



CASE STUDY: A-one+ – *Monitoring the Impact of Worker Fatigue*

A-one+ is the super group of integrated highway engineering providers, having been established by industry leaders Jacobs, Colas and Costain. We provide the expertise and resources to design, construct and maintain motorways and truck roads, as well as being industry leaders for innovation.

A-one+ is committed to ensuring that the health of all its workers is protected and maintained, and we acknowledge that fatigue can seriously hinder an individual's health, safety and wellbeing. In particular, we recognise that fatigue is a significant problem in the construction industry and must be managed like any other workplace hazard.

Fatigue is a feeling of tiredness and exhaustion which is often caused by excessive working time or poorly designed shift patterns, which can then provoke a decline in mental and/or physical performance. This is because fatigue can result in slower reactions, a reduced ability to take in information, memory lapses and an underestimation of risk, all of which can be dangerous to the health and safety of the entire workforce. With this in mind, we encourage our employees to advise site management if they are fatigued and at the risk of falling asleep, or at the risk of their work performance being severely impaired.

Fatigue Management Plan

To prevent the onset of worker fatigue, we have implemented a number of initiatives, including a 'Working Hours' policy based on The Working Time Regulations (1998):

- Working hours are to be limited to 72 hours within any 7 day period.
- The duration of shifts are to be no longer than 12 hours, including overtime.
- Working hours are to be limited to an average 8 hours in any 24 hour period for night workers.
- Employees are to have 11 hours consecutive rest in any 24 hour period.
- Employees must have at least 1 day off every week.
- Employees are to have a minimum 20 minute break if the working day is longer than 6 hours.

To ensure compliance with this policy, our general manager makes sure all line managers provide controls and preventative measures to safeguard the health and safety of all persons on site. While line managers are to ensure that all employees under their management, supervision or control do not work in circumstances where they are likely to be so fatigued that their health and safety, or that of others, could be affected. This includes:

- Monitoring working hours.
- Managing the physical and mental demands of tasks being carried out.
- Organising the time of day works are being carried out.

- Monitoring the door-to-door times of employees.

Other preventative measures include:

- Promoting awareness of fatigue and how to avoid it.
- Developing wellbeing campaigns to promote healthy lifestyles and awareness of health issues, including fatigue.
- Encouraging employees to ensure they are rested and fit for work.
- Monitoring working hours, overtime and workloads using the HSE Fatigue and Risk Index calculator and timesheets.
- Capturing door-to-door times to ensure they do not exceed 14 hours.
- Allowing employees to go home if they are excessively fatigued.
- Providing occupational health screening to safeguard the health and wellbeing of workers.
- Implementing a travel booking system to ensure rail travel and hotels can be easily booked if necessary.

Line management should also ensure that all subcontractors have a suitable system in place to monitor fatigue in line with our requirements.

We also take particular care in managing the health and wellbeing of night workers. This is because accidents and injuries have been found to be much higher on night shifts. To prevent fatigue, we carry out a risk assessment for night workers using the HSE Fatigue and Risk Index calculator and provide frequent health screening to protect the health of our operatives.

Driver Fatigue

We recognise that driving while fatigued is extremely dangerous and can cause serious accidents and injuries. To manage driver fatigue, we provide our employees with the following guidance:

- Encouraging workers to take regular breaks every 2 hours, this can prevent employees becoming fatigued behind the wheel.
- Employees should consider sharing the driving or car sharing, having more than one person driving can reduce the likelihood of fatigue.
- Travelling at times to avoid peak traffic and to keep the time driving as low as possible.
- Employees should avoid travelling between midnight and 6am when natural alertness is low.
- Employees should stop and take a rest if they feel tired or fatigued.
- Employees should consider taking an overnight bag so they can stay in a hotel overnight at short notice if they become fatigued or an incident hinders their journey time.
- Using public transport to commute to and from work rather than driving.

Initiatives

We have also put together the following initiatives, advice and guidance to help us monitor and manage fatigue.

Sleep Survey

In 2019, we conducted a sleep survey to analyse sleeping patterns and to assess how much sleep the workforce is getting every night. Once the survey closed, we collated the information into various toolbox talks to provide employees with information and advice for managing sleep and getting good quality sleep.

Advice given in the toolbox talks includes:

- Maintaining a good sleep schedule to prevent the onset of worker fatigue.
- Avoiding caffeine and nicotine – these are stimulants which can take as long as 8 hours to wear off.
- Avoiding alcohol drinks – these can wake you up at night and may cause you to have an interrupted sleep.
- Avoiding eating large meals at night – these can cause indigestion, causing tiredness and fatigue.
- Avoiding taking medication that delays or disrupts your sleep.
- Relaxing before bed by reading or listening to music.
- Sleeping in a cool, dark room, free of gadgets and technology.
- Visiting your GP if you have concerns about your sleeping patterns or need more information and advice.

Sleeping in Hot Weather

We also provide the workforce with advice for sleeping in hot weather. This is because hot weather can be difficult to sleep in, provoking fatigue and affecting sleeping patterns. With this in mind, we encourage employees to be mindful of fatigue as sleep loss can significantly increase the risk of accidents and injuries. It is important then to try and maintain normal levels of sleep and rest in the summer months.

Advice included in the toolbox talk includes:

- Using black out curtains to prevent light coming through.
- Drinking plenty of fluids to stay hydrated.
- Using light bedding to keep cool during the night.
- Using a fan to cool down the room.

To find out more about A-one+, please click [here](#) to visit our website.