

FFW Policy: The OTML Fitness for Work Policy or FFW for short clearly states that each of us has a responsibility to turn up for work in a fit state. This does not just mean being drug and alcohol free but rested as well.

The idea of Fitness for Work is that we are safe and competent to do the jobs we are paid to do, we don't hurt or injury ourselves or others and if we do either turn up for work in an unfit state or we become unfit during the course of the shift there are measures that can be taken to help both us and our work mates.

Typically organisations that have a FFW policies in place spend time implementing the policy so that all persons on site know that rules, can follow them and know the consequences if they are or become compromised. Not all FFW policies contain the same information or practices but in general they are concerned about performance in the workplace and maintaining safety. OTML has developed this FFW policy over the past few months and it is now being rolled out across site to all persons.

REPORTING FATIGUE AT WORK

There is currently no physical test for fatigue – we can't take blood, get you to wee in a bottle, blow in a tube to determine if you are too tired to work. This technology and practice is not yet available anywhere in the world. The best we can do is ask questions and observe our behaviour and performance. Some of these are done through the safety monitoring system such as the Read Watch, ADAS Camera etc.

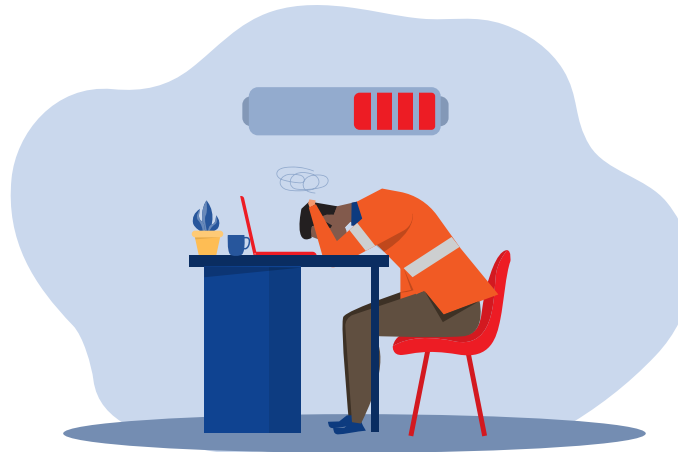
The reasons why you may require a fatigue assessment to determine if you are safe to commence or continue working are similar to the reason why a 'due cause' drug and alcohol test may be undertaken.

However, there are a few additional issues that may trigger such an assessment and they include:

- you report being fatigued/tired at the commencement or during the work period.
- you have involuntarily fallen asleep during work (i.e. you had not intended but accidentally did so).
- your workmate may be concerned with your performance or behaviour and report it to the supervisor.

FATIGUE IS A WORKPLACE HAZARD

There is now ample evidence from the research world and the field that fatigue is an identifiable problem for many organisations and individuals. How big a problem will be determined by the type of work being carried out, when the work is done, who does the work and who the organisation prioritises safety and health.



PO Box 1, Dakon Rd,
Tabubil, Western Province 332
Papua New Guinea

Phone: 71707890



**NATIONAL MINES
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FATIGUE INDUCTION



WHAT IS FATIGUE

Fatigue results from not getting enough sleep in combination with the type of work you are doing.

For example, if you do not get enough sleep and you have a physically active job you may find that fatigue may be less noticeable or takes slightly longer to have an impact but if you have a boring, monotonous, repetitive job and you are tired you are more likely to fall asleep. Fatigue is caused by both work and non-work related factors that influence your sleep; such as noise, light, the sleep opportunity offered by your roster, how many hours you have been awake, how well you sleep, when you sleep, the condition of your bed etc.

TIME OF DAY EFFECTS

There are several points during the 24-hour day where we are at greater risk from fatigue and hence being involved in mistakes, microsleeps, falling asleep, experiencing errors, reduced concentration, incidents and/or accidents. So it is important that we take extra care during these times, especially if we are carrying a sleep debt, where we are not getting as much sleep as our body requires.

These increased risk times occur in the early hours around 3-5am when our body is driving us to sleep and again after lunch between about 3-5pm.

HOURS OF PRIOR WAKEFULNESS

A series of studies has compared the drop in performance levels that occur when people are intoxicated with the drop in performance when people don't get enough sleep. Because the performance impairment associated with alcohol intoxication is well understood and well defined it was used as a gauge or a measuring stick for fatigue.

The studies comparing fatigue and alcohol showed that after 17 hours of wakefulness, performance decreases to a level equivalent to a Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) of 0.05% and if wakefulness is continued to 24 hours, performance decreases to a BAC of 0.1%. So it matters how long you have been awake.

CIRCADIAN INFLUENCE

The sleep wake pattern is the strongest circadian rhythm and is timed according to external cues like sunrise and sunset.

The timing of sleep usually has a characteristic phase relationship with the environment. Generally, humans have an increased likelihood for sleep during the night when the body's temperature is falling, while the likelihood of sleep is lower in the morning as the body's temperature is rising and then, except for a small dip in the afternoon, high levels of alertness continue throughout the day.

So it is not surprising that Individuals function best when they follow their body's natural pattern of sleep and wake.

WORK AND NON-WORK EFFECTS

Specifically Work related factors involve your hours of work, workload, job task/demands and work break between shifts and within the shift

Non-Work related factors generally involve family or social obligations, you may be obliged to attend functions or meeting, relationship pressure which can interfere with your time to sleep. Furthermore, clan and tribal responsibilities may take up your sleeping time.

Essentially, being fatigued is when you feel tired or sleepy.

SIGNS

There are a number of things you may have noticed about yourself, for example your concentration may be reduced, you may be irritable, cranky, you may communicate poorly, your reaction times will be slower, you may nod off in the middle of doing something and you may not be interested in what you are meant to be doing.



CONSEQUENCES

The way you communicate may alter. You may speak slower, use simpler words, slur your words, may grunt rather than using words in response to questions or comments, you may not make sense or sentences may be jumbled. For example, you may talk nonsense on the phone or pass a message onto another person incorrectly.

You may become frustrated and irritated by things or people who don't usually have that effect on you.

Your situational awareness may be reduced. This is when you are not aware of your total surroundings. For example you may drive from the pit to the Rom get there and have no memory of other vehicles you may have passed or if you stopped at the road junction. You will keep your vehicle heading in the direction you want but you lose sight of what is happening around you at the time which can be dangerous for yourself and others.

Your response time may be slower. That is you don't respond to someone or something as quickly as you usually do but at a slowed rate. For example, you won't listen or pay attention to someone who is talking to you and all of a sudden you realise that you didn't quite get what he/she was saying. Or you may need to stop your car but it takes longer for you to do something and your experience is a near hit/miss as opposed to allowing adequate room or distance for whatever is happening.

Your error rate may increase. You may make errors more frequently than you would normally. For example, spelling errors or writing into the wrong report, use the wrong tool, calculate things incorrectly, use the wrong drill bit, write the wrong address, use the wrong word(s) in a report, forget to deliver things to their destination.

You may find that it takes you longer to realise you have to do something, you are vague and slower to react.

Micro sleeps are a sign that you are very very tired. It is a period of time approximately 2-5 seconds where your eyes may be open but you are not responding to your environment, you have essentially shut down for a short period. If you are driving for example it can be dangerous for you and other road users. During these periods you are not in control of what you were doing – anything could and does happen.