

# FATIGUE, DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Ok Tedi recognises that a person's fitness for work can be adversely affected by many factors including:

- fatigue
- inappropriate use of alcohol
- use of illicit drugs
- some prescribed medications.

## WHAT IS FATIGUE?

Fatigue is a physical condition that occurs when a person's physical or mental limits are reached. Fatigue can reduce performance and productivity and can increase the risk of incidents and injury.

## WHAT CAUSES FATIGUE?

Not enough sleep, or poor quality sleep, is the main cause of fatigue. But other causes include not enough exercise, poor nutrition and dehydration. Certain drugs and alcohol can also affect fatigue levels and work performance. Fatigue can:

- be caused by alcohol and/or drug use
- be worsened by alcohol and/or drug use
- lead to increased alcohol and/or drug use.

## ALCOHOL

Workers who have difficulty sleeping sometimes use alcohol and/or drugs to help.

Alcohol is a depressant that increases sleepiness. However, it can also disrupt sleep and reduce sleep quality. While 1-2 standard drinks may help workers fall asleep faster; 5 or more drinks will increase their chances of waking early when the most restful sleep occurs.

Alcohol reduces the dreaming stage of sleep which is important for memory, learning and regulating nervous system activity and mood. It also increases daytime sleepiness and physical and mental impairment in someone who is already fatigued.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Fatigue and alcohol have similar effects on work performance. Being awake for 17 hours has the same effect as a 0.05 blood alcohol content (BAC). Being awake for 20 hours has the same effect as a 0.1 BAC.



**REMEMBER**  
Ok Tedi have a zero tolerance policy to alcohol and drugs in the workplace!



## DRUGS

Drug use can also affect fatigue. Workers may use over the counter (OTC), prescribed, and/or illicit drugs to:

- overcome the effects of fatigue to meet work, social, and family commitments
- treat other medical conditions and experience fatigue as a side-effect
- counteract feelings of fatigue when they are 'coming down' or withdrawing from drug use.

The effects of specific drug types on sleep include:

Betel Nut	Side effects of chewing betel nut include altered speech, increased sensitivity to heat and cold, high blood pressure, mood swings, irritability, anxiety, loss of concentration and disturbed sleep.
Methamphetamine	Disrupts brain chemistry and prevents sleep, sometimes for several days. Can also cause depression and anxiety.
Opioids (often used for pain relief)	Affects sleep patterns and reduces the quality and amount of sleep.
Cannabis	Can cause strange dreams & insomnia.

## FATIGUED WORKERS SHOULD NOT

- drive or operate hazardous equipment
- complete high risk work activities
- participate in medical or surgical procedures
- work with flammable, explosive or electrical substances
- use alcohol or drugs to combat fatigue.

## FATIGUED WORKERS SHOULD

- talk to your Supervisor about any fitness for work concerns you have
- notify your Supervisor if you are taking medication that could affect your ability to do your job (including prescribed medication and over the counter medication)
- use medication as directed by your doctor, or follow the manufacturer recommendations
- cooperate and participate in alcohol and drug testing.
- notify your Supervisor if someone has alcohol, consumes alcohol, or takes illicit drugs at the workplace or during the shift.

For more information:



# ALCOHOL AND DRUG TESTING

FITNESS FOR WORK



Any person working or visiting a Ok Tedi site may be tested at any time and without notice



You must have a **0.000** breath alcohol concentration and a confirmed negative drug result



Ok Tedi has a **ZERO TOLERANCE** policy for alcohol and illicit drug use in the workplace