

Train Engine Drivers and Psychosocial Risk Factors

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The characteristics of the profession train engine driver, in the nature of their work, influence the occurrence of various health risk factors. They are exposed to a workspace that is limited, vibrations, uncomfortable seats and forced position. That can cause problems with the spine, malfunctions of organs in the chest area and abdominal cavities. Professional train engine drivers are also exposed to high blood pressure and cardiovascular system diseases due to the insufficient blood supply to the lower part of the body caused by prolonged sitting. Despite the fact that train engine driver is a profession that is seemingly comparable to similar professions in the transport sector, it is associated with specific risks that have a significant impact on their physical and physical health. Train engine drivers perform their work in a seated position, which is why ergonomics of the working environment (cockpit) is important. Due to safety devices (wake-ups), drivers are forced into recurrent movements, which additionally contribute to the feeling of monotony, which is a result of long track observation of the track. In addition to electromagnetic waves that have a negative impact on health, they also have a negative impact on the feeling of vibration due to the movement of locomotives along railway tracks (track). In addition to the factors affecting physical health, those who have a strong influence on the psychological state and are responsible for the anxiety of drivers are equally important.

Train engine drivers are exposed to psychological stress due to the possibility of a person under train accidents, which cause acute psychological disturbances, severe sleepiness due to night work, and because of irregular shift schedules.

The aim of our study was to investigate psychosocial risk factors among Slovene engine drivers and compare them with random Slovene professional drivers' samples in a cross-sectional study. Few studies address our topic; however, no study was done among Slovene engine drivers on this topic.

With the help of the tool psychosocial risks and absenteeism – OPSA, which is divided into two parts 1) a general part (which includes socio demographic and health related information about the employees as well as 2) the part that focuses on employee psychosocial load evaluation, we conducted survey on 259 drivers, mainly men.

The final contribution of the study helps experts and managers in the field of railway transport and, last but not least, the state as the owner of public railway infrastructure, to help design a successful model that will lead employees to greater security in the management of individual risk factors.

Keywords: train engine drivers, psychosocial risk factors, professional drivers