# Pager Rotation Duties

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# What is Pager Rotation?

- Pager Rotation is rotating responsibility among team members to respond to alerts or incidents outside of "normal" hours.

- Its goals are to ensure coverage, limit downtime and maintain service reliability.

# Challenge and Risks

- The challenges and risks it can impose onto the team would be
- Burnout and Fatigue from frequent or poorly managed rotations
- Alert fatigue due to non actionable alerts
- Knowledge gaps during escalation
- Poor handoffs between shifts
- Morale impact and high turnover risk

# Setting up a healthy pager rotation

- The size of the rotation pool should not be too small nor too large, recommendation of 6 to 8 people typical. Avoiding fewer than 4 no more than 12 people is ideal.

- The weekly shift should be common but can be used a shorter, such as a half week.

- Restricting hours or days for on call shifts can provide a peace of mind to workers.

# Managing alerts and escalation paths

- Providing clear escalation paths (primary, secondary, tertiary) with defined time windows.

- Should page one person at a time. Avoid paging multiple people unless needed.

- Using tools like PagerDuty, OpsGenie can leverage schedule restrictions.

# Hands-off and knowledge sharing

- At shift start, ensure access to all required systems, credentials, dashboards.

- At shift end/handoff, share unresolved incidents, known workarounds and ongoing context.

- Review post incident retrospectives, review alert trends, false positives.

# Metric and Measurements

- Should measure Mean time to acknowledge (MTTA), Mean time to resolve (MTTR), number of alerts per shift and escalation delays.

- Monitoring burnout, how often people are frequently being on call.

# References

- Truss Engineering. (n.d.). *On-call rotation best practices*. Truss Engineering Playbook. https://playbook.truss.dev/docs/incident-response/on-call?

- Datadog. (2023, March 7). *How we structure on-call rotations at Datadog*. Datadog. https://www.datadoghq.com/blog/on-call-rotations/