

**ASLEF**

THE TRAIN DRIVERS UNION

**More** than  
just a **union**

Best Practice Guidelines for  
>>> **Rostering**

## ASLEF Rostering Best Practice

This leaflet is a brief guide to representatives on best practice when scrutinising rosters.

Rostering is a negotiable issue at LLR level, with parameters set within company agreements.

However, the 2002 AAD adopted a policy of closer co-operation between the LLRs, Company Councils and H&S Reps.

## ASLEF policy on working time for Train Drivers

### Length of weekly working time

44 hours maximum for each seven day period.

35 hours maximum per week on average over a 52-week period, save for any excluded days in that period.

### Length of daily working time

Maximum in a 24 hour period, ten, when worked during the period between 0600 and 2300; **or** eight, when worked during night time. In exceptional circumstances, this may be increased to twelve. A train driver's minimum period for a turn of duty shall be six hours.

### Night working

Defined as the not less than six hours, which includes at least three hours in the period between 23.00 and 06.00.

### Weekly rest period

Maximum four consecutive daily turns of duty, when the turns of duty are worked between the hours of 0600 and 2300, or maximum three consecutive turns of duty during night time.

### **Uninterrupted rest periods per week**

Not less than 48 hours on completion of a turn of duty and in any event in each seven day period during which the driver works for his employer, such seven-day period to begin at the start of each week. Week starts at midnight between Sunday and Monday.

### **Daily rest period**

Not less than 14 consecutive hours in each 24-hour period.

### **Rest breaks**

Six hours, a rest break of not less than 20 minutes to be taken between the commencement of the third hour of duty and the end of the fifth hour of duty.

When working longer than six hours, there should be two rest breaks of not less than 20 minutes each; the first to be taken between the commencement of the third hour of duty and the end of the fifth hour of duty and the second to be taken between the commencement of the sixth hour of duty and the end of the eighth hour of duty.

### **Night shifts**

Fatigue will normally be greater on a night shift than on a day shift because the internal body clock causes levels of alertness and performance to be at their lowest between 02.00 and 06.00. There is good objective evidence that risk is increased at night by about 30% relative to the morning/day shift. There is also good evidence indicating that risk increases in an appropriately linear fashion over at least four successive night shift, such that it is about 40% higher on the fourth night shift than on the first night shift. It is also the case that as single night's shift following as span of night shifts may not fully dissipate the fatigue that may accumulate over a span of night shifts.

### **Early starts**

Early turns with a start time before 07.30 result in less sleep and an increase in fatigue. Having an earlier bedtime to compensate for an early start may not be practical, partly as a result of social pressures, but also because of the influence of the so called "forbidden zone" for sleep. This is a period, lasting for about four hours in the evening when the body's higher level of alertness hinders the onset of sleep.

**There is no optimum starting time – but 0700hrs is better than 0600hrs which is better than 0500hrs.**



# BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR **ROSTERING**

## **Shift duration**

There is good evidence that risk increases over the course of a shift in a roughly exponential manner such that longer shifts are associated with a substantially increased risk. For example it has been estimated that, the risk on a 12-hour shift system is more than 25% higher than that on an 8-hour system. Shifts longer than 12 hours are therefore considered as undesirable.

## **Breaks**

The break between two successive shifts must be sufficient to allow the individual concerned to travel home, wind down sufficiently to sleep have a full 8- hour sleep, have at least one meal, and travel back to work. The EU's working time directive sets this limit at 11 hours.

## **Rotation of shift systems**

Advancing systems (earlies, lates, nights) are less fatiguing than delaying systems (nights, lates, earlies).

## **Fatigue and Risk Index (FRI)**

This is a method for conducting a risk assessment of rotating shift work patterns. It can compare two patterns, for example during roster changes. It can also be used to examine rosters to identify duties with higher potential for fatigue and risk to arise.

## **Commuting times**

Research shows that commuting times of over an hour have an impact on fatigue. However, using the Fatigue and Risk Index (FRI), commuting over half an hour should be included in the calculations.

## **Detailed advice on Physical/Personal Needs Breaks (PNBs)**

All diagrams should have at least one PNB. For health reasons, it is better to have two shorter breaks rather than one long one. The longer the diagram, the more this is true. This is based on blood sugar levels, which if they drop affect performance and alertness. PNB's should be positioned within the diagram as evenly as possible, and where practical avoiding the first and last hour of a turn. If only one break is provided, it is better to have a PNB in the middle of a diagram, not right at the start or end of the turn.



# GOOD PRACTICE BASED ON ORR MANAGING RAIL STAFF FATIGUE

Roster Feature	Good Practice
<b>Maximum shift length</b>	Day Shift – 12 hours Night or Early shifts – 10 hours Shifts starting before 05:00 hours – 8 hours
<b>Door-to-door times</b>	<i>(between leaving and returning to home / lodging)</i> 14 hours
<b>Minimum rest between shifts</b>	12 hours
<b>Max number of consecutive shifts before a rest day</b>	Day shifts – 7 Night shifts – 3 Early shifts – 5 Review if the number of consecutive day shifts exceeds 12
<b>Rest between night turns and early shifts</b>	Two rest days
<b>Working week</b>	Planned work + overtime over a 7 day rolling week – 55 hours
<b>Week-ends</b>	Plan some weekends off, advisably at least one every 3 weeks
<b>Direction of rotation</b>	Forwards
<b>Speed of rotation</b>	Weekly changes are harder to adjust to than a more rapidly or more slowly changing one
<b>Number, position and use of spare turns</b>	Where possible, shift start times and on call duties should be planned to avoid variations of more than two hours. Ensure enough spare turns are built into the roster for covering early, late or night shifts
<b>Consecutive night shifts</b>	Make the first night shift shorter in duration
<b>Breaks</b>	Length and timing of breaks appropriate to time spent on duty. Short breaks after every 3 hours and at regular intervals throughout a shift, though an earlier break might be appreciated for early starting shifts. Ensure break has occurred in 3rd to 5th hour of the shift. Avoid positioning breaks at the end of shift turns
<b>FRI</b>	Day shifts – 30 to 35 or less Night shifts – 40 to 45 or less Risk – 1.6 or less
<b>Social</b>	Arrange start/finish times of the shift to be convenient for public transport, ad hoc social and domestic activities
<b>General</b>	Keep the timing of shifts regular and predicable. Include training days within the roster. Be alert to diagrams known to be difficult to run, or that are prone to being longer than planned and seek to improve them or accommodate them where possible. Be alert to preventing significant changes between planned and actual hours from permitting more than 10% of lines showing as vacancy lines or long term sickness absences



## FURTHER INFORMATION

### ORR

The ORR site contains information on fatigue management, including:  
Managing Rail Staff Fatigue  
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999  
Railways and Other Guided Transport Systems (Safety) Regulations 2006

[http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/upload/pdf/managing\\_rail\\_fatigue.pdf](http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/upload/pdf/managing_rail_fatigue.pdf)

### RSSB

A link to resources including the RSSBs guidance on coping with shiftwork, managing fatigue, a good practice; and the HSE Fatigue and Risk Index:

<http://www.rssb.co.uk/EXPERTISE/HF/Pages/HFTOOLSANDRESOURCES.aspx>

Managing Fatigue: A good practice guide:

[http://www.rgsonline.co.uk/Railway\\_Group\\_Standards/Traffic%20Operation%20and%20Management/RSSB%20Good%20Practice%20Guides/RS504%20Iss%201.pdf](http://www.rgsonline.co.uk/Railway_Group_Standards/Traffic%20Operation%20and%20Management/RSSB%20Good%20Practice%20Guides/RS504%20Iss%201.pdf)



ASLEF 77 St John Street, London EC1M 4NN

Tel 020 7324 2400 Fax 020 7794 6406 Email [info@aslef.org.uk](mailto:info@aslef.org.uk)

[www.aslef.org.uk](http://www.aslef.org.uk)

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