

# MANAGING FATIGUE

**TAXI  
FACTS**

There are two main types of fatigue - work related fatigue is associated with hours of work, workplace conditions and the demands of the job; and non-work related fatigue is associated with sleep disorders, family/social responsibilities and seasonal factors (e.g. daylight saving).

The early signs of fatigue are restlessness, lazy steering, aches and pains and sore or tired eyes.

If you ignore these signs you will be more likely to have an accident, you may drop into a micro-sleep or have slowed responses, you will be unaware of the dangers around you and your communication will be affected. This will limit your ability to make money.

## DRIVER INFORMATION

As a taxi driver you are in control of the hours you work and when you take breaks. Act responsibly and consider the following:

1. Set realistic goals: Have a business plan for your taxi driving business - it doesn't have to be written but it should set goals based on what can be achieved safely. Base estimates on realistic earnings not peak periods.
2. Pace yourself: No business takes top money every hour. You should be able to take breaks and still achieve your goals for each shift.
3. Think like a professional: Professional taxi drivers do not waste time waiting for the 'perfect' job, they take every fare as it comes along.
4. Control your anger: Anger is not only a stupid emotion it also drains a person emotionally. An angry person will tire much more quickly.
5. Take regular exercise: Exercise gives you energy and helps fight fatigue.

## OPERATOR INFORMATION

Before bailing your taxi to a bailee taxi driver, assist him/her in being fatigue aware - give them a copy of the WHS section of TaxiCare Plus - Certificate in Taxi Driving.

As the Contract Determination defines a shift as between 9 and 12 hours, it is advisable that operators do not offer bailment for longer than 12 hours. The length of a shift set out in the Contract Determination is not binding on the operator or driver, but it offers an important guide.

A driver who has access to a taxi 24 hours per day, (e.g. operator/driver) must accept that it is not possible to drive the taxi 24 hours per day. A driver must select and commit to a limited number of hours and include regular breaks.

Bailee drivers should be required to fully complete the Driver Worksheet, including the duration of the shift and details of breaks taken.

Check that the worksheets are being filled out correctly and appropriate breaks are being taken by bailee drivers. If it appears that a driver is not taking sufficient breaks during a shift or driving excessive hours per shift, you should take steps to address the issue including (but not limited to) the following:

- (a) promptly counsel the driver to take appropriate steps to introduce regular breaks and reduced shifts.
- (b) follow up with a letter to the driver setting out the advice you have given and keep a copy of the letter.
- (c) closely monitor the driver's worksheets to see what steps the driver is taking to manage the issue.
- (d) continue to counsel, write to and monitor the driver to ensure changes are made.
- (e) seek advice if you continue to have ongoing concerns.

“Fatigue is one of the most common contributors to motor vehicle accidents - drivers and operators have responsibilities to ensure the taxi industry is a responsible road user.”

Roy Wakelin-King AM  
CEO of the NSW Taxi Council



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