

IMO Guidelines on Fatigue

The Maritime Safety Committee at its 100th session approved the Guidelines on fatigue to assist all stakeholders in better understanding their roles and responsibilities in mitigating and managing the risk of fatigue.

Notice to: Ship Owners/ Managers/ Operators | Surveyors/Auditors

URC19012 | 01 February 2019

Fatigue is a hazard because it may affect a seafarer's ability to do their job effectively and safely. Importantly, fatigue affects everyone regardless of skill, knowledge and training. The effects of fatigue can be particularly dangerous in the transportation sector, including the shipping industry. All stakeholders should be alert to the factors which may contribute to fatigue, and make efforts to mitigate and manage the risks posed by fatigue.

Effectively dealing with fatigue in the maritime environment requires a comprehensive and holistic approach that recognizes ship design, and the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in the mitigation and management of fatigue. An effective fatigue management strategy begins with determining operational workload requirements and matching onboard manning levels and onshore support resources, combined with efficient management of workload and hours of work and rest on board the ship. There is no one-system approach to addressing fatigue, but there are certain principles that should be addressed in order to gain the knowledge and the understanding to manage this human element issue.

The **Guidelines** provide information on the causes and consequences of fatigue, and the risks it poses to the safety and health of seafarers, operational safety, security and protection of the marine environment. It has been prepared to assist all stakeholders in contributing to the mitigation and management of fatigue.

The Guidelines are composed of modules each devoted to an interested party. The modules are as follows:

1. Module 1 Fatigue
2. Module 2 Fatigue and the company
3. Module 3 Fatigue and the seafarer
4. Module 4 Fatigue, awareness and training
5. Module 5 Fatigue and ship design
6. Module 6 Fatigue, the Administration and port State Authorities
7. Appendix 1 Examples of sleep and fatigue monitoring tools
8. Appendix 2 Example of a fatigue event report information

The modules are all interrelated; it is recommended that all parties become familiar with module 1, which contains general information on fatigue. It may be beneficial if the reader becomes familiar with modules other than the immediately applicable one.

These guidelines should be taken into consideration when:

1. developing, implementing and maintaining safety management systems under the ISM Code;
2. promoting fatigue mitigation and management;
3. promoting awareness of the causes and consequences of fatigue and developing and delivering training programmes and courses;
4. conducting casualty or accident/incident investigations; and
5. preparing applications for minimum safe manning documents or when determining minimum safe manning levels for ships.

Act now

Ship owners / Managers / Operators are strongly urged to take the issue of fatigue into account when developing, implementing and improving safety management systems under the ISM Code.