



Fatigue Reduction: How Alert Are You?

Karolinska Sleepiness Scale

The Karolinska Sleepiness Scale (KSS) is a 9-point scale often used in scientific studies where people are asked to self-report how alert they feel **right now**. There's lots of research that links KSS scores to performance and other measures of fatigue in the workplace.

It's a great conversation starter in team meetings or briefing sessions before a shift starts, but it's also a good idea to get into the habit of using the KSS before you leave home for work.

Anyone scoring in the 'amber zone' (6 or 7) needs to self-monitor for symptoms of fatigue, nap if possible and consider strategic use of caffeine. Supervisory checks should be organised. Depending on length of duty remaining, and involvement in safety critical tasks, planning for possible task reassignment needs to start.

If an individual is self-assessing as 8 or 9 on the scale, their alertness has reduced to a level where they should not perform safety critical duties, including driving. They are not fit for duty and arrangements should be made to ensure a safe means of transport to either home address or suitable accommodation. **Scores of 8 or 9 are associated with a high frequency of micro sleeps.**

How does this compare to FRI scores?

FRI fatigue scores represent the average % probability of high levels of sleepiness. A score of 35 represents a 35 % chance of the individual achieving a KSS Score of 8 or 9 (extremely sleepy – fighting sleep).

So, an FRI score of 50 means that someone working that pattern of duties has a 50 % chance of scoring 8 or 9 on the KSS and is therefore at high risk of experiencing a microsleep.

1	Extremely alert
2	Very alert
3	Alert
4	Rather alert
5	Neither alert nor sleepy
6	Some signs of sleepiness
7	Sleepy, but no effort to keep awake
8	Sleepy, some effort to keep awake
9	Sleepy, great effort to keep awake, fighting sleep