

Not drunk,
not speeding,
just tired

Calculate your risk of
driving when tired!

**DRIVE
FRESH!**

Never try to
push through.

RISK FACTORS	ADD
Slept less than 6 hours in the past 24 hours	3
Slept less than 14 hours in the past 48 hours	2
Been awake for more than 16 hours	3
Worked night shift in the last 3 days	2
Have a sleep disorder e.g. insomnia	3
Driving between 2pm and 5pm	1
Driving between midnight and 6am	3
Had any alcohol in the last 2 hours	2
Driven for more than 5 hours without a break OR	2
Driven for more than 8 hours without a break	3
TOTAL	

CAUTION

If you score **4**

You may be driving tired more often than you realise which would make you a significant road hazard.

WARNING

If you score **5-7**

You are at a high risk of having a crash. Avoid driving. have a power nap.

DANGER!

If you score **8 or more**

You are an extreme driving risk/hazard on the road. You should NOT be driving! Ignore all other factors. You need at least 8hrs sleep before you drive again.

Ways to mitigate and manage fatigue

ACTIONS YOU COULD TAKE

- Check that all responders have turned up to the SAROP in a fit for action state. This may include asking a few questions about alcohol use, sleep or work if you have any cause for concern.
- Develop a policy or process which clearly outlines your expectations for fitness when turning up for a SAROP, and any support that your organisation provides in this regard.

RISK ASSESSMENT: INDIVIDUAL'S INFLUENCING FACTORS

Effects of the individual on fatigue

Factors that influence fatigue	RISK LEVELS		
	LOW RISK	MODERATE RISK	HIGHER RISK
QUALITY AND DURATION OF SLEEP	Good quality sleep, alert and refreshed.	Disturbed sleep and showing signs of fatigue.	Health or personal factors that impacts sleep quality (apnoea, new baby, work demands etc).
HEALTH	Good health.	OK health, with some minor physical symptoms but manageable and not going to impact the search.	Poor diet (B12 or iron deficient) and inability to replenish during SAROP. Current sickness (cold and flu).
FITNESS	Fit for the activities and SAROP environment and demands.	Some issues with particular types of terrain or activities.	Recent illness or injury.
LIFESTYLE FACTORS	Occasional alcohol consumption.	Moderate user of alcohol.	Alcohol / drug taking or dependencies.
SUPPORT	Good support at home and work.	Some support at home with friends and family. Work supportive in general.	Little support at home or work.
USUAL HOURS WORKED (in all roles not just SAR) over a three-month period	Daily: 8 hours or less. 40 hour working week.	Daily: 9 to 12 hours. 48 hour working week.	Daily: Over 12 hours. 56 hour working week.
TIME AWAKE prior to SAROP commencing	Awake for less than 12 hours. More than 10 hours since last at work.	Awake for 12 to 16 hours.	Awake for more than 18 hours. Less than 10 hours since last at work.
CAPABILITY AND EXPERIENCE	Verifiable capability. Experienced and well-trained responders.	Not all capability able to be verified – some assumptions and trust in information provision required. SAR responders are trained with minimal experience.	Capability not verifiable. Inexperienced and newly trained responders relative to the SAROP specific context.

FATIGUE GUIDANCE NOTE FOR SEARCH AND RESCUE



What is fatigue?

Fatigue is a normal state that people experience. It is a symptom of stress and associated with impaired physical and/or mental performance. It can have the same negative effects on critical decision making as being under the influence of drugs or alcohol. The stress experienced is often from exertion outside an individual's current fitness level or capacity (physical and/or mental) over a prolonged period of time, or can be as simple as fatigue brought on from sickness.

We often observe colleagues/workmates as "run down" referencing the fact a person is not performing as expected and needs rest (sleep) and or food and water. Sleep plays a vital role in removing metabolic cellular waste from around the brain. A permanent pattern of less than sufficient levels of sleep has links to increased levels of depression, psychosis, stroke, and obesity.

Why manage fatigue?

Fatigue can contribute to two risks during a SAROP or SAREX.

Firstly, fatigue may lead to a health and safety incident causing harm to a SAR responder. People who are fatigued are not as alert as they normally are. They are less able to make good judgements and decisions; and are slower to respond and adapt to changing circumstances. In a SAROP or SAREX, which are often conducted in high risk situations and environments, this can mean they put themselves and others at risk.

Secondly, fatigue may lessen the effectiveness of a SAROP. A fatigued person can, in particular roles and situations, hinder the search and compromise the chances of a successful outcome.

As well as these immediate problems, fatigue can lead to long-term health problems. Looking after the people that work with and for you is not just a legal requirement, it is essential to ensuring a healthy, sustainable, and efficient search and rescue sector that is able to respond to people in distress.

“2 weeks of 6 hours sleep each night = same performance deficits as staying awake for 24 hours straight.”



It can be difficult during a SAROP for responders to pause, recognise and take care of their own needs and their own health. The drive and motivation to push through and press on can become all consuming. It is imperative that the organisations directing and controlling responders consider the health and fitness of those they are responsible for, in order to be confident they are able to participate fully in the SAROP without posing a danger to themselves, other responders, or the person(s) in distress.

How to identify fatigue

We don't go from 100% alert to 100% fatigued in one leap. At any time, those in a SAROP or SAREX will be at varying stages of fatigue. **People suffering from fatigue may display the following signs that you will be able to recognise from the side bar on the right.** If you spot any of these signs, go and talk to them and do not task them in a role where they are going to be a risk to themselves or others. A fatigued person needs to sleep – so ensure they get home safely. Remember that a fatigued person may not feel tired, so do not rely on their own assessment of tiredness.

How to recover from fatigue

Sleep is the only way to recover from fatigue.

Provide responders with regular breaks and rest opportunities during a SAROP or SAREX to reduce the potential, or effects, of fatigue.

If during a SAROP or SAREX a responder is showing signs of fatigue:

- Provide safe transportation home for them to get sleep or
- Provide an appropriate (cool, dark, quiet) area for them to sleep.

How to identify and manage fatigue

The following four tables are provided as a risk assessment tool to help in identifying and managing fatigue of responders in SAROPs and SAREXs.

The tables provide risk assessments in four areas:

- The mental demands of a SAROP on a responder
- The physical demands of a SAROP on a responder
- The environmental demands of a SAROP on a responder
- The individual's factors influencing fatigue levels.



FATIGUE CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to identify signs of fatigue in your self and others

PHYSICAL SIGNS

- Eye rubbing
- Yawning
- Slumped posture
- Slow blinks
- Desire to sleep
- Reduced coordination and motor skill
- Micro sleeps or spacing out
- Slow reaction time
- Nausea or vomiting, headaches or dizziness
- Not wearing all protective gear and equipment properly/at all

MENTAL SIGNS

- Slowed reaction time and response time to questions or conversation
- Reduced situational awareness
- Poor memory
- Distracted
- Failure to anticipate
- Omissions/carelessness
- Poor decision making and judgement
- Decrease in problem solving
- Greater tolerance for error
- Reduced visual perception

EMOTIONAL/AFFECTIVE SIGNS

- Irritable, easily frustrated
- Terse communication
- Withdrawn, un-talkative
- Hyper-reactivity
- Delayed response on 2-way radio
- Disregard for command orders and tasking instructions
- More quiet
- Poor motivation or attitude
- Unstable mood and/or strained relationships



If you're feeling drowsy, you may drift in and out of sleep.

In a short 3 second sleep at 100km, you can travel the length of a rugby field without knowing it!