

AUSTRALIAN FEDERATED UNION OF LOCOMOTIVE EMPLOYEES



Circular: 118/22
Ref: ONRSR Fatigue
12/12/2022

National Rail Safety Law – Shift Lengths

Dear Members,

Last week, the AFULE state office received notification from members, coinciding with a call from the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator (ONRSR) relating to reports of Traincrew working shifts beyond the maximum allowable shift lengths.

The legislation is clear –

For Traincrew in Driver Only Configuration, the maximum allowable shift length in control of a train, by law is 9 hours.

For Traincrew in Two Driver Configuration, the maximum allowable shift length in control of a train, by law is 12 hours.

These shift lengths are enshrined into the National Rail Safety Law and where Traincrew breach these shift lengths – you may be prosecuted.

I have attached ([click here](#)) the latest ONRSR FAQ regarding shift lengths and fatigue, including what actually constitutes “driving” a train.

I urge you to review and become knowledgeable with the attached document.

Although they may try, **Operators do not have the authority to overrule these mandatory maximum shift lengths**. The only time a member of Traincrew may be in control of a train beyond these hours is where there is an imminent/ immediate risk to person or plant.

If you feel pressured to breach this legislation, I urge you to advise your supervisor of the legislation and contact your local rep or the AFULE state office.

If you have any questions, please contact your state office on 3844 9163, email traincrew@afule.org.au or contact your local AFULE representative.

In Solidarity,

Mick McKitrick,
State Secretary

Traincrew representing Traincrew