

# SHIFT BRIEFING |

## FATIGUE IN THE WORKPLACE IS REAL!

Fatigue can be caused by insufficient sleep, prolonged mental or physical work, shift work, or extended periods of stress or anxiety. This increases the likelihood of incidents and injuries.

Fatigue is of particular concern to aviation workers who may be interrupting their circadian rhythms by crossing time zones on long-haul flights or who work a variety of rotating shifts.

There are two types of fatigue: physical and mental.

**Physical fatigue** affects the ability to exert force with your muscles. Physical fatigue most commonly results from physical exercise or loss of sleep and can often lead to mental fatigue.

**Mental fatigue** is a general decrease of attention and ability to perform complex, or even quite simple tasks with normal efficiency. Mental fatigue often results from irregular sleep and is of particular concern to some airport workers, who are frequently required to work early in the morning or at night.

Tips for workers to reduce fatigue:

- EAT a healthy diet that promotes longer-lasting energy. Complex carbohydrates (starch) are preferable to simple carbohydrates (sugar).
- AVOID fatty foods and junk food.
- ADOPT a steady exercise routine that includes cardiovascular, muscle strengthening and flexibility workouts.
- TRY to get at least 7.5 – 8.5 hours of sleep per night.
- STAY positive. Make a conscious effort not to be overwhelmed by negative circumstances.
- AVOID driving if you are tired, especially in inclement weather where vision is impaired.
- AVOID excessive noise.