



Response Date:04/07/2024

2024/654 - police officers fatally injured in road traffic collisions

In response to your recent request for information regarding;

Could you please supply the number of police officers fatally injured in road traffic collisions from your force when travelling home from a shift, specifically ones having finished a night shift or similarly physically demanding shift wholly or partly conducted during unsocial hours.

North Wales Police do not hold this information.

We would not keep a record specifically of the number of police officers fatally injured in road traffic collisions when travelling home from a shift.

Could you also advise whether police officers are encouraged to take a short period of sleep if they feel fatigued or whether such a 'power nap' would be subject to action plan, management action etc.

If officers were particularly fatigued and there was a danger it would affect them doing their job then we would support a 20 minute nap (any longer and there is a danger they would go into a deeper sleep which would be harder to wake up from).

Our National Police Wellbeing Service also suggests this in their sleep guidance (attached). It would also depend on demand and whether there was someone available to respond to any emergencies so Line Managers would need to make the decision on this.

[The National Police Wellbeing Service | Oscar Kilo](#)

THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN PROVIDED IN RESPONSE TO A REQUEST
UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000, AND IS CORRECT AS AT 04/07/2024



OSCAR KILO

BETTER SLEEP SERIES

#2 Strategies for Shift Workers: Action Stations

created by Dr Sophie Bostock



THE SLEEP SCIENTIST

Sleep and performance science unlocked



**The National Police
Wellbeing Service**



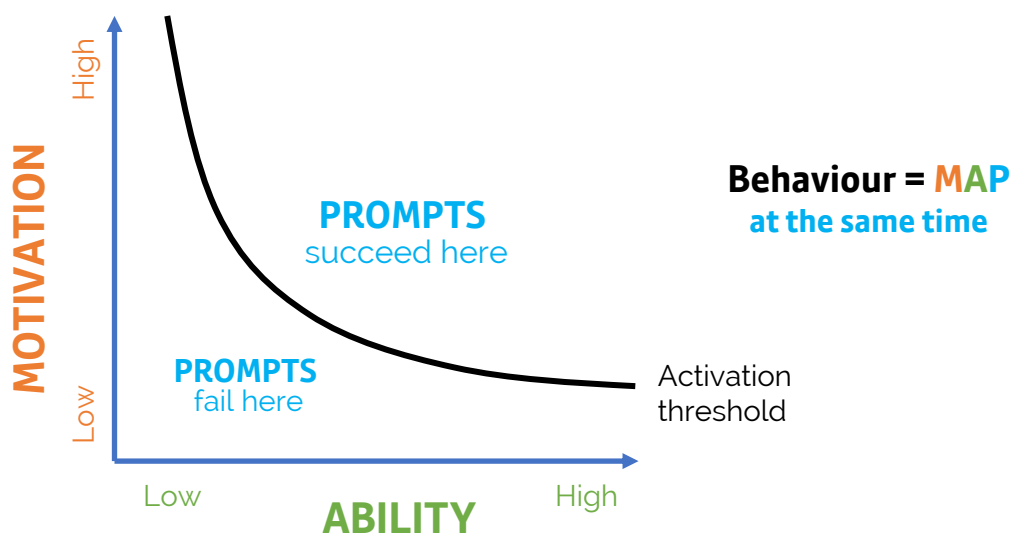
**College of
Policing**

Welcome, or welcome back!

Thanks so much for getting involved in the [Better Sleep](#) webinar series. The goal is to help equip you with the knowledge, tools and techniques you need to take control of your sleep, lift your mood and optimise your performance.

If you made some changes after **#1: Banish the Winter Blues**, you might be starting to notice changes already. If you stick to a **new habit** until our next webinar, the odds are you will start to see improvements in mood and energy.

If you've struggled to change your habit(s) in the past, don't worry. It just means the conditions weren't quite right, and you may want to tweak your goals or prompts to make the new behaviour easier, or the old behaviour harder. Quick recap: to change behaviour, we need **Motivation**, **Ability** and a **Prompt** or trigger to occur **at the same time**.



Shift work can challenge both our **ability** and **motivation** to change. Preparation is key, so I've included a checklist this week to try and help, and a sleep habit tracker you can print out as a **prompt**. Please don't hesitate to get in touch to tell me how you're getting on, what you're finding helpful, and what questions you still have.

Dr Sophie Bostock

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PREPARE your home

Stock up on healthy meals and snacks for work so you have less to do between shifts

Keep copies of your schedule visible on your door/fridge & let others know when to shhh....

Create a sleep 'haven' - blackout blinds, insulation from noise/ear plugs, clean & tidy

REFUEL yourself

We cope better with circadian disruption if we're well rested - protect sleep time before you start

Try a long nap a few hours before your first shift. Even if you can't sleep, rest will help. Allow an hour to wake up.

Eat your main meal before your night shift. Stick to slow release energy - plenty of protein.

ADAPTING TO NIGHT SHIFTS

STAYING ALERT on shift

Eat light meals/snacks at the same time each shift. Avoid high fat, high sugar food, especially 00h00 to 06h00.

Seek out bright light before and in the early part of the shift. Break areas should be well lit.

Drink plenty of water - dehydration makes you fatigued and may interfere with sleep later.

Choose lower caff tea vs. coffee, but not 6 hours before bed. Get moving or chatting to boost alertness.

Mid shift power naps are more effective than caffeine - if practical. Even 10 min could help alertness.

TRAVEL home

Can you avoid driving? If there is no alternative, vary your route to avoid driving on autopilot, or take a nap first

Daylight is a signal to stay awake. If you're not driving wear shades or blue light blocking glasses on your way home.

PROTECT recovery

Use a similar wind down routine after day and night shifts. Pattern recognition can help prepare the body for sleep

Exercise will wake you up; ideally sleep first, then make time for exercise before the next shift.

Shift work checklist

This list is designed to help you plan [night shifts](#), but some of these ideas will help no matter what shifts you're facing. You certainly don't need to do everything (!) but it might help with a few new ideas. We're all different and not all of these will be relevant - experiment to see what works for you.

In advance

- Stock the fridge and freezer with plenty of healthy meals and snacks
- Print out a copy of your schedule and leave visible for the household
- Discuss with family / household your planned sleep times
- Tidy your bedroom, clean your sheets – create a cosy haven
- Have ear plugs, a fan or white noise app ready to drown out noise
- Plan when and where you intend to exercise during the week
- Where possible, get plenty of sleep leading up to a change of shift

On the day

- Don't set a morning alarm – sleep for as long as you need
- Try and nap in the late afternoon, but get up at least an hour pre shift
- Eat a main meal before your shift, with some slow release protein
- Think about travelling home – can you share lifts?
- Put shades or blue light blocking glasses in your bag for coming home
- Take a water bottle and stay well hydrated
- Take some healthy snacks (e.g. hummus, fruit, cheese, nuts)

On shift

- Spend plenty of time in bright light, especially early in the shift
- Small amounts of caffeine in the early part of the shift can help alertness
- Drink lots of water, but try and avoid large meals
- Plan a snack time at the same/similar time each shift if possible
- Discuss potential for a 10-20min nap with your supervisor if very sleepy
- Feeling sluggish? Move around if you can, or chat with colleagues
- Try to avoid high fat and high sugar foods at breakfast

Checklist continued...

After your shift

- If you're using public transport, put on shades to limit light exposure
- If you're driving, vary your route to avoid auto-pilot
- If you haven't eaten, eat breakfast as soon as possible post shift
- When you get home, allow yourself time to wind down before bed
- Repeat your normal pre-bed rituals, such as a warm bath or shower
- Turn off your phone an hour before bed (no screens in the bedroom!)
- Make the bedroom as cool, dark and quiet as possible
- Don't panic if you can't sleep! Resting is good too. Relax.
- If you're wide awake after a few hours, eat lunch, but then return to bed
- Late afternoon is a good time to exercise before your next shift

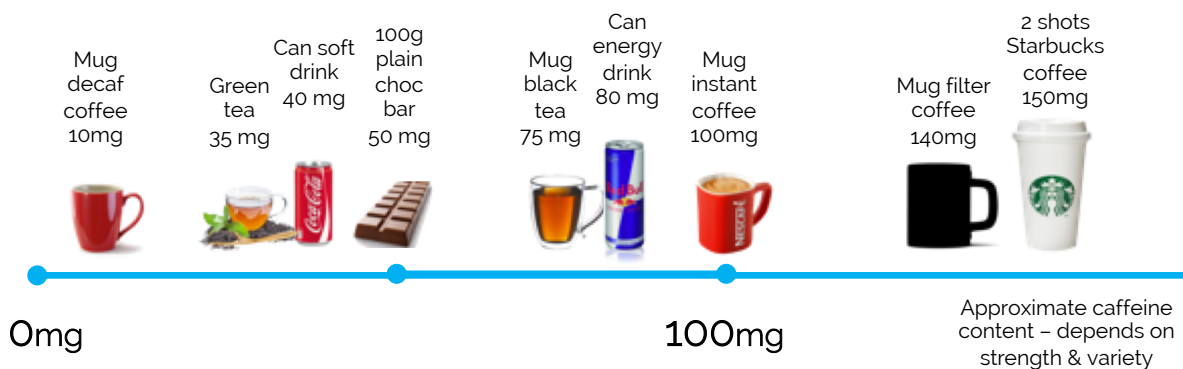


What about your list?

The suggestions above are just suggestions.. What do you think should be on your personal checklist?



HOW MUCH CAFFEINE?



A review of the effects of caffeine on health by the European Food Safety Directive in 2015 concluded that consuming **400mg** per day did not give rise to safety concerns in non-pregnant adults. For pregnant and breastfeeding women, there were no safety concerns for daily intake up to **200mg**.

The research behind these numbers is based on body weight – around **6mg/kg** per day is deemed safe.

It's difficult to assign an exact amount for everyone because people can have very different sensitivities or reactions to caffeine based on age, medical history, and tolerance. Caffeine is a stimulant, which can increase heart rate and blood pressure. Therefore, those with heart arrhythmias, murmurs, and hypertension may be advised by their doctor to limit their caffeine intake.

These recommendations did not specify the *timing* of caffeine consumption in relation to sleep. Research has shown that caffeine consumed 6 hours before bed can still disrupt sleep quality.

- *Have you tried tracking your caffeine consumption for the day? Jot down how many teas and coffees you drink. Try sparkling water as an alternative.*
- *Why not replace your tea and coffee at home with decaf varieties? If you remove the labels, will you notice the difference?*
- *If you're reducing your caffeine intake, try a gradual reduction over several weeks to avoid withdrawal effects.*

Sleep diary & habit tracker

Fill in your planned **wake up** and **ready-for-bed** times at the start of the week. Track up to 3 sleep habits. When you get ready for a new shift, tick successes from the previous day, and feel good about any successes!

Start date: _____	Example	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Target wake up time? (Get out of bed within 10 minutes for a tick)	4pm ✓							
What's your target time to go to bed?	9am ✓							
How many hours have you been in bed, last 24 hours?	9 hours							
How many hours were you asleep for?	6 hours							
What was your Sleep Efficiency? = hrs sleep / in bed * 100 More on this in webinar 3	67%							
1. Light meals/healthy snacks on shift								
2. 30 min physical activity								
3. No technology 1 hr before bed								
How would you rate your energy yesterday? 10=best ever	8, good day!							

Techniques for switching off

We often blame a busy mind for keeping us awake, but sleep is influenced by a multitude of factors. For example, you're much less likely to experience a racing mind if you've built up sufficient sleep pressure before getting into bed. More on mind games in webinar **#3: Tackling Stubborn Sleep Problems**, but in the meantime, here are some ideas to put your mind at ease:

1. Time out during the day

If your entire day is spent at 300mph, then when you switch off the light, the brain still has a lot of processing to do. It helps to 'rehearse' or practice switching off at other times of the day – not just in bed. Try and build 15 min of 'me-time' into your calendar to detach. This can be before or after work if work time is too full on. This might mean a walk, eating a meal slowly and consciously, listening to music, or practicing mindfulness – try an app like Headspace, Calm or Buddhify.

2. Putting the day to rest

After your work day, set aside 10 minutes to write down what you've done that day, and what you have to remember tomorrow. Ideally write your list well before bedtime, but you can keep your list or notebook by your bed. If the same 'to-do' thoughts pop up, tell yourself they are on the page, and let them go. If you have to add new things, that's OK. Then go back to sleep.

3. Paradoxical intention

The sounds counterintuitive, but if you're awake during the night. Tell yourself that that's OK. If your body needed to sleep, it would sleep. Gently stay awake. Enjoy feeling of being safe and warm in your bed. You're ok where you are. (Paradoxically, when you stop trying, sleep is more likely to come.)

4. Avoid frustration. Get out of bed.

If you really can't sleep after half an hour or so. Get up. Get out of bed. There's no point in wrestling with it. Read a book under dim light until your eyelids feel heavy, and only then get back into bed. The worst thing for sleep is trying too hard! If you miss out on sleep one night, just know that sleep the following night will be even better.