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Fact sheet:

To keep driving or not - A guide for salespeople

So what is the recommended maximum daily driving time for people in sales roles such as agriculture business bankers, financial planners and regional managers? This fact sheet has been produced to help drivers in sales roles with the decision to keep driving or not when experiencing and managing fatigue while driving on the job.

What is Fatigue?

A loss of alertness that reduces human performance and may or may not end up in sleep.

Why is Fatigue a Problem?

Fatigue is one of the leading factors contributing to road crashes. Fatigue has the following effects on driving performance:

- Slowed reaction time
- Shorter attention span
- Less effective memory
- Narrowing of attention
- Less effective reasoning and decision making



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Causes of Fatigue

- Sleep deprivation (less than 6-9 hours sleep)
- Working long hours
- Inaccurate risk perception
- Long distance driving
- Vehicle comfort
- Road environment
- Stress
- Unpredictability of work (call outs)
- Irregularity of shift timing (e.g. variable start times)

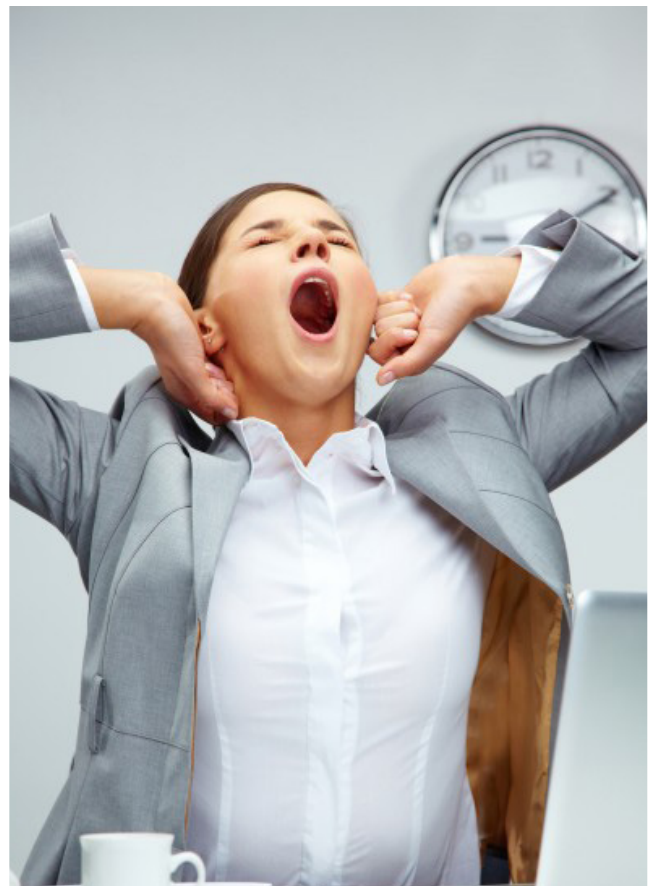
Fatigue is **4 times** more likely to contribute to impairment at work than drugs or alcohol.

Symptoms of Fatigue

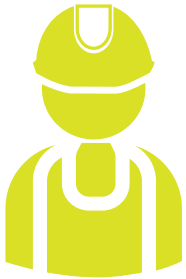
- Yawning
- Sore or heavy eyes
- Slower reaction times
- Daydreaming and lack of concentration
- Poor perceptual-motor control
- Impatience
- Impaired judgement and performance
- Stiffness and cramps

Avoiding Fatigue When Driving

- Prepare with adequate sleep
- Rest regularly – before becoming tired
- Limit driving to less than 8 hours a day
- Alternate driving tasks
- Avoid driving at 'danger' times – midnight to 6am and post-lunch
- Avoid direct sun on the body – use shading
- Beware of the effects of monotony – aim for optimal cognitive demand by talking, sharing driving, taking regular breaks, 'interesting' routes



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Night shift workers have **6** times the risk of a fatigue-related crash



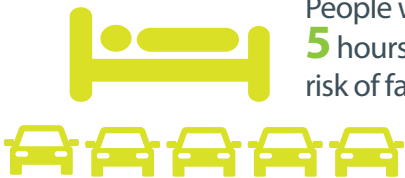
Driving for more than **11** hours doubles the risk of a crash



Being awake for **17** hours creates impairment that will double the risk of a crash



People who sleep less than **6** hours have **3** times the risk of fatigue-related crash



People who sleep less than **5** hours have **5** times the risk of fatigue-related crash

Duty of Care and Regulations

Both employers and employees have a duty of care in relation to working hours under the OHS Act and associated regulations and codes of practice and can be fined for breaching the Act. The operating standards included in the regulations provide a guide to industry on how to plan trip schedules and rosters that best manage fatigue for commercial vehicle drivers. The standards emphasise the importance of sleep and timing of work and rest.

How Long Can I Keep Going?

This depends on how often you want to drive. For one long journey, you may be able to go for 12 or 14 hours, if you are driving during the day, have adequate breaks and you have had a good night's sleep. If you are driving at night after a day's work, 3 or 4 hours may be too much. Recent research suggests 9 to 10 hours as a maximum. If you are driving on several successive days, you should not go beyond this limit.

What Can I Do?

Avoid the kind of driving conditions that the professional driver finds difficult and dangerous. This means:

- do not start a long trip at night after a day's work; if you must do this, make sure you get to bed early the night before;
- not more than 10 hours on the road, unless you can share the driving with someone else;
- do not try to keep going after your first drowsy spell; the next will come quickly, and if you survive that, the next will come even more quickly;
- don't drink alcohol until the journey is over.

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What Causes Drivers To Fall Asleep?

There are several factors:

- 10 hours or more driving at the wheel. The risk of having an accident increases sharply if you drive for more than 10 hours
- Long spells of driving on several days in a row. It becomes more likely that a driver will fall asleep as s/he extends into the third, fourth, fifth or later day of a period of driving duty.
- Older drivers, say, over 50, are more likely to fall asleep than younger drivers
- Less than the usual amount of sleep makes a driver more likely to fall asleep at the wheel some time during the following day
- Consumption of alcohol - even in moderate amounts - increases the tendency to fall asleep

Workplace Fatigue Policy

A fatigue policy may be an effective way to communicate the organisation's procedures to workers. Consider including information about:

- roles and responsibilities of supervisors and workers
- maximum shift length, average weekly hours and total hours over a three-month period
- work-related travel
- control measures for specific tasks, jobs and operations
- self-assessment checklists
- procedures for reporting potential hazards and fatigue risks, and

- procedures for managing fatigued workers, including what will happen if they are too fatigued to continue work (e.g. temporary task re-allocation).

A fatigue policy can be included with other work health and safety policies, for example policies on bullying, drugs and alcohol, and fitness for work.

(Safe Work Australia, Guide for Managing the Risk of Fatigue at Work, 2013)

Factors To Be Taken Into Account

Worksafe WA (2004) recommends that to comply with operating standards, scheduling and rostering must ensure that:

- A commercial vehicle driver is given at least 24 hours' notice to prepare for working time of 14 hours or more.
- A commercial vehicle driver is not permitted to exceed 168 hours of working time in any 14 day period.
- Total non-working time in any 72 hours is at least 27 hours.
- A solo commercial vehicle driver has at least one continuous 7-hour period of non-work time in any 24-hour period and preferably between 10pm and 8am.
- Continuous periods of work time do not exceed 5 hours before a break of at least 10 minutes is taken.
- A schedule must allow for an average of 20 minute breaks from driving for each 5 hours of work time for a commercial vehicle driver, and a minimum break from driving of at least 10 consecutive minutes at the end of 5 hours work time.

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- Maximise the opportunity for sleep and to prepare for a trip by minimising very early departures.
- A commercial vehicle driver has at least two continuous periods of 24 hours non-work time in 14 days.
- Minimise irregular or unfamiliar work rosters.
- Minimise schedules and rosters that depart from daytime operations when commercial vehicle drivers return from leave; commercial vehicle drivers returning from leave require time to adapt to working long hours especially at night.
- Ensure 24 continuous hours of non-work time between shift changes when commercial vehicle drivers work a continuous rotating shift system of 5 days or more.

For More Information

- Safe Work Australia, Guide For Managing the Risk of Fatigue at Work, 2013
- WorkSafe WA Code of Practice – Fatigue Management for Commercial Vehicle Drivers, 2004
- Transport for NSW. Thinking about hitting the road? Test how tired you might be before you get behind the wheel, get some tips to help avoid driving tired, and share your results with your friends at testyourtiredself.com.au

Recent Research

1. Elyria Kemp, Steven W. Kopp, Erasmus Kemp, (2013) "Six days on the road: Will I make it home safely tonight? Examining attitudes toward commercial transportation regulation and safety", The International Journal of Logistics Management, Vol. 24 Iss: 2, pp.210-229, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/IJLM-08-2012-0080>.
2. Guang Xiang Chen, Youjia Fang, Feng Guo, Richard J. Hanowski, The influence of daily sleep patterns of commercial truck drivers on driving performance, Accident Analysis & Prevention, Volume 91, June 2016, Pages 55-63, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.aap.2016.02.027>.
3. Philippa H. Gander. Evolving Regulatory Approaches for Managing Fatigue Risk in Transport Operations. Reviews of Human Factors and Ergonomics June 2015 10: 253-271, doi:10.1177/1557234X15576510.