



Spotlight on...
worker fatigue

**CONSIDERATE
CONSTRUCTORS
SCHEME**

Case Study: Bouygues UK

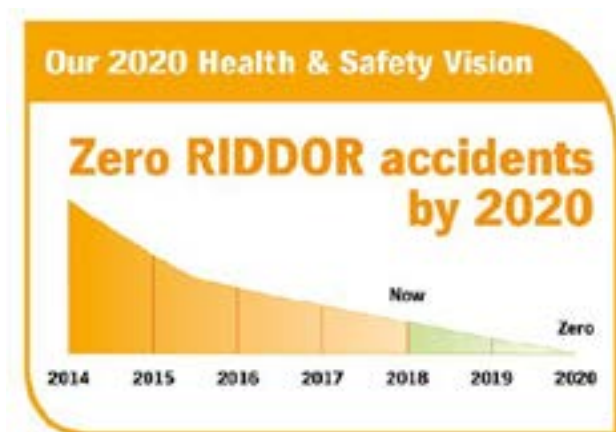
Worker Fatigue

INTRODUCTION

The Health and Safety Executive refers to fatigue as an issue that arises “from excessive working time or poorly designed shift patterns. It is generally considered to be a decline in mental and/ or physical performance that results from prolonged exertion, sleep loss and/ or disruption of the internal clock. It is also related to workload, in that workers are more easily fatigued if their work is machine-paced, complex or monotonous.”

Fatigue is a health and safety issue which can cause accidents on and off construction sites. A global health and safety strategy has been defined by Bouygues Construction, which will help to reduce worker fatigue and improve the health, safety and wellbeing of everyone. This strategy falls into their vision, in which they aim to achieve a culture “where everybody contributes to the health, safety and wellbeing of each other.”

Bouygues Construction’s strategic goal, as defined in the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy Statement is to achieve “Zero RIDDOR” (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) by 2020. This remains a key objective alongside their vision.



HEALTH AND SAFETY BEHAVIOURS

Bouygues Construction has identified some key health and safety behaviours (company values) that require adoption from all employees. It is believed that these values should be engrained in everything we as individuals and everything the business does. Promotion of these values should be the responsibility of everyone in the business to each other and external parties such as the supply chain.

These values include the following:

- **Respect for other people – all injuries and incidents are preventable.**
- **Line management are responsible and accountable for the care of their workplace, work activities and staff.**
- **Making things personal – all individuals are to be responsible and demonstrate their commitment to health and safety.**
- **Demonstrable Health and Safety Commitment is a condition of employment and a required mind-set for all.**
- **Disciplinary action will be used as a last resort, and when applied, it must be done properly and consistently.**
- **Report all incidents, near misses and unsafe situations and people – this is a positive action as this should prevent future mistakes.**
- **A safe, competent supply chain is a requirement for Bouygues to achieve their vision.**



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Bouygues Construction also have 12 basic rules, which are applied to all of their construction sites. These rules are as follows:

1. Possession, distribution or working while under the influence of drugs or alcohol is forbidden.
2. All personnel and visitors who enter our construction sites shall wear as a minimum: safety shoes, hard hat, Hi-Viz, and task-specific PPE when required, as defined by task-specific risk assessment. This can include safety glasses, hearing protection, safety gloves, etc. Specific PPE must be defined after task-specific risk analysis.
3. Obey traffic regulations both on and off site. All walkways and travel paths should be designed to prevent slips, trips and falls. Walkways be made of suitable materials and should be well lit for pedestrian traffic and work activities. Each site must have a plan to segregate mobile equipment and vehicle roadways from pedestrian traffic.
4. The workers start their day with a warm-up and daily briefing. They will formally share any experiences from the previous day whilst being allocated new tasks for the day ahead.
5. No work can commence without: clear definition of the task, an assessment of safety and health risk (short or long term) associated with method statement, the working environment and mitigation measures, A formal training for task and risk overview is to be conducted, Any technical or organisational changes of a task shall only proceed with a reassessment of the risks and amendment in the plan; with an upgrade of training if required.
6. To maintain health and wellbeing of employees, tasks that generate constraints must be analysed to remove, replace or reduce the health impact. In particular, mechanical means must be embedded into the design principle to limit the effects of vertical or horizontal manual handling operations.
7. Temporary structures, equipment or plant (form panels, formwork, precast elements, scaffolding, etc.) must be installed and stabilised as per approved technical guidance and method statement. Their stability must be maintained throughout all phases and differing locations of the work environment.
8. Work on energised systems can only be performed after formal switching off and isolation has been proven. Do not perform any work on electrical systems without checking first that it has been rendered de-energised/ isolated by the appointed personal and placed in a locked off position. The appointed person and the person performing the work must check physical isolation.
9. No work can be carried out without appropriate tools that are designed for the task and its environment. These must be inspected regularly and maintained appropriately.
10. All work at height that should be carried out from a fixed or mobile platform or from a scaffold with guard or handrails designed for the task and shall be subject to inspection before use. Access to working platforms must be built from a metallic stabilised structure designed to prevent falls. Temporary stairs or stair towers must be used as a means of access to working platforms. Use of ladder or stepladders as working platforms is prohibited.
11. On working platforms, an all-around fall protection system must be used where practicable. Protection systems must be stiff and fit for purpose to protect from falls from height, falling objects or projectiles.
12. In the event of seeing unsafe acts or conditions, it is everyone's duty to intervene.

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INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

Health and safety is a shared commitment. As a result, everyone employed by Bouygues Construction is accountable and encouraged to visibly lead and commit to health, safety and wellbeing. Bouygues encourage strong health and safety leadership, and influencing positive behaviour is the foundation to this.

HEALTH & SAFETY ACTION PLAN

Bouygues Construction have a Corporate Health & Safety Action Plan, which aims to do the following:

- **Influence positive behaviours through strong leadership.**
- **Providing tools and measurements to promote good leadership traits.**
- **Raise awareness of and promote high standards as defined by Bouygues.**
- **Raise awareness of and promote health and wellbeing of staff and stakeholders.**

HOW BOUYGUES ARE COMMUNICATING HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING ISSUES TO THEIR STAFF

Bouygues celebrated their Health and Safety Day on the 9th October 2018 on all of their construction sites and in all of their offices. On the Pontoon Dock site, the day included three different presentations and a celebration of there being zero lost time accidents.

Bouygues UK also participated in Mental Health Awareness Week 2019, which took place from 13 to 19 May. During the week, staff were given mental health awareness pin badges, there was a meeting organised for managers, and toolbox talks on the subject were organised for all subcontractors. There are also future plans to train several mental health first aiders.

Several Bouygues UK staff completed a two day training course on ergonomics (the study of people and their working conditions, with the aim of improving productivity), which was run by an external training company called Ergo Methods.

The training sessions explained the principles and history of ergonomics; occupational health risks associated with them, such as musculoskeletal disorders; how to apply principles of ergonomics in the workplace and reduce risk, amongst other things.

HOW WORKER FATIGUE IS BEING TACKLED BY BOUYGUES

Warm up exercises on site: Bouygues UK site staff start their day with some group warm up exercises, which is great for physical fitness as well as preventing injuries that could result from the body not being prepared for the day's work. As this activity is done as a group, it encourages team spirit and high morale to ensure staff are in a more positive mind-set prior to commencing their shift.

HAVWEAR: Bouygues UK staff are provided with wearable wrist devices which record, track and calculate the individual's exposure to Hand Arm Vibration (HAV) resulting from tool use. This exposure is recorded in real time with the aim of raising the user's awareness of the issue. Excessive use of hand tools that vibrate can not only be tiring, it can lead to Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS). Although HAVS is preventable, if it is allowed to develop, it is irreversible. Common symptoms of HAVS include pain, numbness, tingling and loss of nerve sensitivity in the fingers, hands and arms. This HAVWEAR works in accordance with the Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005.

Working hours: No Bouygues UK site staff are expected to work on Saturdays or after 6pm, as it is common knowledge that unsociable working hours, or insufficient rest time between shifts, can cause or exacerbate fatigue.

Reducing manual handling to prevent physical fatigue by using a lightweight, adjustable mortar board, which can be set at different heights to suit the individual bricklayer using it as well as a 'Gorilla Gripper': a gripping hand tool designed by lifting, carrying and moving sheeted materials easily with just one hand.

Health check MOTs were carried out by the Wellbeing People on Bouygues UK's Pontoon Dock site staff, with the results being slightly better than average. However, one member of staff went straight to hospital as a result of their blood pressure result.