

FARE – Fatigue and Rosters in Ferry Operations

A European research initiative examining fatigue and working patterns in ferry operations.

Project overview

FARE is a European study commissioned by DG MOVE, European Commission. Its objective is to generate robust, evidence-based insights into seafarer fatigue in passenger ferry operations, with a clear ambition: **to improve safety, working conditions, and regulatory frameworks across the European maritime sector.**

The project addresses fatigue from a holistic and operational perspective through four main workstreams:

1. Assessment of fatigue levels and contributing factors, including psychological, cognitive, physical, and environmental drivers
2. Evaluation of work rosters and shift patterns (e.g., split shifts, night work, cumulative fatigue, onboard vs. commuting sleep)
3. Analysis of the impact of fatigue on safety and operations, including cognitive performance, situational awareness, and links to incidents
4. Development of mitigation strategies and policy recommendations aligned with international and European regulatory frameworks

Why operator participation matters

To ensure that findings reflect real operational environments, the study requires collaboration with selected ferry operators across all Europe.

Your participation helps ensure that:

- Recommendations are grounded in operational reality
- Business constraints and practical feasibility are considered
- Future policy discussions reflect sector diversity

Participation positions your organization as a proactive contributor to the evolution of fatigue risk management in the ferry sector.

What participation involves

Participating operators will collaborate with the consortium to:

- Provide anonymized roster data for scientific analysis
- Facilitate interviews with operational and management experts
- Enable structured onboard data collection, including:
 - Quantitative data (app-based sleep and fatigue logs)
 - Qualitative data (interviews and focus groups)
 - Objective measurements (activity monitoring and environmental indicators)

All activities are coordinated to minimize operational disruption.

What your organisation gains

Participation provides:

- Independent scientific analysis of fatigue exposure linked to roster design
- Insight into operational fatigue drivers specific to ferry environments
- Evidence to support internal safety and workforce strategies
- Contribution to sector-wide best practice development
- Strategic input into future European fatigue policy

This is not an audit or compliance review. It is a research partnership designed to produce actionable, scientifically robust recommendations.

A strong consortium

FARE brings together complementary expertise across science, operations, safety and maritime health:

- **Welbees** – Project coordinator and scientific lead
- **IMHA** – Strategic leadership and stakeholder engagement
- **ORPHY** – Physiological, environmental and psychometric expertise
- **Antwerp Maritime Academy (AMA)** – Operational and environmental analysis
- **CCMM** – Maritime medical expertise and biological data protocols
- **BEA mer** – Safety investigation expertise and incident analysis

Together, the consortium ensures scientific rigour, operational relevance, and regulatory alignment.

Governance & Confidentiality

- Commissioned by DG MOVE
- Independent scientific methodology
- Strict anonymisation and ethical compliance
- Results reported at aggregate level only

Timeline

- 14-month European research programme
- Structured milestones and reporting
- Final evidence-based recommendations delivered to the European Commission

Contact

We welcome the opportunity to discuss participation with your organisation: seafarer-fatigue@welbees.com