

MS – Toolbox Meeting Records			MRG-CF-TCR-07
Rev: 2.0	Next Rev Date: July 2028	Issue Date: July 2024	

Toolbox Talk No: 289

Issue:	Fatigue Management		
Location:	Via SMS Text Message, MRG Employee Portal	Date:	26/02/2026
Briefed by:	Via SMS and Portal	Time:	10.30

Points Raised and Comments

Purpose of this Toolbox Talk
 Fatigue is a critical safety risk in the rail environment, especially during night shifts, extended hours, and possession works. This toolbox talk reinforces the importance of recognising fatigue, managing it effectively, and maintaining compliance with rail safety and WHS requirements.

Why Fatigue is a Major Risk in Rail Environments
 Fatigue reduces a worker’s ability to:

- Concentrate and maintain situational awareness
- React to hazards such as trains, plant, or alarms
- Make safe decisions under pressure

In rail environments, fatigue can lead to serious incidents, near misses, or fatalities, particularly where timing and awareness are critical.

Common Causes of Fatigue

- Long shifts or extended working hours
- Night work and disrupted sleep patterns
- Consecutive shifts without adequate rest
- Physically demanding tasks
- Travel time to and from site
- Personal factors (stress, illness, poor sleep)

Signs and Symptoms of Fatigue

Physical Signs:

- Constant yawning or heavy eyes
- Slowed reaction times
- Microsleeps (brief, unintended sleep)

Mental Signs:

- Poor concentration
- Forgetfulness or confusion
- Reduced decision-making ability

Behavioural Signs:

- Irritability or mood changes
- Increased errors or near misses
- Lack of communication or disengagement

Mandatory Controls & Prevention Measures

Work Planning

- Plan shifts in accordance with fatigue management requirements.
- Limit extended hours and ensure adequate rest breaks.

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- Rotate high-risk or physically demanding tasks.

Rest & Recovery

- Ensure adequate sleep between shifts (recommended 7–8 hours).
- Take scheduled breaks during shifts—do not skip breaks.
- Use rest areas provided during possessions.

Hydration & Nutrition

- Stay hydrated and maintain proper nutrition.
- Avoid excessive caffeine or energy drinks as a substitute for rest.

Fitness for Work

- All workers must present fit for duty.
- Report fatigue to your supervisor—there is no penalty for raising safety concerns.

Supervision

- Supervisors must monitor workers for signs of fatigue.
- Adjust work or stand down personnel where required.

Rail-Specific Controls

- Increased vigilance required during night works and possessions.
- Ensure clear communication with Protection Officers and Lookouts.
- Avoid safety-critical tasks if fatigue is identified.
- Confirm all workers remain alert before entering the rail corridor.

Stop Work Authority

All workers must STOP WORK if:

- They feel too fatigued to perform tasks safely
- A co-worker is showing signs of fatigue
- Safety-critical decisions are being compromised

Stopping work due to fatigue is a safety responsibility, not a weakness.

Emergency Procedures

- If a fatigue-related incident occurs, notify the Supervisor immediately.
- Provide first aid if required.
- Contact emergency services (000) if necessary.
- Record and report the incident as per site procedures.

Key Takeaways

- Fatigue is invisible but extremely dangerous in rail environments.
- Being “tired” is not normal—it’s a safety risk.
- Get proper rest, stay hydrated, and take breaks.
- Speak up early—don’t push through fatigue.
- Look out for your mates—fatigue affects everyone.

If you are unsure what to do following an incident, please contact:
Michael Petrovski 0478 983 823 or Chris Cakovski 0434 531 255



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