

Tasracing

Fatigue Management Guidance

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Tasracing

*Shaping a united
and vibrant industry
of which Tasmania
can be proud.*

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1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Tasracing is committed to promoting a safe and healthy workplace for its employees and all participants in the racing industry. This requires collaborative efforts to manage and minimise the risks associated with fatigue.

This Guidance Note aims to inform trainers and industry participants by outlining workplace health and safety (WHS) and employment responsibilities, and that it will assist employees understand their role in managing fatigue. It seeks to assist in the understanding of fatigue risk management and how to address these risks effectively.

Participants in the Tasmanian racing industry face significant fatigue risks due to demanding schedules, extensive travel, and, for some, the pressures of weight management and other employment outside of the racing industry. These factors can impact health and safety, creating risks under Tasmania's WHS legislation. It is the responsibility of trainers (as the employer) and their employees to work together to meet their legal obligations relating to fatigue.

To address these risks, the Guidance Note encourages trainers and their employees to collaborate in developing a 'weekly plan' that accounts for work schedules and working hours. This plan should prioritise minimising fatigue risks wherever practicable.

Fatigue impairs alertness, slows reaction times, and reduces decision-making abilities, all of which increase the likelihood of accidents travelling to and from events, and injuries during racing and training activities.

While Tasracing does not directly manage fatigue risk for industry participants, it is committed to supporting the racing industry by providing resources and guidance to promote safe practices.

2. LEGAL OBLIGATIONS UNDER WHS LAWS

Under Tasmania's Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (TAS) (**the WHS Act**), both employers and workers have shared legal responsibility to manage fatigue-related risks.

Under the WHS Act, as a person conducting a business or undertaking (a PCBU - Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking) has a primary duty of care, so far as is reasonably practicable, to the health and safety of:

- workers engaged, or caused to be engaged, by the trainer; and
- workers whose activities in carrying out work are influenced or directed by the trainer when at work.

i.e. a Trainer, a PCBU must eliminate risks in the workplace, or if that is not reasonably practicable, minimise the risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

Employers (PCBU - Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking):

- provide and maintain a safe working environment
- source and maintain knowledge on fatigue-related matters including identifying and managing risks and hazards associated with fatigue
- offer appropriate training and information to workers

Workers:

At the same time, a worker has a duty while at work to:

- take reasonable care for their own health and safety
- report if they are suffering from fatigue
- ensure their actions do not harm others
- report any risks to themselves or others relating to fatigue
- follow reasonable instructions and cooperate with workplace policies regarding fatigue management including those stated in the Tasmanian Local Rules of Racing 2019

Under the WHS Act, a 'worker' is a person who carries out work in any capacity for a PCBU, including, but not limited to:

- an employee
- a contractor or subcontractor
- an employee of a contractor or subcontractor
- an apprentice or trainee
- a student gaining work experience; or
- a volunteer

3. WHAT IS FATIGUE?

Safe Work Australia defines fatigue as more than feeling tired and drowsy. In a work context, fatigue is a state of mental and/or physical exhaustion that reduces a person's ability to perform work safely and effectively.

It can occur because of prolonged or intense mental or physical activity, sleep loss and/or disruption of the internal body clock.

Signs of fatigue include:

- tiredness even after sleep
- reduced hand-eye coordination or slow reflexes
- short term memory problems and an inability to concentrate
- blurred vision or impaired visual perception
- a need for extended sleep during days off work

Causes of fatigue

Fatigue can be caused by work related or non-work related factors or a combination of both. An example of non-work related fatigue would be poor quality sleep due to street noise or family demands.

Work causes of fatigue might include:

- roster patterns including working early mornings and finishing late at night due to race meetings
- excessive long shifts, or insufficient recovery time between shifts and blocks of shifts e.g. working at night meetings and then being on an early morning shift the next day
- harsh environmental conditions e.g. working in extreme heat in the summer or working in minus degrees on a winter's morning
- prolonged or intense mental activity e.g. driving in poor weather conditions or driving for extended periods of time
- prolonged or intense physical activity e.g. riding track work all morning, then working at the races

Why is fatigue a problem in the workplace?

Fatigue may increase the risk of incidents because of a lack of alertness. Fatigue may result in a slower reaction time to signals or situations and affect the ability to make good decisions, particularly when:

- operating fixed or mobile plant including driving vehicles
- undertaking critical tasks that require a high level of concentration
- undertaking night or shift work when a person would ordinarily be sleeping

A person conducting a business or undertaking must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers while they are at work. This means if fatigue is identified as causing a risk to work health and safety, then suitable control measures should be implemented in consultation with workers to eliminate or minimise the risks.

4. GUIDANCE FOR TRAINERS AND WORKERS

Workers often have demanding schedules, which can lead to fatigue. Trainers and workers are encouraged to:

- develop a 'weekly plan' to schedule work hours i.e ten hours between shifts as per documented for Tasracing employees and Apprentice jockeys
- ensure the plan aligns with WHS obligations and provides sufficient rest periods
- review the plan regularly to account for changes in schedules or workloads

An example of a 'weekly plan' (**Appendix A**) aims to balance commitments while prioritising rest and recovery to maintain safety and performance standards.

How trainers may manage fatigue include but are not limited to:

- designing working hours and rosters to allow enough rest time between shifts for community, meals and sleep;
- having a process for workers to report concerns with fatigue;
- ensuring workers have and take adequate and regular breaks during shifts to rest, eat and hydrate;
- developing plans to deal with workload changes due to absences of other workers;
- providing sufficient rest breaks where early morning shifts are worked, and limiting the number of successive early morning starts (where possible);
- avoiding long working hours and limiting the number of consecutive working days;
- encouraging and allowing workers to take annual leave;
- allowing individual flexibility where possible to accommodate family and other commitments; and
- keeping the timing of shift predictable.

5. FATIGUE RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Effective fatigue management involves identifying risks, assessing their impact, and implementing strategies to minimise them. Some recommended strategies include:

- **Work Scheduling:** Limit long working hours and ensure adequate breaks between shifts. Avoid where possible scheduling tasks during high-risk times, such as late at night or early in the morning.
- **Travel Management:** Plan travel to allow sufficient time for rest and recovery before and after events. Consider sharing the driving with other race day participants in the car.
- **Weight Management Practices:** Provide education on healthy weight management strategies and support for participants managing weight-related pressures for Jockey's and apprentices.
- **Awareness and Training:** Offer training on recognising fatigue and implementing risk management practices.
- **Communication:** Foster open communication among all participants to address fatigue concerns promptly.

6. TASRACING'S SUPPORT

While Tasracing does not directly manage fatigue for individual participants, it is committed to supporting the industry by:

- Providing resources and guidance on fatigue risk management
- Promoting awareness of WHS obligations and best practices including training
- Facilitating collaboration between trainers, apprentice jockeys, and other industry participants to prioritise safety and well-being

Tasracing is not able to provide legal advice about incidents suffered in the workplace due to fatigue.

For further information and assistance in relation to any WHS concerns, please refer to WorkSafe Tasmania, Safe Work Australia, and/or call the Tasmanian Racing Integrity Hotline on (03) 6777 1900.

It is important to note that the Tasracing Integrity Unit enforces the Tasmanian Rules of Racing.

7. CONCLUSION

Fatigue management is a shared responsibility that requires commitment from all industry participants. By working together to recognise and mitigate fatigue risks, the Tasmanian racing industry can maintain a safe, healthy, and sustainable environment for everyone involved.

Tasracing encourages all trainers and participants to utilise the strategies outlined in this Guidance Note and to seek additional support or clarification as needed.

Further information:

- Worksafe Tasmania – 'What is Fatigue' - worksafe.tas.gov.au/topics/Health-and-Safety/hazards-and-solutions-a-z/hazards-and-solutions-a-z-pages/f/fatigue
- Safe Work Australia – "Guide for Managing the Risk of Fatigue at Work" - www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/system/files/documents/1702/managing-the-risk-of-fatigue.pdf

APPENDIX A - FATIGUE CHECKLIST

This checklist provides guidance to assist in identifying risks of fatigue but is not an exhaustive list of risk factors. If the answer is yes to any of the questions, fatigue risks may need to be further assessed, and control measures implemented.

Mental and physical work demands	
Does anyone carry out work for long periods which is physically demanding? (for example, tasks which are especially tiring and repetitive such as cleaning boxes, working multiple horses)	Yes/No
Does anyone carry out work for long periods which is mentally demanding? (for example, work requiring vigilance, work requiring continuous concentration and minimal stimulation, work performed under pressure, work to tight deadlines, managing a number of employees, dealing with demanding owner expectations)	Yes/No
Work scheduling and planning	
Does anyone consistently work excessive split shifts (i.e. 5am to 11am and then return to work at 2pm to 6pm)	Yes/No
Does the work schedule prevent workers having at least one full day off per week?	Yes/No
Does the roster make it difficult for workers to consistently have at least two consecutive nights sleep per week?	Yes/No
Do work practices include on-call work?	Yes/No
Does the roster differ from the hours actually worked?	Yes/No
Does the work roster include rotating shifts?	Yes/No
Does anyone have to travel more than one hour to get to their job?	Yes/No

Cont. APPENDIX A - FATIGUE CHECKLIST

Work time	
Does anyone work in excess of 12 hours regularly (including overtime)?	Yes/No
Does anyone have less than 10 hours break between each shift? (for example, split shifts)	Yes/No
Is work performed at low body clock times (between 2 am and 6 am)?	Yes/No
Enviromental conditions	
Is work carried out in harsh or uncomfortable conditions? (for example, hot, humid or cold temperatures)	Yes/No
Is anyone working with hazardous chemicals?	Yes/No
Is anyone consistently exposed to loud noise?	Yes/No
Non-work factors	
Are workers arriving at work fatigued?	Yes/No
Does anyone drive a vehicle with less than 5 hours sleep between shifts?	Yes/No