

Don't Be A Killer Truck Driver! Don't Drive Tired.

Guidance for owner-drivers on the prevention of truck driver fatigue.





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Who is this guide for?

This guide is for truck owner-drivers and aims to inform them on how to manage and prevent truck driver fatigue.



Why the need for guidance?

One of the causes of truck accidents is driver sleepiness due to driving for excessively long hours without sufficient breaks.

As an owner-driver, you have a special responsibility to ensure you do not put lives at risk by driving too long without a break or by working too many hours.

Driver sleepiness results in poor judgement, slower reactions to driving events and a decrease in necessary skills – all of which may result in a loss of vehicle control and a crash.



The legal framework

It is not only dangerous to drive when tired; it is against the law.

The law states that you must not drive, or continue to drive a commercial vehicle whilst impaired or likely to be impaired by fatigue.



Article 10.7 UAE Federal Traffic Law Number 21, 1995

You must not drive your vehicle when tired as you may not be able to control your vehicle.

Penalties for owner-drivers include:

- *Fines.*
- *Loss of trade licence.*
- *Removal of driving licence.*
- *Prison.*

What are the benefits?

Managing and preventing fatigue has many benefits:

- Reducing the risk of road accidents.
- Reducing insurance claims and costs.
- Improving your and the industry reputation.
- Improving customer service.

Know the signs of driver fatigue

There are early warning signs when you are sleepy. You should know what these signs are and take a break immediately.

Driver drowsiness indicators include:

- Drowsy/Sleepy feeling.
- Blurred vision.
- Difficulty keeping eyes open.
- Head nodding.
- Excessive yawning.
- Repeatedly drifting out of the road lane.

Factors that predict longer-term driver tiredness or fatigue include:

- Not feeling refreshed after sleep.
- A greater tendency to fall asleep while at work.
- More frequent naps during leisure hours.
- Extended sleep during days off.
- Increased errors and loss of concentration at work.

Using the radio, air-conditioning, or other “tricks” to stimulate alertness has limited effect and will not overcome fatigue.

Stimulants, like caffeine, will provide a temporary boost but do not reduce the need for sleep. Sleep that is delayed will need to be made up later. The use of prescription or illegal drugs to try and overcome fatigue is never permitted.

Do not put yourself at additional risk of fatigue by lifestyle habits.

You must ensure that you are fully rested before you start your shift, eat healthily and take adequate exercise to stay fit.

Some prescription and over-the-counter medicines can cause sleepiness. Usually there are non-drowsy alternatives available, so check with your doctor or pharmacist.

The risk of falling asleep at the wheel increases when driving occurs at times when drivers would normally be asleep, particularly in the pre-dawn hours.

There is also an increased crash risk during the mid-afternoon or after-lunch hours.



Organising your schedule

Being in charge of your own truck means that you are responsible for organising your working day. Plan the following:

- Schedule and take one or more rest breaks each working day.
- Have at least 8 continuous hours of rest in any 24-hour period, preferably between 10 pm and 8 am.
- Minimise irregular or unfamiliar work schedules.
- If possible, operate flexible schedules to allow for sufficient breaks from driving or discretionary sleep.
- Minimise very early departures where possible to give yourself the maximum opportunity to sleep in preparation for the trip.
- Avoid sleeping in places where you are likely to be disturbed.
- Keep a record of your working day, showing start and finish places and times, as well as the breaks you have taken.

Your customer, such as a transport company, a port or a factory, has a responsibility to set reasonable delivery schedules that allow for breaks and do not require you to drive excessive hours.

This should be specified in any agreement.

Further information

For more information on how to prevent truck driver fatigue and how to create a Driver Fatigue Management Plan, get a copy of *Truck Driver Fatigue Management Guide*.

Please visit www.freight2030.ae

