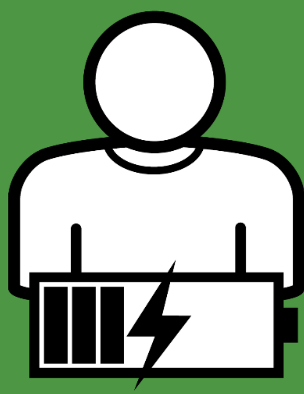
Fatigue Reduction:
How to Manage Your Team’s Fatigue

A guide for all Network Rail people managers



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1. Introduction

Before reading this guide, you should read “How to manage your fatigue”. This is available on the Fatigue Reduction site. It will provide you with the background knowledge of fatigue and the Fatigue Standard NR/L2/OHS/003.

This document is aimed at anyone responsible for managing others workload. If you need detailed information on any of Network Rail’s HR policies, please visit the HR area on My connect.

Note: *This guide complements the Network Rail Fatigue Management Standard (NR/L2/OHS/003). Reading this is not a substitute for reading the Standard.*

2. What are my fatigue management responsibilities as a people manager?

The key stages of fatigue management are:

Observe	Care	Mitigate	Monitor

Observe

It is important to:

- Hold regular team meetings, where fatigue discussions are a standing agenda item.
- Regularly talk about fatigue in 1-2-1s.
- Openly discuss fatigue with colleagues.
- Consider fatigue when planning or discussing workloads.
- Regularly check rosters, updated FRI scores or time sheets of hours worked to identify trends.
- Look out for symptoms of fatigue in ourselves, family, friends, colleagues and employees.
- Use existing channels (like Close Call and Worksafe procedure) to raise fatigue concerns.

Care

How you behave as a manager, or supervisor, effects your ability to manage fatigue risk. To manage fatigue successfully, everyone needs to feel empowered to raise fatigue concerns. You can create this safe environment by starting a cultural movement against fatigue.

To achieve this:

- Everyone needs to “Lead by Example” and show caring behaviours.
- When concerns are raised they must be listened to and taken seriously.
- Fatigue worries need to be treated sympathetically.
- Concerns raised must be handled in a caring and sensitive manner.
- Regularly enquire if fatigue is or could become an issue.
- Get to know your colleagues as it may be something outside of work that’s causing fatigue.
- Educate yourself and your team on the causes, consequences and effective controls for managing fatigue.

Mitigate

The most effective method for the management of fatigue is to have a good understanding of the real underlying issues, in and out of work. With this knowledge, you can identify potential causes of fatigue and apply suitable controls before it becomes an issue. Potential controls to mitigate fatigue include:

Public transport / taxis to and from work	Sharing of workload amongst other team members
Flexible working / working from home	Discussion with family and friends to minimise issues outside of work
Ad hoc change of start and end times	Time off in lieu
Lighter / change of duties	Wellbeing breaks (short walks away from desk or outside, as an example)
Shared driving to and from work	Change of work location/environment (working quietly in pod for instance)
Completion of the “risk assessment for new and expectant mothers”	Discuss potential “Comms (phone, email)” free periods outside of work place
Better use of equipment/technology	Seek professional medical advice (e.g. Doctor)
Skype for Business to avoid travel for meetings	Putting a “Fatigue Friend” process in place
Eat, Sleep, Hydrate, Repeat	Consider diet, hydration and exercise changes
Validium or other support services	Conditions for working, for example lighting, ventilation and temperature
Reprioritisation of work	

These controls should be agreed, then documented in a fatigue management plan. Consider the benefits of rolling out the actions across the wider team if needed. For more detail, you can read our Mitigation Guide on the Fatigue Reduction site.

Monitor

The fatigue management plan needs to be reviewed regularly to check it’s still effective. In particular:

- Regularly speak to the individual or group to check if the controls are effective.
- Be open to adapting the plan if the controls aren’t effective.
- When accidents or Operational Close Calls occur, consider whether Fatigue may have been a potential cause.
- Be aware of the latest fatigue research, best practice and controls.
- Accurately record fatigue as the reason for sickness.

3. What processes do I need to follow to manage fatigue?

How your business area manages fatigue has been decided at a local level.

While this guide covers the basics of fatigue management, your local fatigue policies contain the full details. Visit the Fatigue Reduction website to find out who you can contact for details of your local Fatigue Reduction processes.

4. What data do I need to manage and report on fatigue?

There are a few pieces of information you will need to manage your team's fatigue risk successfully. These are listed in this section along with details of where you can source the data.

Be proactive in your fatigue management, by looking ahead. Make sure you understand workloads and shift duration. Check rosters, project plans, resource requirements and discuss workload in 1-2-1s. This enables you to spot where there's a high likelihood of fatigue before it becomes an issue. The best way of managing fatigue is to stop it occurring in the first place; where possible integrate fatigue management into existing processes.

Actual hours worked

This data needs to be comprehensive, showing the **number of hours worked** and **when they were worked**. It will help you gauge if a member of staff is hitting or exceeding one of these fatigue triggers…

1. Working week triggers (60 hours or 72 hours)
2. Working day of more than 12 hours
3. Less than 12 hours between shifts
4. Working more than 13 consecutive turns of duty in 14 rolling days

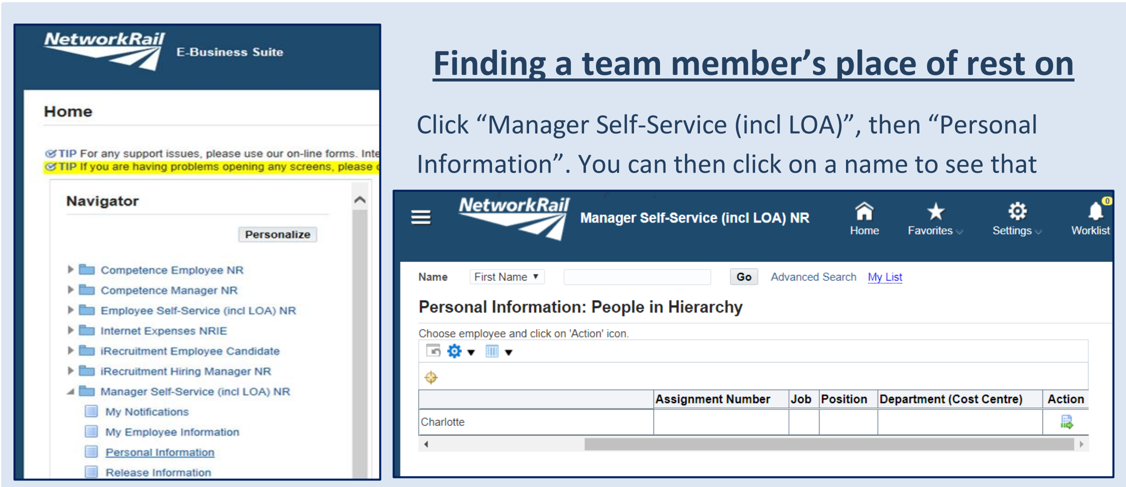
If you're unsure how to track hours worked by your team, please visit the Fatigue Reduction site to find out who you can contact for details of your local Fatigue Reduction processes.

NOTE: *It's important you and your team understand this data is not being collected for payment purposes or to check they're working enough hours. It is collected to make sure they're not hitting or exceeding the fatigue triggers and are not being subjected to significant fatigue risk. That's why it's essential you collect genuine hours worked.*

Commute times

You need to be aware of your staff's journey times from their "Place of Rest" to "Place of Work" and back again. Check the journey time each way and at different times of year, as commute times will vary because of traffic conditions or train timetables; this data needs to be accurate, so it's important to regularly check the information you have is up to date.

You can find your staff member's place of rest on Oracle (see screen grab), but the data on Oracle will not show the full picture. It may not be up to date. Also, they may live 2 miles from a station that they can drive to in 5 minutes, but they may choose to walk, adding 30 minutes to their journey. Talk to them and find out about their journey times.



Commuting information and actual hours worked, will help you gauge if a member of staff is hitting or exceeding this trigger…

- Less than 14 hours door to door

FRI scores

The Fatigue and Risk Index is a tool developed by the HSE to compare shift patterns and identify which has the lowest risk of fatigue and injury. The Fatigue and Risk Index (FRI) tool will give you two figures; a fatigue index and a risk index. This tool should be used whenever a roster is created and, importantly, whenever it is amended. It can also be used to investigate an incident, re-assess an existing roster or assess fatigue using actual worked hours data. As this tool was created to compare shift patterns, it's not suitable to use for staff who are not rostered.

Below we explain **what** the FRI tool calculates. If you'd like to find out more about **how** you use the tool, you can find our FRI tool guidance on the Fatigue Reduction site.

Fatigue Index

This is the estimated chance (as a percentage), that a member of staff will feel very fatigued at some point during the shift pattern you're testing. So, a fatigue index of 10 means that on average, 1 in 10 people working that pattern are likely to feel very tired.

A fatigue index of 10 does not mean that shift pattern is risk free. It means the shift pattern is less likely to cause fatigue than one with a fatigue index of 50. A fatigue index of 50 means half the people working that pattern are likely to feel very tired.

The Fatigue Index will show you if a member of staff is hitting or exceeding these fatigue triggers…

- Daytime Fatigue Index – 35 or more
- Night time Fatigue Index – 45 or more

NOTE: In 2008 the Health and Safety Laboratory surveyed shift patterns in the UK rail sector for the ORR. It found most of them produced fatigue scores of less than 30 - 35 for day shifts and 40 - 45 for night shifts. These scores reflect what the majority of the rail companies found achievable. It will often be possible to improve fatigue controls to reduce these scores further.

Risk Index

A Risk Index score of 1 is based on the average level of risk of accident/error for people working 12 hour shifts on a 2day, 2-night, 4 rest day schedule. So, a risk score of 2 could be taken as a doubling of risk on that shift.

The Risk Index will show you if a member of staff is hitting or exceeding this fatigue trigger…

- Risk Score of 1.6 or more

***NOTE:** FRI indexes do not give a full picture of an individual or team's fatigue risk. It's key that this tool is used alongside 1-2-1s and the fatigue assessment tool (where necessary).*

5. Other information it's important to collect

Collecting data is helpful in forward planning to avoid fatigue. It's also needed to report on how well fatigue is being managed in your business area. But numerical data doesn't capture everything.

We know fatigue can be impacted by a host of factors, including:

- Quality and length of sleep between shifts
- Personal preference (are people morning/evening/night people?)
- Ability to of individual to adjust to night working, or switching between day and night working
- Whether good quality rest is had on rest days
- Whether individuals are turning up well-rested and fit for duty
- Medical issues
- Lifestyle considerations (caring responsibilities, party season)
- Concerns and worries (divorce, financial issues)

To make sure your team feel comfortable coming to you when they feel at risk of fatigue, it's important you regularly discuss how they're feeling in 1-2-1s. Regular fatigue discussions in team meetings and safety hours can help you spot potential causes of fatigue before it becomes an issue. There is a fatigue friendly 1-2-1 form available on the Fatigue Reduction site.

6. What do I do when a fatigue concern/issue is reported, or a trigger is exceeded?

If a trigger has been exceeded, it's important that you follow the actions detailed in the standard (Module 3: Exceedance Management).

If a member of your team comes to you with a more general fatigue concern, you should:

- Acknowledge their concerns and thank them for reporting it.
- Show respect and sensitivity.
- Explore the cause of the issue with them and work together to find a solution.
    - In some cases, the individual will need to sleep and not be able to work.
    - In some cases, the issue may be dealt with by reasonable adjustments.
    - In some cases, the issue may not be work related. Help by signposting to fatigue resources on Fatigue Reduction site, Validium or other support services. In this situation the individual will be responsible for their fatigue management, with support from you.
- Consider completing a fatigue assessment (you can find this on the Fatigue Reduction site
- Work together to develop a fatigue management plan if the situation requires one. If you don't think it's needed make sure you write down why it's not needed on the fatigue assessment. See section 8 for more information on fatigue management plans.
- Follow up on the effectiveness of the fatigue management plan at agreed intervals. You can check it's working by completing another fatigue assessment.

You might choose to make a record of any conversations and decisions made. If you'd like more information on how to have a fatigue conversation, including examples of questions you may like to ask, please see our "How to have a fatigue conversation" guide on the Fatigue Reduction site

7. What is the fatigue assessment tool? When do I use it?

The fatigue assessment tool asks questions that help confirm if fatigue is a problem for the person answering. The result will help you decide on next steps to take.

You should use this tool when:

- You or a team member are concerned about their levels of fatigue.
- If a team member has hit or exceeded one of the fatigue triggers.
- A flexible working request has been made.
- You need to provide supporting information for a risk assessment.
- Undertaking an accident investigation.

The questions cover areas that aren't touched on by the FRI calculator, for example:

- When breaks were last taken.
- When they last ate and had a drink.
- How good a rest did they get in their last rest period.

The assessment will advise whether the team member has a low, medium or high risk of fatigue.

8. What is a fatigue management plan? When do I use it?

A fatigue management plan is a way of recording the conversation you've had with your team or team member. You can use the Network Rail Health Management Action Plan (HMAP) as a template for this; it can be found on the Fatigue Reduction site.

You need to create a fatigue management plan when:

- You think one is needed, or a team member has requested one.
- The fatigue assessment is showing medium or high risk of fatigue.
- A member of staff (or the team) have hit a level 1 or 2 trigger (working more than 60 or 72 hours a week).
- A member of staff has or is likely to hit the 14 hour-to-door trigger.
- A member of staff is returning to work after an extended absence.
- Working hours need to be amended as part of reasonable adjustments.
- A fatigue related condition has been identified in an occupational health referral that could cause, contribute or worsen the health and/or wellbeing of that member of staff.

The key to a good fatigue management plan is to have an open and honest discussion, in a safe environment that is sympathetic and realistic.

There are 4 stages to creating a fatigue management plan:

- Discussing the potential causes of fatigue.
- Work out who is affected by those causes (do they affect the whole team?)
- Deciding what measures can be put in place to ease fatigue (for team or individual)
- Confirming who responsible and accountable for putting the plan into action.

9. Fatigue assurance: How do we know our fatigue management process is working?

It's important that you keep records of exceedances in your team, as well as collecting the data listed in section 4 of this document. Your business area will collate this information to check fatigue risk is being managed effectively.

The Fatigue Reduction programme team will collate this in formation and monitor the impact of fatigue management on Your Voice results and absenteeism records.

Visit the Fatigue Reduction site to find out who you can contact for details of your local Fatigue Reduction processes.

10. FAQs

These are just a few of the questions we're frequently asked. For the full list, please see our FAQ document on the Fatigue Reduction site.

- **Can staff take advantage of the fatigue management process?**

As with sickness, there's a chance some employees may wish to take advantage of the fatigue management process. That's why fatigue is recorded as a normal sickness/absence and will follow the normal absence reporting process. Just make sure it is recorded under the work-related absence category. This will allow you to monitor how many fatigue absences are taking place.

- **Does this standard mean staff can no longer work nights or on call?**

The standard does not stop staff working nights or on call. Where staff need to work these patterns, fatigue is a risk; the standard advises how that risk should be managed

- **I manage a large team. Will I have to create an individual fatigue management plan for all of those affected?**

No. You can produce one plan to cover a whole team, if their fatigue considerations are similar. If, for example, one member of staff has a particularly long commute, you'll need to consider their needs separately.