

# Fatigue risk management

## Facilitator guide



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# Facilitators

Thank you for becoming a facilitator and a champion for this subject. We hope you enjoy it.

This is similar in format to Resilience modules. The aim is that everyone learns together, sharing experiences and learning from each other's point of view.

This guide contains three common scenarios which are delivered in a group setting and led by a facilitator. The fourth scenario is an optional extra which may be particularly relevant just before crew change.

The scenarios are designed to help explore fatigue. They encourage individuals to manage sleep and recognise how they can help themselves reduce fatigue, especially if they are facing difficult situations, such as personal problems.

## Practical points

- Read through the programme and the scenarios in the handout before you deliver them, so that you understand what it is about, any examples you could use and what you need to set up the session. It takes about 10 to 15 minutes to review each scenario.
- Each person needs a copy of the fatigue risk management participant exercises booklet, which includes the paperwork for the exercises, the example scenarios and gives participants space to write down their own notes and ideas.
- Find a room/area big enough to hold these sessions.
- This is a group activity so make sure you have at least two people taking part. Groups larger than 12 should be split, as it is easier to have conversations in smaller groups.
- You will need chairs for all participants and a few tables. There should be enough space for people to split into pairs or small groups to discuss the scenarios. Try to keep the session in one room – you will lose valuable time if people are moving in and out of multiple rooms.
- Make sure that you have the equipment you need for the session e.g. pens, post-it notes, flip chart etc.

# Practical tips

- **Deliver a short safety brief at the beginning of each session:** familiarise yourself with alarm procedure and emergency numbers and review the evacuation floor plan for emergency exits and muster points;
- **Check whether all participants know each other** and if not, hold a brief introduction session where each person gives their name and function. You could make it more informal by asking each person to give a fun fact about themselves, etc.
- **Confidentiality:** remind participants that personal information may be shared in these sessions. It is important that everyone respects each other's confidentiality and does not share personal or sensitive information outside the sessions.
- **If you feel that the conversations are something you are unable to deal with** or you find out that a person needs more help, then ensure you are aware of the support systems available so you can assist participants in seeking help.



## TOP TIPS

- Present with passion;
- Be enthusiastic and supportive of the programme;
- Listen and don't talk too much yourself (the answer is in the room!);
- Be open and interested (ask open-ended questions);
- Read this guide, the programme material and the scenarios beforehand. Give yourself enough time to prepare to facilitate each scenario in the module and think of any good examples you can share from your own experiences.

# Scenario 1: a long watch...

Give everyone a couple of minutes to read the following scenario and think about what may be behind Ernesto's difficulty in sleeping.

After a long day and several cups of coffee, Ernesto has almost finished a week of six on six off. He can't wait to get some longer rest. When he gets to his cabin, he quickly changes his clothes and goes to bed.



Even though he is very tired, he's finding it surprisingly difficult to go to sleep. There is light coming through the window and he can hear laughter and noise from his shipmates playing cards in the next cabin. He tries to put his pillow over his face to get rid of the noise and light, but it doesn't seem to work.

He then gives up and reaches for his phone and starts looking at pictures of his family...



Why is Ernesto finding it difficult to sleep even if he is tired?

*Some reasons for this may be:*

- *He just got off watch and it may be hard for him to instantly go in to 'sleep mode': it's important to make some time to wind down from work and relax before going to bed;*
- *He may have drunk too much coffee: avoid drinking caffeinated drinks (e.g. coffee, energy drinks etc.) several hours before going to sleep.*

# Scenario 1: a long watch...

After some discussion, ask the group to talk about what positive actions Ernesto could take.



What are some of the things Ernesto could have done to help him fall asleep?

*Some ideas could be:*

- *A pre-bedtime routine: taking time to create a bedtime routine can really help e.g. not using the phone right before going to bed, taking a shower, trying quiet activities like mindfulness, breathing exercises, praying (for people of faith), listening to relaxing music or reading a book;*
- *Ask his shipmates, politely, to be quieter or to socialise somewhere else;*
- *Prepare in advance by bringing an eye mask to avoid exposure to light (in case there are no blackout curtains);*
- *Find a comfortable position: this can be difficult, especially when the ship is rolling, so Ernesto could adapt his sleeping position and location (e.g. day bed or sofa);*
- *Avoid using a phone right before going to bed.*

# Scenario 2: an incident at home

Give everyone a few minutes to read the following scenario and ask them to write down why Mark is fatigued and how they know. Importantly, ask them what they think might happen later in the day.

Mark just finished exercising and started preparing to sleep because he must get up early tomorrow.

He is lying on his bed, scrolling through Facebook on his phone. A few minutes later his phone begins to ring. His wife, Grace, is very upset with one of their kid's behaviour at school – their youngest got into a fight with a schoolmate.

After they discuss this issue, Grace goes on to talk about her plans for renovating their house, an annoying conversation she had with her mother and the movie she just finished watching.

Mark ends up staying awake until 01:00 talking to Grace. Whilst he is then trying to sleep again, his phone continues to sound alerts which disturbs him each time.

The next morning, he gets up at 05:00 to start his duty but he can barely keep his eyes open.



- Why can Mark barely keep his eyes open?
- What signs of fatigue is he showing?
- What are some of the symptoms he may show later in the day?

## **Later in the day there is a chance that Mark may experience:**

- *Clumsiness*
- *Headaches and dizziness*
- *Loss of appetite*
- *Moodiness and needless worrying*
- *Poor judgement of distance, speed, time and risk*
- *Slow responses*
- *Difficulty concentrating*

# Scenario 2: an incident at home

Ask participants to talk with a partner about ways Mark could have helped himself.



Share ideas in the room. Then, as a group, talk about what Mark could do now to stay safe.

*What could Mark have done differently to prevent feeling so tired?*

- *Time of exercise – ideally Mark should have not exercised right before he went to bed;*
- *Use of electronic devices – it would have been better if Mark had avoided using his phone while trying to sleep;*
- *Sleep Mode – if possible, phones/ tablets etc. should be switched off or put on sleep mode as part of a good bedtime routine;*
- *Contact with others – Mark could have let Grace know the best time to contact him depending on his shifts, time zone, etc.*

*What Mark can maybe do now to put safety first?*

- *Talk to his senior rank (especially about safety critical duties).*
- *Speak with his buddy to cover / change duties etc.*

# Scenario 3: a complex situation

Sometimes there is no single solution.

Ask the participants to think about the next scenario and make notes on the three questions: How could Maria could have helped herself, what symptoms can they identify and what could Maria do to make sure she and her colleagues stay safe in their situation?

Maria is a Second Engineer and is having a difficult time. She is not getting much sleep lately – she is thinking a lot about her sick mother and money problems.

These problems are the main topics of her arguments with her husband. She makes enough money to support her family but now she also has to cover her mother's hospital bills.

She woke up this morning feeling exhausted and is lacking motivation, but a ship doesn't stop and so work has to carry on. It is a particularly hard day because the weather is very bad and the ship is rolling heavily.

The Chief Engineer tells Maria to complete her month end reports but then a problem is reported with the main engine. When the Chief asks her to look into the problem, Maria seems to have a hard time concentrating and making decisions.



What are some of the things Maria could have done to help her sleep?

Is Maria experiencing any symptoms of fatigue? If yes, what are the symptoms?

What can Maria do now to put safety first?

Suggested answers can be found on the next page



# Scenario 3: a complex situation

## *Some of the things Maria could have done to help her sleep*

- *Write down her worries – this could help get perspective on the worry, work out what is bothering her and prioritise her concerns. It could also help her to simply clear her mind, which might stop her worrying as much.*
- *Choose a certain time during the day to think about her worries and possible solutions.*
- *Talk to others – sharing problems may not be easy but it can help her reduce stress and feel less alone. She could talk to a shipmate she trusts; they may have had similar experiences and they understand life at sea. She could also connect online with friends and family, a welfare worker in port, or get in touch with a helpline, e.g. SeafarerHelp, for support.*

## *Some of the symptoms of fatigue Maria may be experiencing*

- *Feelings of exhaustion*
- *Inability to concentrate*

## *What Maria can do now to put safety first?*

- *Ask for friend to cover / help in the engine room*
- *If her worries get worse, she could ask the Chief Engineer about going home early (e.g. to help her family) or staying longer (e.g. to pay for the medical expenses).*

## Read the following summary

Sleep is as important as food and water, so it's essential we get enough of it.

Not enough sleep, or frequent physical or mental pressure, can lead to fatigue.

Fatigue is dangerous because you may not even know how fatigued you are and it may put you, your colleagues and your ship in danger.

It can affect anyone, regardless of skill, knowledge, experience or training.

# (Optional) Scenario 4: jet lag

Ask participants to read this scenario and work with a partner to answer the questions.

George flew from Greece to Australia. He arrived yesterday and joined his new ship directly. It's now George's second day onboard, but he is not feeling great.

He didn't get a lot of sleep last night because of the time difference from home. His local time is 9:30am but he's finding it hard to keep his eyes open.

He's disappointed that he already feels so tired on his second day onboard, but he's embarrassed to tell anyone. He tells himself that it's nothing and that he can carry on working.



His next task is to sail the vessel from port under pilotage. He knows this is a difficult task that needs his full attention, so he's a bit worried that he feels so tired.

When the Captain asks him if he needs extra help because he seems sleepy, he laughs it off and says that he's fine.



Why is George feeling so tired?

What is jet lag?



What are some of the common symptoms of jet lag?



What can you do to handle jet lag?

# (Optional) Scenario 4: jet lag

*Why is George feeling so tired?*

- *He is probably jet lagged;*
- *He may also be tired from the stress of preparing for and leaving home.*

*What is jet lag?*

- *Jet lag can happen after long flights e.g. when you move quickly through several time zones to join your ship and there is a sudden change in the day/night cycle. That may cause sleep problems and fatigue, which may be made worse by adjusting to a watch rota;*
- *Jet lag can happen when sailing across time zones 'changing clocks' forward or backwards for a number of days in a row.*

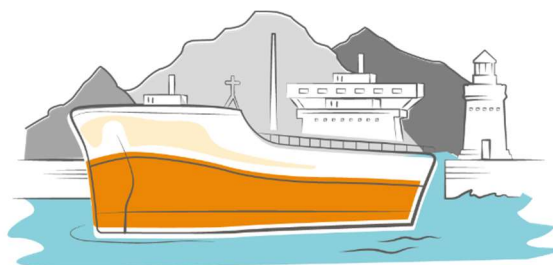
*What are some of the common symptoms of jet lag?*

- *Wanting to eat and sleep at times that are not regular in the new time zone;*
- *Problems with digestion;*
- *Lower performance on mental and physical tasks;*
- *Mood change.*

# (Optional) Scenario 4: jet lag

*What can you do to handle jet lag?*

- *Be aware of it – jet lag may last several days. To fully recover you need about one day for each time zone crossed (so if you travel across 5 time zones you would need about 5 days to recover). Everyone is different, so it is important to look after yourself and take it easy until you have fully recovered.*
- *Be open about how you are feeling.*
- *Stay hydrated and eat well.*
- *Try and get as much sunlight/artificial light at times you need to be awake and keep it as dark as possible when you want to sleep.*
- *Try not to over-eat in flight and take meals in line with the new time zone as soon as possible.*
- *To minimise the effect on your performance, whenever possible, pair up with a colleague when performing complex and/or potentially dangerous duties so that you can double check the procedures and call out loud the steps you are taking to complete your tasks.*



# Thank you & the future

Ask participants to take a quick look at the back page of their booklets and to please take five minutes to discuss with a partner:

- What information in the fatigue risk management programme did they find useful? Did anything surprise them?
- What would they like to learn more about?
- What things will make the biggest difference to them and their colleagues to help manage the risk of fatigue?

Facilitate the discussion.

Please collect and give feedback to your company on these suggestions as it will help to develop the conversations and improvements in mental health at sea.

Thank them for their participation.

Finish the session by asking them to think about how they could apply some of what they have learned. They could use the table on their workbook to note any issues they are experiencing and consider what changes they could influence.

You could use a table like the one below to start looking at things in your life which you could change. Identify what the issue is. Think about whether you can control it, influence it, or whether it is out of your control. If you can control or influence it, start thinking what steps you can take.

What is the issue?	Can I control it, influence it, or is it out of my control?	Action plan
e.g. drink a lot of caffeinated drinks	can control	only consume 2 caffeinated drinks per day and not before rest