CODE OF PRACTICE UPDATE

Curtin University

Working Hours

Scope: This code of practice applies to all workplaces in Western Australia covered by the WHS Act. It provides guidance for employers and workers on the management of safety and health hazards and risks commonly associated with working hours arrangements.

Definition: Certain working hours arrangements have been linked to occupational safety and health risks, such as fatigue and impaired performance, and increased exposure to some hazards. As with other occupational safety and health issues, employers have a general 'duty of care' obligation to ensure that, as far as practicable, employees are not exposed to hazards and risks that could arise from their working hours arrangements and to address them through a systematic risk management process.

Key things to consider in your risk management approach include:

- Shiftwork and rosters
- Night work
- On call and call back work
- Emergencies and unexpected events
- Breaks during work period
- Breaks between work periods
- Seasonal work
- Work task demands
- Fatigue critical tasks
- Exposure to hazards
- Training
- Supervision
- Individual and lifestyle factors
- Policies
- Working environment
- Security issues
- Consultation
- Incident management
- Work-related travel

Actions: A three-step process should be in place to manage working hours:

- identify hazards;
- assess risks of injury or harm arising from each identified hazard; and
- control risks through implementation of control measures to eliminate or reduce them.

Fatigue critical tasks are tasks where there are increased risks of incident/harm/injury should employees become fatigued. Scheduling of fatigue critical tasks should be planned at times that minimise fatigue risk – at times when people are normally awake.

References: Code of Practice: Working Hours

Who do you call with questions?

If you have any queries, please contact Health and Safety on 9266 4900 or email healthandsafety@curtin.edu.au.

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