

## UNION FACT SHEET 4

### Finish on Time and Fatigue Management

#### Queensland Ambulance Service Employees

#### Purpose

This fact sheet helps members understand how “**Finish on Time**”, **fatigue management**, and **Out of Service (OOS)** procedures work together to meet obligations under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)*, *Industrial Relations Act 2016 (Qld)*, and the *Queensland Ambulance Service Certified Agreement 2025 (Clause 17)*.

#### 1. Legal and Policy Framework

##### Key Industrial Instruments

- **Clause 17 – Finish on Time (Certified Agreement 2025)**  
Requires QAS to actively monitor and reduce shift extensions, report late finishes, and review systemic causes.
- **WHS Act 2011 (ss. 17–19):**  
Imposes a duty on QAS to eliminate or minimise fatigue risks as far as reasonably practicable.
- **IR Act 2016 (s. 136 & 137):**  
“Reasonable overtime” must take into account health, safety, family responsibilities and employee consent.

##### Supporting Procedures

- [SOP03.8 – Fatigue Management](#)
- [SOP02.23– Dispatch – Out of Service Shift End of Operational Resources](#)

Together, these documents create an enforceable operational framework that requires crews to be taken **Out of Service** at rostered finish and to have fatigue risk controls applied consistently.

#### 2. QAS Fatigue Management Principles

- Fatigue is defined as a **physical and psychological condition** that reduces reaction time, judgement and communication.
- **Shared Responsibility:** Both QAS and employees must actively manage fatigue
- **Mandatory i-Fatigue:** All operational officers must complete an i-Fatigue or Prior Sleep Wake Model assessment at shift commencement and report significant risk scores during the shift.
- **Variation 3 scores ( $\geq 12$ )** mean “*not fit for duty*”—the officer must notify their supervisor for alternate arrangements.
- Officers must not *wilfully place themselves or others at risk* by continuing to work fatigued.

### 3. Mandatory Out of Service (OOS)

- **Automatic OOS status** applies once an officer reaches their rostered finish time.
- Staff who have **worked 12 hours or more must not be dispatched** again without supervisor approval
- If a crew volunteers to work over 12 hours, a QAS supervisor must perform a risk assessment and can refuse this request if deemed unsafe.
- Any exception requires **Operations Centre Supervisor (OCS)** or **Clinical Deployment Supervisor (CDS)** authorisation
- **Backup units** should be dispatched to relieve crews held past shift end, ensuring safety is not compromised.

*This is not discretionary—OOS is a WHS control, not a privilege.*

### 4. Dispatcher and Supervisor Responsibilities

- Dispatchers must place crews into “**OOS – End of Shift**” in the CAD system at rostered finish, and cannot remove this without OCS/CDS approval.
- Supervisors must actively manage rosters and resource allocation to **prevent dispatching beyond 12 hours** and must escalate workload issues early to Region management.
- OCS/CDS must support dispatchers and document all authorisations to override OOS status.

### 5. Employee Responsibilities (Under Fatigue Procedure v2.2)

Employees must:

- Complete and report i-Fatigue assessments honestly;
- Monitor their own fatigue and alert supervisors if at risk;
- Not continue to work when fatigued;
- Record fatigue-related incidents in the **Safety, Health and Environment (SHE)** system;
- Participate in investigations and apply agreed controls

### 6. Interaction with “Finish on Time” Clause 17

Clause 17 of the Certified Agreement 2025 makes **fatigue mitigation and finish-on-time compliance a measurable organisational duty**.

Under the clause:

- QAS must monitor late finishes and report trends and data quarterly.
- Crews’ finish-time metrics must be reviewed through the joint consultative committees.
- Persistent non-compliance to finish on time strategies can be escalated under the dispute resolution procedure (Part 2 of the Agreement).

*Fatigue procedures, OOS protocols, and finish-on-time obligations are interlinked and enforceable under both WHS and industrial law.*

## 7. i-Fatigue Quick Guide (Member Insert)

| Variation Level | Risk Score Range | Meaning          | Action Required  |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------|--|
| 1 – Low         | 0–7              | Fit for duty     | Proceed with normal shift  |
| 2 – Moderate    | 8–11             | Caution advised  | Notify supervisor; apply fatigue-proofing controls                                     |
| 3 – High        | 12 +             | Not fit for duty | Notify supervisor; apply fatigue-proofing controls. QAS to consider release from duty. |

Members should document any refusal of rest breaks or pressure to continue work when a high fatigue variation exists.

## 8. Practical “How-To” for Members

### Logging and Reporting

1. Complete **i-Fatigue** at start and mid-shift, and after every callout..
2. Record extended shifts or denied OOS in a **personal log**.
3. Submit a **SHE report** if you were required to continue working fatigued.
4. Raise ongoing issues through:
  - OIC or SOS (first level)
  - Regional WHS Representative
  - UWU Delegate or Regional Consultative Committee

### Example Notification (Fatigue Report)

- “Due to rostered finish at 1900 hrs, I am past my rostered finish time and current fatigue score of 13, I am reporting unfit for continued operational deployment. I request immediate OOS in line with SOP 2.23 and 3.8.”
- I am on a callout and have transported outside of my usual response zone. I have a fatigue score of 11 and am requesting to be placed into OOS EA Unit on Return as per SOP 2.15 and 3.8.
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## 9. Legislative and Ethical Support

- **WHS Act 2011 (ss. 28–29)** – Workers must take reasonable care for their own safety and comply with instructions.
- **Ambulance Service Act 1991 (s. 41)** – QAS officers must follow operational procedures and directives.
- **Ahpra / Paramedicine Board Code of Conduct** – Practitioners must not work while impaired or fatigued to a degree that could place patients at risk.

*Therefore, declining unsafe overtime or end-of-shift dispatches is consistent with professional and legal obligations.*

## Union Tip

Finishing late once might be unavoidable.

Finishing late *every day* is a systemic failure — and now, under the 2025 Agreement, it's a reportable breach.

If it's not recorded, it didn't happen.

If it's recorded, it becomes evidence. Keep logging, keep reporting, and let the union escalate your concerns through the official industrial and safety pathways.

***These fact sheets are provided to assist UWU members in understanding their new and existing rights and entitlements.***

*For any further questions or clarification, please contact a UWU Official at [qldambulance@unitedworkers.org.au](mailto:qldambulance@unitedworkers.org.au) or speak with your local UWU State Council Delegate.*