through nutrition and lifestyle whilst working on a construction site.

Control measures include:

- Toolbox meetings to advise of importance of healthy living and nutrition.
- Adequate breaks to ensure rehydration and nutrition can be absorbed.

Stress

The result of stress often becomes evident in the workplace. Signs of stress in personnel normally result in, but are not limited to:

- mood swings
- inattentiveness
- anger/aggressiveness
- poor quality work
- emotional displays
- quietness

Control measures include:

- Appropriate monitoring of staff
- Use of personal leave days when staff need to seek medical assistance.

Culture & Training

Open communications, trust and understanding by staff that they have the freedom to inform their supervisor when they believe they are suffering from symptoms of fatigue, without fear of recrimination, forms the cornerstone of an effective fatigue management strategy.

Potential Exposure to Other Hazards

A complete risk assessment will take into consideration the effects of environmental conditions and task design on personnel and its cumulative influence on fatigue.

All Site Managers, and Supervisory Staff, must evaluate the demands placed on personnel by:

- work schedules and rosters - irregular and unplanned work schedules such as call out shift work (emergency personnel etc.) must be considered.
- staffing levels - this impacts on shift length, physical and mental demands of the work and commuting requirements (method of travel, distance, frequency, risk of incidents whilst commuting).
- overtime restrictions for personnel on call out or similar duties. Ensure cover is provided during the absence of key personnel without endangering or exposing others to additional risk.
- Environment impacting efficient performance - this would include heat, vibration (machinery operation), humidity, light, noise and diet requirements/balance etc.

Facilities

Accommodation facilities and the ability of personnel to ensure they take advantage of their recovery period are intertwined and hence are inseparable.

In the event that extended hours, work cycles and shift operations occur outside of the normal working hours (i.e. nightshift) it is important to plan and provide facilities which ensure personnel are afforded the maximum opportunity to sleep unimpeded and without disruption.

5. HEAVY VEHICLE

Guidance:

All fatigue management practices related to the operation of heavy vehicles shall be in accordance with [Heavy Vehicle Operations Procedure \(50.01.01\)](#).

6. MONITOR AND REVIEW

Guidance:

Once control measures are implemented, they will be monitored and reviewed to ensure they continue to effectively manage fatigue.

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ID: Safety Practice
90.02.17

Version: 2.0

Last Review date:
30/06/2026

Owner: HSEQ

Page 3 of 4



Trial periods will be implemented for any new work schedules and encouraging workers to provide feedback on their effectiveness.

Control measures should also be reviewed when:

- there are any indication risks not being controlled.
- new tasks, equipment, procedures, rosters or schedules are introduced.
- changes are proposed to the work environment, working hours, schedules and rosters.
- there is an incident due to fatigue at the workplace.
- new information regarding fatigue becomes available, and the results of consultation, including a request from a health and safety representative, indicate that a review is necessary.

7. EMPLOYEE AWARENESS

Guidance:

Personnel are to be advised of the importance of fatigue management in their induction.

Employees are responsible for notifying their supervisor/manager or relevant authorised person where they are experiencing symptoms of fatigue where they are not able to perform their work safely.

LINK TO SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- [HSE Management Plan \(Form 967\).](#)
- [Project Risk Register \(Form 996\)](#)
- [Heavy Vehicle Operations Procedure \(50.01.01\).](#)

REFERENCES

- Work Health and Safety Act 2020
- Work Health and Safety (General) Regulations 2022
- Model Code of Practice: Managing the risk of fatigue at work
- Worksafe WA Code of practice: Fatigue management for commercial vehicle drivers