

Motor Vehicle Registry Information Bulletin

V71 – Heavy Vehicle Driver Fatigue Standard Hours

Effective Date: 21 August 2008

Introduction

The national road transport Heavy Vehicle Driver Fatigue laws sets revised work and rest limits for heavy vehicle drivers and requires better management of driver fatigue. The reform makes all parties in the supply chain legally responsible for preventing driver fatigue. Operators and drivers have three options for managing driver fatigue under the laws.

This Information Bulletin provides assistance to drivers and operators wishing to adopt the Standard Hours option. Further Information on the different driving hours options is available through the following web link: <http://www.nt.gov.au/transport/mvr/vehiclestandards/infobulletins/ibv70.pdf>

Table 1 below outlines the 3 tiers available under the new national transport reform laws.

Table 1: Work and Rest options

Module	Requirements
Standard Hours	Basic work and rest time
Basic Fatigue Management	More flexible work hours linked to accreditation
Advanced Fatigue Management	Create your own safety management system and work hours linked to accreditation

Standard Hours

The Standard Hours option sets out minimum rest and maximum work hours and contains basic record keeping requirements (see Table 2). The National Transport Commission (NTC) Information Bulletins 'Two-up driving explained' and 'Driving hours for the bus sector' provide further information on Standard Hours and are available on the NTC website at: <http://www.ntc.gov.au>

Table 2: Standard Hours – Solo Drivers

Time	Work	Rest
In any period of...	A driver must not work for more than a MAXIMUM of...	And must have the rest of that period off work with at least a MINIMUM rest break of...
5 ½ hours	5 ¼ hours work time	15 continuous minutes rest time
8 hours	7 ½ hours work time	30 minutes rest time in blocks of 15 continuous minutes
11 hours	10 hours work time	60 minutes rest time in blocks of 15 continuous minutes
24 hours	12 hours work time	7 continuous hours stationary rest time ¹
7 days	72 hours work time	24 continuous hours stationary rest time
14 days	144 hours work time	2 x night rest breaks ² and 2 x night rest breaks taken on consecutive days

¹ Stationary rest time is the time a driver spends out of a regulated heavy vehicle or in an approved sleeper berth of a stationary regulated heavy vehicle.

² Night rest breaks are 7 continuous hours stationary rest time taken between the hours of 10pm on a day and 8am on the next day (using the time zone of the base of the driver) or a 24 continuous hours stationary rest break.

Work and Rest Time

Work time refers to all driving and any other tasks related to the operation of a heavy vehicle. All other time is counted as rest. Time is counted in 15 minute intervals and is recorded according to the time zone of the driver's base.

Work time is always rounded upwards e.g. a period less than 15 minutes is counted as 15 minutes work, a period more than 15 minutes up to 30 minutes is counted as 30 minutes work etc.

Rest time is always rounded downwards e.g. a period less than 15 minutes does not count towards rest while a period of 15 minutes but less than 30 minutes is counted as 15 minutes rest etc.

The Standard Hours option gives drivers opportunities to take short rest breaks when they feel tired especially later in a shift when fatigue starts to cut in.

Night Work and Rest

Night Work is any work performed between the hours of midnight to 6am. Research has shown that these hours expose a driver to a greater risk of fatigue.

Under the Standard Hours option a driver must take 4 nights rest including one pair of consecutive nights rest in any 14 day period. For example, in a 14 day period, a driver would be able to work up to 6 night shifts (between the hours of midnight to 6am) in 1 week and 4 night shifts the following week. Night rest is 7 continuous hours rest taken between 10pm and 8am (this can include a 24 hour continuous rest).

Work Diary

A work diary has been designed for drivers to record Work and Rest time. If working more than 100km from their base a driver will be required to use the diary to record all work and rest activities. Local area drivers can use the work diary as a means of recording how they are complying with the laws but use of this document is optional.

General Duty of Care

Under the *Workplace Health and Safety Act*, transport operators working within the Territory have a general duty of care to ensure, as far as reasonably practical, that workers and others are not exposed to risks to health or safety arising from the employer's business. To demonstrate this requirement transport operators need to have a fatigue management system in place which effectively manages the risks associated with driver fatigue.

The national driver fatigue legislation is consistent with current obligations under OH&S laws and will assist operators in demonstrating that they have taken reasonable steps in managing driver fatigue.

Further Information

Further information on OH&S requirements for employers, employees, owner/operators and supply agents can be accessed through the NT Worksafe website at: <http://www.worksafe.nt.gov.au>

Further information on fatigue and copies of the Information Bulletin '*Guidelines for Managing Heavy Vehicle Driver Fatigue*' are available from NTC website at: www.ntc.gov.au

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