Fatigue in Operational Incidents

This list of questions can help you evaluate if fatigue may have been a contributing factor to an incident.

**Time of Day**
Fatigue risk increases during circadian lows. Asking the following questions to determine if the incident occurred during a circadian low.

- Did the incident occur between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m.?
- Did the incident occur between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m.?

**Work Schedule**
Work schedules can contribute to fatigue accumulation as well as determine rest opportunity. The following questions will help you determine if work schedules could have contributed to the incident.

- How many days/nights of work in a row?
- What was the shift start time?
- Was there a recent change in shift?
- Any unexpected changes in work schedule?

**Hours Awake**
Fatigue accumulates the longer a person is awake. The longer a person is awake the greater the risk. Asking the following questions will help you determine a fatigue risk level based on hours awake.

- Have individual(s) been awake more than 12 hours?
- Have individual(s) been awake more than 16 hours?
- Have individual(s) been awake more than 24 hours?

**Sleep**
Sleep loss is a large contributor to fatigue risk. Asking the following questions can help you determine if sleep loss was a contributing factor.

- Have individual(s) gotten less than 7 hours of sleep in last sleep period?
- Have individual(s) incurred any sleep debt during preceding period?
- Any recent sleep episodes at unusual times?
- Recent sleep been disturbed?
- Could sleep disorders be a factor?

**Behavior and Performance**
There may be additional factors contributing to risk. The following questions will help evaluate behavioral and performance factors.

- Individual(s) have any prior issues with fatigue?
- Any unusual observed behavior or performance prior to incident?
- Any other personal or health issues that may contribute to fatigue?
- Individual(s) received fatigue management training?