

For issue to Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (Employees and Contract Partners)

SHE COMMUNICATION

Managing tiredness within our teams

What happened?

Our employee was returning home from a fault in the early hours of the morning, when they fell asleep at the wheel of their vehicle and veered into a barrier causing minor damage to the wing mirror and door panel. Fortunately, there were no injuries to our colleague or any other third-party road users.

What action is required?

It is recognised that tiredness can affect our ability to concentrate and focus, and in some instances reduce reaction times.

Levels of tiredness are affected by many things, like age, physiology, underlying health conditions and general fitness levels. External factors such as the type of activities and quality of sleep in preceding days also play a part. It is therefore possible that employees working together on the same activity, experience different levels of tiredness.

It is essential that we understand the impact that tiredness can have on our ability to work safely, and it is important that we are aware of the symptoms of tiredness that we may experience or observe in others.

- When someone has been at work for more than 12 hours that particular day, they should record on the 'Stage 3' section of the job risk assessment when 12 hours worked that they are feeling fine and will be able to continue their planned work activity and commute home safely. This process should be repeated at 14 hours and if need be at 16 hours if the work hasn't been completed.
- If an employee is feeling concerned that they are unable to complete the work activity or have any other concerns they should contact the standby TM or OM as required.
- If an employee indicates that they are not able to continue working, arrangements will be made to provide a suitable replacement and to ensure that the individual is able to get home safely.
- Use licence to stop where appropriate if feeling fatigue influencing safety.

We all must look out for one another and use our safety licence – to stop work if we believe it to be unsafe.

Fatigue Management

Extended periods of tiredness can lead to **fatigue** which is defined as *"the decline in mental and/or physical performance that results from prolonged exertion, sleep loss or disruption of the internal clock"*.

The most effective way of managing the likelihood of fatigue is through monitoring the hours worked by our employees and ensuring wherever possible, that they have adequate rest periods between shifts. This done on a weekly basis by our L3 managers.

As with tiredness, there are some warning signs that may indicate some one is suffering from fatigue;

- Poor concentration
- Slower reactions
- Reduced coordination
- Increased irritability
- Memory lapses and absent-mindedness
- Slower to process and retain information
- Underestimation of risks

SHE Communication No. NET-SHE-COM-20042021-01

The extent of an individual's fatigue may be affected by many external factors, but the following steps may alleviate it:

- Take adequate rest periods between shifts
- Take breaks regularly – every 4 to 6 hours
- Factor in travel plans at the end of an extended day
- Get plenty of sleep, eat well and stay hydrated

Accidents are more likely to happen when we're tired and our health and wellbeing is more likely to be negatively impacted when we become fatigued. By recognising the signs of tiredness and fatigue, we can prevent potential safety incidents and help our people to have a healthy work-life balance.

Please refer to the following guidance documents for more information.

- Fatigue Management SharePoint site - [Fatigue Management at SSEN \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
- Occupational Health, wellbeing and Welfare Standard ([RS-SHE-205](#))
- Working time directive video [Working Time Regulations \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Our Licence:

At SSEN we are fortunate to be provided with the licence we need to go home safe every day. Our primary objective is to deliver safe outcomes for our people, our customers and the environment and on this we will not compromise.

At Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks – if it's not safe, we don't do it.

Communication by (✓)	Managers	✓	Notice board	✓	Tool-box talk		Team brief	✓
Communication complete by (✓)	1 week	✓	2 weeks		1-month		2-months	
Issued by: Iain Graham, Head of SHE					Date of issue: 20/04/2020			