

# Wheelhouse Fatigue Checklist

## Signs and symptoms of **fatigue**

### Mood

- » more irritable than usual
- » uncommunicative
- » easily frustrated by tasks
- » doesn't care

### Alertness/sleepiness

- » looks tired
- » yawns a lot
- » has micro sleeps
- » behaves "automatically"
- » slurs speech
- » rubs eyes

### Focus

- » preoccupied with parts of a problem
- » loses the big picture
- » misses warning signs
- » unable to stay focused on a task
- » has a fixed gaze
- » reports blurred vision
- » fails to interpret a situation correctly

### Task performance

- » takes unusual risks
- » cuts corners to get the job done
- » shows poor judgement of distance, time or speed
- » is clumsy
- » does things in the wrong order
- » doesn't complete tasks
- » forgets recent information
- » moves slowly
- » reverts to old habits
- » responds slowly to situations
- » does not think logically
- » makes calculation mistakes

*Get your sleep*  
Reduce your risk

## > Risk factors

It is possible to both look and feel alert when being at risk of falling asleep. Accident investigation often finds that seafarers "felt good" not long before going to sleep on watch. **If two or more of the risk factors listed here exist**, consider the seafarer to be fatigued and at risk of falling asleep:

- » has been awake for more than 16 hours
- » is short of sleep
- » has had poor-quality sleep
- » is working alone in the early morning hours
- » reports being fatigued.

## > Managing fatigued seafarers

**If you consider the fatigue to be a *temporary problem*, have the seafarer:**

- » take a break
- » have a nap (allow a maximum break of 40 minutes if work will resume shortly after waking. Otherwise, a longer nap of about 2 hours is better – this should include a 15 minute or more "wake up" phase)
- » have a drink (water is best, avoid caffeine if within 4 hours of a sleep period)
- » have something to eat (not too heavy)
- » rotate tasks.

**If you consider that the seafarer *requires longer to recover*, then:**

- » send the seafarer for a long sleep
- » rotate the seafarer to a task where the risk is acceptable (only if the situation demands that he or she must work)
- » consider whether the task must be continued (such as watchkeeping) or can be delayed (such as loading supplies).