

SECTION EIGHTEEN – FATIGUE MANAGEMENT

OBJECTIVES

Crom-Dig Ltd aims:

- to recognize work situations that may lead to worker fatigue and other detrimental effects
- To provide guidelines for minimizing the effects of working extended hours
- To provide guidelines for managing situations where fatigue may be an issue

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Manager will:

- Establish procedures for recognising and managing work situations that may lead to worker fatigue
- Ensure all supervisors and workers receive training and instruction on minimisation of fatigue in the workplace
- Monitor the work situation for early identification of fatigue indicators
- Take action to manage the situation where fatigue becomes an issue the workplace
- Provide education and training where required to assist supervisors and workers to understand the issues related to working extended hours and workplace fatigue
- Seek assistance to manage the situation where fatigue becomes an issue in the workplace

Workers will

- Report situations where fatigue is becoming an issue
- Follow procedures that are implemented to reduce the effects of working extended hours
- Try to maintain a healthy lifestyle, and obtain adequate sleep to aid fatigue management

SITUATIONS WITH POTENTIAL FOR FATIGUE

Working extended hours is a major cause of fatigue in the workplace. The following situations can lead to worker fatigue if not managed effectively:

- Emergency call out of workers
- Staff shortages
- Meeting rigorous production schedules
- Meeting deadlines for completing a job
- Demanding shift rosters

POTENTIAL IMPACT OF FATIGUE

The following effects can be the result of working extended hours and fatigue when it occurs over a period of time.

- Ill health e.g. gastro-intestinal symptoms, sleep deprivation, depression, and aggravation of pre-existing diseases. This is exacerbated by disruption to healthy lifestyle habits such as regular exercise and a well-balanced diet

- Stress through demands to remain alert and trying to balance family life with work
- Increased potential for injury due to poor concentration
- Social disruption where a person is unable to fulfil family and other commitments due to the work load
- Increased exposure to workplace hazards as a result of longer work hours in contact with the hazard, e.g. noise, fumes, chemicals
- Communication problem as a result of lack of normal contact with the workplace e.g. inability to attend meetings, loss of contact with fellow employees
- Training and instruction opportunities may be missed
- Involvement in activities such as Health & Safety meetings, tool box meetings and consultative meetings may be impossible

Required actions

RISK ASSESSMENT

The following situations should trigger an assessment of the work situation, as fatigue could be an issue:

- Where normal rostered breaks are not occurring
- Where demands are consistently high over a period of time
- Where the employees are regularly required to work over 12 hours

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Workers should receive training and education to ensure the issues relating to working extended hours and fatigue are understood. Training should cover the following topics:

- Recognition of situations likely to lead to fatigue
- Risk assessment procedures
- Procedures for managing jobs involving extended working hours

SUPERVISION

Work involving situations likely to lead to fatigue must be adequately supervised by a person who understands how to manage the issues and who is authorised to make the necessary decisions.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Risk assessments should take into account the potential for emergency situations and procedures implemented to follow in the event of an emergency occurring.

- Workers should be provided with the means to make contact in the event of emergency
- Emergency contact numbers, internal and external, should be readily available
- Supervisory staff must be able to respond to an emergency situation

OVERTIME

On occasion workers may be required to work overtime. At Crom-Dig Ltd, staff shall not work any longer than 14 hours in any one 24-hour period. Following an extended work period there will be a minimum mandatory 9 hour stand down period prior to commencing the next working period.