

## Pressured and Fatigued



What is the optimal workload? One that engages without causing excessive pressure.

A workload that is too low leads to boredom, inattention, and potential for errors.

A workload that is too high leads to overload, stress, and inability to pay attention, and potential for errors.

A consideration of workload must consider time and tasks, mental workload, ability to address abnormal operations, and an assessment of operational factors.

Where does work-related pressure come from and how does it relate to fatigue? It could come from any of these factors, which are from the NASA Task Load Index:

- Mental demand
- Physical demand
- Time demand
- Effort required to perform task
- Performance satisfaction
- Frustration level

Over time, any or all of those factors can lead to task-related fatigue. Think about the categories of tasks in a control room:

1. Line operations
2. Line adjustments
3. Log sheets, other logs, scheduling
4. Sampling, testing, measurement tasks
5. Abnormal operations
6. Monitoring
7. Phone calls, radios, other types of communication
8. Communications in person
9. Administrative tasks required by job
10. Miscellaneous

If you want to avoid task-related fatigue from pressure, it is important to determine if the workload is optimal; neither too low nor too high. This requires that both employees and managers participate in the assessment of workload.