FIT FOR DUTY

Toolbox Talk
Workplace Exposures
FIT FOR DUTY

» Fit for duty is about helping people, building capacity, and setting up workers and companies for the safe execution of work

• Do your workers and controls have the capacity to handle an issue?

• What risks exist around fit for duty and workplace exposures?

» This is not about blaming workers
WHY FIT FOR DUTY?

» Fatigue, alcohol and drugs, mental health and a variety of other stressors impact worker performance and health and safety

» Many companies formally manage only some of these

» Often limited to alcohol and drugs and fatigue, and almost always in isolation of each other
FIT FOR DUTY – SOME EXAMPLES

» How do you manage the following situations?

» A worker:

  • With a pacemaker working around magnetic pumps?

  • Who is pregnant in a work environment with reproductive toxins (carbon monoxide, toluene, radiation, etc.)?

  • Working with a chemical that can impact fitness for work and the only defense is a respirator?
FIT FOR DUTY DEFINITION

A condition in which an employee's physical, physiological and psychological state enables them to continuously perform assigned tasks safely.

» This definition includes:

• Physical requirements – physical demands analysis, vision, hearing, etc.

• Physiological condition – fatigue, alcohol and drugs, workplace exposures, etc.

• Psychological condition – commitment, risk tolerance, emotional state, culture, etc.
FIT FOR DUTY – A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

**Physical**
- Physical Demands
- Vision
- Hearing

**Physiological**
- Fatigue
- Alcohol and Drugs
- Workplace Exposures

**Psychological**
- Risk Tolerance
- Culture
- Emotional state

**Communication**
- Hand Signals, Common Language, Understanding
What are your thoughts on the risk significance of one worker being overexposed one day out of the year to a chemical mixture that causes narcosis (high on hydrocarbons)?

- How much effort would you devote to resolving uncertainty (on-going sampling or measurement) with such an exposure?
- How much effort would you devote to controlling such an exposure?

What if I told you this worker pilots a helicopter just after they are overexposed. Does this change your thoughts on the risk?

What capacity exists in your system of controls to prevent an exposure that could lead to a serious incident?
What type of workplace exposure situations or health affects would you consider related to fit for duty?

- Availability or inability to use oxygen (asphyxia, hypoxia or anemia)
- Inability to think or function (CNS impairment)
- Nausea and headache
- Eye and respiratory irritation

70% of the approximately 700 chemicals that have exposure limits have health effects similar to those described above as the basis for their occupational exposure limits (OEL).

Workplace exposures are connected to fit for duty more than we know!
Where in your operations are you vulnerable to workplace exposures that may impact fitness to work? Think about exposure situations that:

- Rely on personal protective equipment as the primary barrier
- Occur to an isolated worker (working alone)
- Occur during high stress or demanding work
- Involve the operation and control of hazardous energy during the exposure or shortly thereafter (operating machinery, vehicles, etc.)

Can you add additional barriers so that you have the capacity to fail safe if an unprotected overexposure occurs?
FIT FOR DUTY - LIFE SAVING RULE

» Be in a state to perform work safely

• I will be physically and mentally in a state to perform my assigned duties

• I commit to not being under the influence of alcohol or drugs

• I will inform a supervisor immediately if I or a co-worker may be unfit for work

*The Fit for Duty Task Group efforts influenced the creation of the Fit for Duty Life Saving Rule*
IDENTIFICATION AND MANAGEMENT OF AN UNFIT PERSON

- Observation of Possible Unfit Person
  - Notification of Person of Authority
    - Inquiry and Confirmation
      - Referral in Accordance with Company Policies and Programs
        - Fit for Duty: Returned to Work
        - Unfit for Existing Duty: Modified Work Duties
        - Unfit for Duty: Cannot Return to Work
FIT FOR DUTY WALLET CARD

FIT FOR DUTY?
Don’t be a hazard

Physical - Physical Demands, Vision, Hearing
• Know the physical demands of your job.
• Able to meet the physical demands.
• Require any assistance with the planned work.

Physiological - Fatigue, Alcohol & Drugs, Workplace Exposures
• Rested and ready to work.
• Free from the influence of alcohol or drugs.
• Concerns about workplace exposures (chemicals, heat, etc.)?

Psychological - Risk Tolerance, Culture, Emotional State
• Concerns about the work?
• Distracted by something on your mind?
• Would you like someone to talk to today?

WHEN TO TAKE ACTION
Signs or symptoms

Physical Requirements - The Body Itself
• Deterioration in appearance or personal hygiene.
• Unable to conduct the assigned work or it hurts to do so.

Physiological Condition - Affects How the Body Functions
• Difficulty staying awake or persistent/excessive yawning.
• Dizziness, slurred speech or inability to stand or walk straight.

Psychological Condition - Mental State
• Irritability, inappropriate responses or behaviours.
• Forgetfulness, judgement errors or difficulty staying focused.

Observe any of these signs? Speak with a supervisor.
Fit for Duty - A Life Saving Rule

The Fit for Duty wallet card is available at EnergySafetyCanada.com
FIT FOR DUTY – REFLECTIVE LEARNING

» Discuss past incidents where workplace exposures may have been a causal factor.

» What workplace exposures exist in your operations that could impact fitness for work?

» Are your exposure controls good enough to prevent a serious incident related to fit for duty?
QUESTIONS?