



# DRIVER FATIGUE

## Manager's Fact Sheet

### Why is this important?

Safety is one of the cornerstones of any business and covered by several legislative acts. It is important that the responsibilities are both recognised and acted upon from the driver to the managers of a company.

- Fatigue can be caused by several factors, both long and short standing. Drivers can be suffering from Fatigue due to non-work-related reasons, as well as fatigue brought on by lack of rest during the working day.
- An employee who is suffering with Fatigue will not be able to concentrate on the task of driving, putting them and other road users at risk – their reaction time and co-ordination will be slower.
- Fatigue caused by medication, or a medical condition could be a condition that prohibits a driver from legally driving, it is important that managers make drivers aware of the DVLA regulations for medical conditions and drivers read instructions for any medication being taken.
- Changes in a driver's lifestyle, such as returning from holiday overnight and driving the next morning after little or disturbed sleep or following switching between shift times can result in fatigue.
- Fatigue has impacts on a person's ability to act rationally, resulting maybe in road rage, customer components, or generally erratic behaviour, which can be out of character.
- Drivers who work shifts are more susceptible to fatigue, and with vehicles having more aids there is a risk that drivers are lulled into a false sense of comfort and security e.g., cruise control, lane departure, heated seats etc.
- It is important drivers take regular breaks, and take time away from their vehicle, especially on long journeys.



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### Why is this important? (continued)

- The impact personally on a driver who has been involved in a serious incident can itself cause fatigue, and support should be made available to any driver following an incident.
- Outside influences for example, financial, family, medical, work, or lifestyle choices can cause fatigue, and managers need to be aware of any support available to both them and employees via the company, should they be asked.

### What are the legal requirements?

From a legal perspective all drivers have responsibilities, which are laid out in the Highway Code, Road Traffic Regulations Act, etc. however employers are also bound by further legislation, including the Health & Safety at Work Act, and specific areas such as duty and rest periods.

- Drivers can be prosecuted if they do not declare medical conditions which could prevent them driving or holding a licence.
- The impact of driving whilst tired can be fatal, and a driver charged with death by dangerous driving could face a maximum penalty of 14 years in prison.
- If a driver is suffering from a fatigue related condition which impacts on their ability to drive safely, and does not seek medical support, nor inform the DVLA, will be liable for a £1000 fine and face prosecution.
- Penalties under “not being in proper control of a vehicle” attract 3 penalty points and fines upwards of £100, these can include selecting music, eating, or drinking to stay awake.

### What is best practice?

Having clear policies and procedures within your business is key, these should include:

- Driver health declarations – can be part of any pre use checks.
- Reviewing mobile workers daily workload, to ensure driving is included in their working day.



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### What is best practice? (continued)

- Having policies and processes in place, which employees have access to, providing support with fatigue and wellbeing.
- Having wellbeing on the agenda in the same way companies have a first aider.
- Medical checks / helplines either company funded or supported via affinity schemes help employees get access to help and support.
- Regular “check ins” with remote workers who drive, in the same way you would brief a site-based driver.
- Being aware of a driver who has taken on additional work, paid or voluntary, ensuring they are getting sufficient rest.
- Be aware of drivers who travel long distances on motorways and dual carriageways, ensure they take regular breaks – long journeys on fast roads can lead to higher driver fatigue.
- Raising awareness of non-work-related support via charities and support agencies – for example: money worries / gambling etc
- Holding driver engagement days – to review topics such as fleet selection (ergonomics), wellbeing, road risk and tease out some of the topics – drivers love to talk!

### Where can I find further information?

[www.gov.uk/driving-medical-conditions](http://www.gov.uk/driving-medical-conditions)

[BRAKE - Fatigue info](#)

[www.rospa.com/road-safety/advice/drivers/driver-health](http://www.rospa.com/road-safety/advice/drivers/driver-health)

[Martin Lewis debt support](#)

[www.drivingforbetterbusiness.com/resources/search-results/?search=fatigue](http://www.drivingforbetterbusiness.com/resources/search-results/?search=fatigue)

[www.drivingforbetterbusiness.com/articles/company-found-guilty-after-driver-fatigue-death/](http://www.drivingforbetterbusiness.com/articles/company-found-guilty-after-driver-fatigue-death/)