



Fatigue Management and Road Safety Guideline

Driving to work or placements is a requirement for many staff and students within the Faculty. Distances travelled can often be significant.

Research suggests that 15-30% of all road crashes are caused by drivers falling asleep behind the wheel. This guideline is intended to raise awareness of the issues and highlight strategies which could help reduce the risk of a serious accident while travelling

WHEN PLANNING TRAVEL CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES TO DRIVING
e.g. AIR, RAIL, BUS, TELECONFERENCING



Fatigue can combine with these factors to increase the risk of a serious accident:

- Excessive speed for the road conditions
- Alcohol or drug use
- Driver inexperience
- Extreme weather conditions
- Unfamiliar vehicle,
- Unfamiliar driving conditions
- Monotony
- Poorly maintained roads, differing road surfaces and narrow or unsealed roads
- Animals and farm machinery on the roads

If you have any of these fatigue symptoms, do not drive:

- Excessive yawning, feeling drowsy or falling asleep
- Short term memory problems
- Inability to concentrate
- Impaired decision-making and judgment
- Reduced hand-eye coordination
- Slow reflexes
- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Blurred vision or impaired visual perception

Don't rely on short-term remedies to offset symptoms
e.g turning up the music, drinking coffee or energy drinks.

The only cure or preventative measure for fatigue is sleep.

If you have to drive, then:

- Plan your route carefully, allow adequate travel time and rest or meal breaks and check road and weather conditions – Road Reporting Hotline 13 19 40 and BOM website.
- Make sure your supervisor has approved the journey, is aware of your planned route and that you have a contingency plan including a call schedule.
- Read the UQ Work Off Campus Procedure <http://www.uq.edu.au/ohs/> and if necessary lodge a Work Off Campus plan.
- Read and understand the FoM Risk Assessment #2928 - Driving in rural and remote areas of Australia on sealed roads <http://www.uq.edu.au/ohs/> as appropriate to your journey.
- Staff should use vehicles from UQ Fleet Services <https://www.pf.uq.edu.au/fleet/> or a reputable Hire Company. Rural Clinical School (RCS) staff must ensure that RCS vehicles are booked via the site booking system and that the appropriate logs are updated before beginning your journey.
- Ensure you arrange suitable communication i.e. mobile phone (be aware that some phone service providers have patchy coverage) or satellite phone and that you have a charging cable in the vehicle. Connect your phone to the vehicle audio via Bluetooth for handsfree operation.
- Get plenty of sleep before you leave and don't drive if you're unwell.
- Investigate overnight stays on location prior to an early start in the workplace or at the end of a long day if a significant return journey is needed. *Don't travel for 3 hrs to site, work for 8 hrs and then travel 3 hours back.* FoM will support costs of overnight accommodation for staff, where required, to minimise fatigue and to ensure you have a minimum of 12 hrs rest break between shifts. Fatigue can carry over into the workplace and is a significant work accident risk factor– don't ignore the effect of a long drive before work; avoid complex and dangerous procedures when fatigued.
- Try to modify work patterns to allow a later start and/or earlier departure when intending to travel before or after work. Your placement coordinator or supervisor should be advised of significant travel times and may be able to assist with modified schedules.

Basic driving safety tips;

- Ensure the vehicle is road worthy and you have sufficient fuel to get you to your next stop (For RCS staff please ensure that the current fuel card is stowed in the glovebox). Learn how to change the tyre, check tyre pressures and oil and water in the vehicle engine.
- Drive within the limitations of both driver and vehicle and to road conditions; if wet, smoky or foggy, **slow down or stop in a safe place until the situation resolves.**
- Avoid driving at dawn, dusk or after dark, as this is the time wildlife is more active.
- Share the driving if you can, take regular breaks to refresh, drink and eat as needed. A 15 min break every two hours is recommended by Dept Transport & Main Roads. Use the free Driver Reviver stops when available.
- Eat well balanced meals, do not consume alcohol.
- Obey the road rules, observe speed limits and comply with safety advisory signage.
- Wear seat belts at all times and secure loads with restraints or cargo nets.
- Watch out for animals, slow moving vehicles i.e. tractors or school buses and vehicles entering the road from farms or side roads.
- Avoid undue risks such as driving across flooded creeks, through bush fires and road shoulders.
- Overtake only when necessary and safe to do so - allow ample road space, do not overtake over solid lines and crests. Use particular caution with Road Trains, they can be 50 meters long.
- Keep in touch with supervisors and colleagues during the journey and notify them on arrival at destination or end of leg ; let someone know if the itinerary changes.
- Stay with your vehicle in the event of a breakdown or incident.
- Carry spare water, warm clothing, and a first aid kit. Don't forget personal medications.

Please contact FoM OHS Team or your supervisor if you need further assistance