



AREC Standard Operating Procedure

Fatigue Management SOP

An AREC standard operating procedure (SOP) is a set of step-by-step instructions or guidelines designed to help in handling routine situations. They are intended to achieve efficiency, quality, and uniformity of performance, while reducing miscommunication, and breaches of policy.

They are not intended to be mandatory in all situations. SOPs should not be interpreted to prohibit an alternative procedure where the particular situation demands it, as long as the action does not breach AREC policy.

Contents

Introduction	3
Background	3
Fatigue Risks and Hazards.....	3
Procedures for Fatigue Management in AREC operations	4
Risk Control	4
Recording and oversight of members fatigue risk.....	4
Incident Management Team liaison	5
AREC Member responsibilities.....	6
Guidelines	7
Rest Requirements.....	7
AREC taskings & team welfare.....	7
AREC Response Leaders	7
Fatigue Monitoring	7
Safety Critical Tasks.....	7
Demobilisation/Wrap-up of Operation	8
Scheduling of Training, Exercises and Meetings):	8
Reporting.....	9
Infringement of 8-hour rest period	9
Exceeding 17-hour rule	9
Appendix 2	11
Health and Safety Plans	11
Minimum standards.....	11

Introduction

Background

AREC activities are usually in addition to a member's full working day/week. Operations often occur at night and may involve driving significant distances. In addition, AREC tasks may involve intense concentration, physical output, and few or inadequate opportunities to rest. These factors lead to a heightened risk of fatigue for members and therefore AREC has identified fatigue as a critical risk for all AREC activities.

Fatigue Risks and Hazards

Fatigue is a state of physical and/or mental exhaustion which affects a person's ability to function within normal boundaries.

It is caused by prolonged periods of physical and/or mental exertion without enough time to rest and recover and may accumulate over time.

Fatigue leads to a decrease in cognitive and psychomotor performance reducing the ability to perform tasks safely and effectively.

Risks and Consequences of fatigue include the following:

- Poor decision making and judgement
- Lack of attention – loses the big picture.
- Loss in the ability to process information.
- Memory lapses & absent-mindedness
- Slower reaction times
- Physical and task errors – reduced coordination
- Driving errors
- Microsleeps - brief and unintended periods of sleep

Sleep Research Shows:

The performance of a person continuously awake for 17-hours has the equivalent impairment of a person with a blood alcohol reading of 0.05 %, the legal driving limit.

Procedures for Fatigue Management in AREC operations

Risk Control

The following principles should be applied to minimize the risks associated with fatigue:

- Members must have a minimum of **8 hours** rest in the previous **24-hour** period before being deployed on an AREC operation.
- Anyone who reaches **17 hours** of wakefulness must not operate any type of motorised transport (vehicles, ATVs, etc). That means **NO** driving of any kind.
- After 17-hours of wakefulness, activities may continue, however rest breaks need to be considered and a risk/hazard assessment process performed to ensure any safety-critical tasks that need to be undertaken can still be conducted safely and effectively.
- After 17-hours of wakefulness, a minimum rest time of 8-hours is required before anyone can operate a vehicle or perform any further critical safety related tasks.

Recording and oversight of members fatigue risk.

The **AREC Response Leader** will ensure that:

- All AREC members complete the AREC operation log sheet (see appendix 1) and also any attendance record required by the tasking agency. sheet if required, noting their awake time and 17-hour expiry time. This is both a self-awareness check and can help plan deployment/rest decisions.
- If an extended activity is likely, a rest area is identified that will allow members to achieve the required 8-hour rest period. This is a mandatory requirement for all overnight activities.
- Fatigue checks are conducted and all members have regular short breaks during the activity.
- The person delegated to act as Response Leader whilst the primary response leader is resting understands and carries out these duties.
- Anyone whose waking hours have exceeded 17-hours is instructed **NOT** to drive.

**Incident
Management
Team liaison**

The AREC Response Leader will:

Comply with the [AREC Health and Safety and Wellbeing policy section relating to Health and Safety Plans](#) when operating with other agencies. (See appendix 2)

Confirm that the Incident Controller is aware of AREC fatigue management requirements and that:

- Fatigue management is considered in pre-planning and action plans.
- The IMT plans for fatigue management throughout the operation including the period *home – operation – home*.
- Support logistics are in place to ensure this SOP is adhered to. For example, provision of fresh drivers, accommodation, rest breaks, and planning ahead for the next operational phase.

Monitor the Incident Management Team (IMT) activities to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities for ensuring the following:

- Implementation of a fatigue check system – this should account for the waking hours of the people responding to the operation and monitoring during the operation.
- Planning for when people should be removed from tasks for rest breaks – after 17hrs of wakefulness assess the activity – rest breaks & risk assessments should be considered for safety-critical tasks.
- Planning the logistics that enable LandSAR Safety Standards to be adhered to. This should include call out of fresh drivers, include arrangements for overnight stays, breaks in taskings, and planning for the next phase – additional resources.

AREC Member responsibilities

Individual AREC Members are responsible for the following:

- Responding to operations fit for duty – providing correct information to the AREC Response Leader and IMT about rest time, and how many hours you have been awake.
 - Declining a request for deployment if you are feeling tired or close to reaching your 17-waking hours limit.
 - Monitoring your own fatigue levels during AREC activities – know how to recognise signs of fatigue.
 - Arriving at any SAR or CDEM operation prepared to stay overnight (minimum 8-hours rest) or be prepared to take alternative methods home if you will be over the cumulative waking time of 17-hours at the termination of the shift/operation.
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Guidelines

Rest Requirements

- As a guideline, 'Rest' can be described as relaxing, sleeping, or refraining from taking part in any work or activity. It should be a state of inactivity in which a person can refresh their body and mind.
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AREC taskings & team welfare

- Individuals are to monitor fatigue levels using the AREC PEEP and STOP tools.
 - Take adequate rest breaks – be prepared with equipment and supplies.
 - Speak up – notify AREC Response Leader and IMT if your energy level has dropped, or you recognise signs of fatigue in yourself or other team members.
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AREC Response Leaders

- Check fatigue levels of the team before starting a task using information from the sign-in log-sheet and apply the standard PEEP and STOP risk control tools as necessary.
 - Ensure operations take place at a pace that is comfortable for all team members and that everyone takes breaks when needed.
 - Ensure the condition of the team is fed back to IMT so that any restrictions on future operational activities can be planned.
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Fatigue Monitoring

- Fatigue data management system – completed by members upon initial response to call-out – see Appendix One.

Questions may include:

- In the last 24-hours prior to this SAROP **have you had a recommended minimum of 8-hours of rest time?**
- **How many hours have you been awake since you last slept?**
- Have you been awake for more than **17-hours** or coming close to?
- AREC communication personnel are in a unique position to regularly monitor the working time of LandSAR/Police field teams. The sound of fatigue in communications calls and any concerns in regard to potential time awake information must be reported to the IMT/IC via the AREC Response Leader.

Safety Critical Tasks

Safety Critical tasks can be, but are not limited to working around helicopters, river crossings, navigating at night in difficult terrain, searching of bluffs, ledges, gorges, etc.

- Rest breaks are to be planned for when carrying out safety critical tasks.
 - Team(s) involved in safety critical tasks and reaching the 17-hour point of wakefulness – must stop and assess to continue, in LandSAR they use the “Take Five” and relay info back to IMT.
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**Demobilisation/
Wrap-up of
Operation**

- Where members will exceed the 17 waking hours – plans **must** be in place for members to get sleep or have alternative options for returning home.
 - Look at options for local accommodation or camping areas for adequate rest (minimum 8-hours); and/or
 - Arrange for fresh drivers to be on standby to get members and their vehicles home.
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**Scheduling of
Training,
Exercises and
Meetings):**

- Event locations including start and finish times should be taken into consideration to ensure that this Fatigue SOP can be adhered to.
 - Ensure planning has taken into consideration the need for overnight stays and adequate rest facilities to meet the requirements of this SOP.
 - Where possible minimise long-distance travel.
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Reporting

Infringement of 8-hour rest period


If the 8-hour rest period is infringed due to an unusual or safety critical circumstance, the AREC Response Leader must complete an AREC Issues Report as soon as practicable but no later than 48 hours after the end of the issue arising, and forward to HSW@arec.nz.

Exceeding 17-hour rule

In the event an AREC activity results in the 17-hour rule being exceeded the circumstances must be recorded by the AREC Response Leader in the AREC operation log with an analysis of the reason and how such circumstances can be avoided in future.

If other AREC Groups/response teams could learn from the event, an AREC Issue report should be completed and emailed to HSW@arec.nz to ensure AREC management can spread the learnings, and training material can be updated.

Appendix 1

 AREC Daily Operation Log									
Operation Info									
Date				Location Name					
Activity Type				Location Coords					
Description				Lead Agency Ref					
Lead Agency									
AREC Personnel	Name	Member Mobile Phone	NoK/Emergency Contact Phone	Awake Time	Awake +17	Start Time	End time	Hours	
Response Leader									
AREC Members									
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
Total Members							Total Hrs		

Appendix 2 Extract from AREC Health Safety and Wellbeing Policy

If clarification is required or if there is any doubt refer to the latest Policy accessible via the AREC InfoNet

Health and Safety Plans	<p>Every plan for an operation or activity conducted by AREC must include consideration of the health and safety factors.</p> <p>Where an operation or activity involves other agencies, the Health and Safety requirements or plans of that agency must be incorporated into the overall AREC plan.</p> <p>Health and Safety factors must form a part of the briefing given to deployed AREC members in accordance with the AREC Operational Deployment and Command Policy</p> <p>Where there are concerns regarding the appropriateness of the Health and Safety plan of a client agency the AREC response leader must raise the matter with the client agency and either stop the activity or, after consultation with the client, follow the default AREC response for that circumstance.</p> <p>If a situation is not covered by the primary H&S plan the AREC response leader must advise the concern to the agency whose plan is being followed, then follow the AREC H&S process to systematically identify hazard and associated risk and deal with it.</p>
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Minimum standards	<p>If there is a conflict between the minimum safety standards of a client agency and that of AREC, the most conservative standard is to be observed unless an agreement to the contrary is reached with the relevant agency.</p>
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