



**Communication Workers' Union  
Of Australia**

**Telecommunications and Services Branch**

**MEETING NOTICE**

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P.O. Box 511 Spring Hill  
QLD 4004  
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QLD 4000  
Secretary - Ian McLean

**APRIL  
GENERAL MEETING**

**WILL BE HELD AT:** UNION OFFICE, 93 FORTESCUE STREET,  
SPRING HILL

**ON:** WEDNESDAY, 13TH APRIL, 1994

**AT:** 5.30 P.M.

**BUSINESS:**

- (1) MINUTES
- (2) NEW MEMBERS
- (3) REPORTS
- (4) FINANCIAL REPORTS
- (5) CORRESPONDENCE
- (6) NOTICES OF MOTION:

**MOTIONS**

MOTION 1 - APTU UNION ELECTIONS  
MOTION 2 - GENERAL MEETING RULES  
MOTION 3 - 12 HOUR SHIFTS - AUSTRALIA POST

(7) GENERAL BUSINESS

**ATTENTION COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT MEMBERS:** THE COMMITTEE OF  
MANAGEMENT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THE SAME DATE AT 4.30 P.M. AT THE UNION OFFICE

**ROGER BATEMAN**  
Branch President

**IAN McLEAN**  
Branch Secretary

## **MOTION 1 - APTU UNION ELECTIONS - MOVED UNDER RULE 17**

"That Transitional Rule No. 123 be amended by the addition, under the heading of Postal and Telecommunications Branches, of words to Columns 1,2,3 and 4 as follows: -

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
APTU	New South Wales Branch Organisers R. Heiler & C. Airs whose term of office expires in October 1995	Branch Organiser	31 July 1994
APTU	Branch President (VIC) whose term of office expires on 31 July 1995	Branch President	31 July 1994

and that the National Conference determines that the proposed rule change to Rule 123 be treated as urgent for ratification purposes and a decision be finalised no later than 9/3/94. "

## **MOTION 2 - GENERAL MEETING RULES - MOVED UNDER RULE 16**

"In accordance with rules 10(b) and 16, I provide the following notice of motion: "

To amend rule 100 as follows: 100(c) where facilities for a telephone conference call for a Branch Committee of Management or Branch Executive Meeting have been provided and where a Branch General Meeting immediately follows that meeting, the facilities may be used by financial members to participate in the Branch General Meeting. Financial members are eligible to vote at such meetings, provided the voting is confirmed by letter, electronic mail or facsimile machine.

To amend rule 103 as follows: 103(g) where members participate in a Branch Committee of Management, Branch Executive or Branch General Meeting by telephone conference call in accordance with rule 100 sub-rules (a) & (b) they are considered to be part of the quorum for that meeting."

## **MOTION 3 - 12 HOUR SHIFTS - AUSTRALIA POST - MOVED UNDER RULE 16**

"That the 12 hour shift agreement Australia Post (technical staff) be considered by the CWU National Executive as a matter of urgency. The motion presently before the National Executive which would require endorsement by the CWU National Executive and then registration in the A.I.R.C. should be placed on the agenda of the next National Executive."

### **Reasons In Support**

Twelve hour shifts were introduced approximately 2 years ago on a 6 month trial basis. Members have found these new shift arrangements have suited their lifestyle. The health monitoring over the trial period in fact indicated an improvement in that area. Some 18 months have elapsed since the trial and Australia Post are carefully examining the associated additional costs. The agreement would in no way force 12 hour shifts on technical staff in mail exchanges. In no way would the agreement be binding on any other group in Australia Post.

## **RESULTS OF MARCH GENERAL MEETING**

**MOTION 1 - PUBLIC HOLIDAY GUIDELINES NDCQ**

**CARRIED**

KEEP FOR FILE

## AUSTRALIA POST TWELVE HOUR SHIFT OPERATIONS AGREEMENT 1992

### GUIDELINES FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF TWELVE HOUR SHIFT OPERATIONS

1. Twelve hour shifts will only apply to 24 hour stations. Conversion to twelve hour shifts does not automatically include all staff working at the subject station on shift rosters and must be agreed to by Australia Post, C.W.U. and the majority of shift staff.
2. Consideration of the introduction of twelve hour shifts should be on a centre by centre basis and must not adversely affect the viability of the station's operations with respect to service standards.
3. Twelve hour shifts are not appropriate to functions requiring heaving physical involvement or where an inappropriate working environment exists; (e.g. high levels of heat, noise, etc.).
4. Twelve hour shifts are not appropriate where a constant high level of physical or mental commitment is required.
5. Twelve hour shifts are not appropriate where short cycle repetitive roles are involved; (e.g. processing type activities).
6. Twelve hour shifts are not appropriate where uneven loadings in peaks increase demands in one shift over another.
7. As a general principle, the introduction of twelve hour shift operations shall not result in an increase in staff numbers or overtime. In exceptional circumstances where all other principles are met at a particular location, and an agreed health professional advises that existing rostering arrangements mean that strict adherence to this principle would result in adverse occupational health and safety impacts, variations from this principle may be considered in the light of that advice.
8. There must be the need for ongoing shift work at the station for at least two years.
9. Overtime is not to be performed where it will fall within a period of twelve hours either side of a normal day or night shift, except in emergency situations when immediate relief is unavailable. In such situations, overtime should be restricted to a maximum of two hours.
10. In all but exceptional circumstances, the maximum length of time a worker should have to remain on duty beyond rostered shift completion time is two hours.
11. If twelve hour shifts are in operation, the maximum number of consecutive night shifts to be rostered should be not more than three (3).
12. Staff called in for non-rostered duty should be twelve hours clear of duty on either side of the shift.
13. Swaps on the roster should be avoided as far as possible. Where required they should be subject to the discretion of the officer-in-charge, who is to ensure that adequate rest breaks are provided and fundamental twelve hour roster principles are applied.
14. Staff may rest (for a reasonable period) on the premises at the completion of a twelve hour shift if they do not feel competent to make an immediate departure for home.
15. Twelve hour shift work rosters must be developed in consultation with workers and appropriate unions.
16. Twelve hour roster operation in any station will be subject to review within the first twelve months of operation. If adverse indicators in performance or staff health are evident, twelve hour shifts would be discontinued.
17. The services of an agreed health professional will be used in the compilation of rosters.

#### 1 - SHIFT DURATION AND STARTING AND FINISHING TIMES

- 1.1 A working week is to be consistent with sub-clause 10 b (i) of the Australian Postal Commission Technical and Engineering Staff (Salaries and Specific Conditions of Employment) Award 1982.
- 1.2 Shifts will not exceed twelve hours and fifteen minutes duration.
- 1.3 Shift times will be 06.00 to 18.15 (day shift) and 18.00 to 06.15 (night shift). These times are open to discussion between both parties.

- 1.4 Once agreement has been reached on start and finish times, shift times are not to be varied by more than one half hour.

## **2 - PENALTY PAYMENTS**

- 2.1 Shift Duty.
- 2.2 Both the day and night shifts to attract penalty payments.
- 2.3 Penalty payments will be as per sub-clause 15 (a) - Shift duty, of the Postal General Conditions of Employment Award 1989.
- 2.4 Payment in lieu for an employee rostered off on a public holiday will be twelve hours fifteen minutes.

## **3 - OVERTIME**

- 3.1 Overtime is not to be performed where it will fall within a period of twelve hours either side of a normal day or night shift, except in emergency situations when immediate relief is unavailable. In such situations, overtime should be restricted to a maximum of two hours.

## **4 - RECALL**

- 4.1 Recall rates as per clause 16 - Emergency duty, of the Postal General Conditions of Employment Award 1989, should be paid to staff for emergency duty not on their roster where:
- (a) they are not told of an additional shift while on duty as per the Postal Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual 18.1.
  - (b) if they are called while off duty they are not given twelve hours notice of an additional shift.
- 4.2 That in the event of an officer being recalled under Emergency Duty Conditions, a Meal Allowance be payable for each 12 hour shift attendance, or where an attendance under Emergency Duty Conditions exceeds 5 hours and extends into a recognised meal break.

## **5 - ROSTERS**

- 5.1 Rosters are to be determined by consultation between local management, staff and CWU, with an input from an agreed health professional.
- 5.2 Alterations to rosters are only to be implemented following consultation between local management, staff and an agreed health professional.
- 5.3 Swaps on the roster should be avoided. Where required, they should be subject to the approval of the station officer-in-charge, who is to ensure that adequate between shift breaks are provided and fundamental twelve hour roster principles are applied, as described in paragraph 1.

## **6 - SHIFT CYCLE**

- 6.1 Cycles of shifts will be agreed between parties subject to the following conditions:
- (a) As a principle no more than four consecutive day shifts should be rostered.
  - (b) As a principle no more than three consecutive night shifts should be rostered.
  - (c) Working additional shifts beyond those rostered will be voluntary.
- 6.2 Consecutive night and day shifts are not to be rostered or performed.

## **7 - BREAKS**

- 7.1 Two paid meal breaks of 30 minutes duration are to be included in each shift. Staff may be required to remain "on-site" during these meal breaks but will be paid no penalty in situations where they are required to work for any or all of the break periods.
- 7.2 Provided that no employee is required to work for a continuous period of more than five hours without a meal break, the time of taking meal breaks is to be agreed by the parties.

## **8 - ANNUAL RECREATION LEAVE**

- 8.1 Accrual of annual recreation leave will be based on four weeks at 36 ¾ hours per week.
- 8.2 For the purposes of additional recreation leave provided by clause 23 of the Postal General Conditions of Employment Award 1989, the working of two twelve hour shifts shall be deemed to be the equivalent of the working of three ordinary shifts.

## **9 - SICK LEAVE**

- 9.1 Sick leave accrual will be based on 73 hours 30 minutes full and 73 hours 30 minutes half pay per annum.
- 9.2 The number of hours allowed without the production of a medical certificate in any sick leave year is to be regarded as 36 ¾ hours.
- 9.3 Three consecutive days sick leave for the purposes of the meaning of section 14.12.9 of the Postal Personnel Policies & Procedures Manual is to be read as 24 hours 30 minutes in consecutive shifts.
- 9.4 Sick leave will be denoted in hours and minutes.
- 9.5 Sick leave on a public holiday where an officer is rostered on duty will result in no debit from his or her sick leave credits and no payment of penalty rates or payment in lieu for the shift not worked.

## **10 - SPECIAL LEAVE**

- 10.1 Special leave entitlements are to be read as 24 hours 30 minutes.

## **11 - BEREAVEMENT LEAVE**

- 11.1 Leave entitlements under clause 27 of the General Conditions of Employment Award are to be read as 24 hours 30 minutes.

## **12 - OTHER LEAVE**

- 12.1 For all other leave entitlements, a twelve hour fifteen minute shift will be regarded in hours and minutes.

## **13 - LONG SERVICE LEAVE**

- 13.1 All details and entitlements relating to long service leave will remain unaltered, i.e. accrual will be at the rate of 3/10 calendar month for each completed year of service.

## **14 - HIGHER DUTIES**

- 14.1 Performance in another position for one shift will, subject to normal higher duties principles, accrue twelve hours fifteen minutes (1 day 4 hours 54 minutes based on a 7 hour 21 minute day) towards a higher duties increment.
- 14.2 A higher duties increment will accrue after 261 days, based on a 7 hour 21 minute day, in any two year period.
- 14.3 Leave which affects higher duty service will do so at the equivalent rate of one shift (twelve hours fifteen minutes) per absence, except for part shift absences.

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02/15/94 08:48 061 03 6635073 HUMAN RESOURCES 003  
02/15/94 08:49 061 03 6635073 HUMAN RESOURCES 004  
02/15/94 08:47 061 03 6635073 HUMAN RESOURCES 002

*TO - GAVIN STOWIE.*

DRAFT

## AGREEMENT FOR EXTENDED SHIFT ARRANGEMENTS FOR TECHNICAL STAFF

### A. SCOPE

1. This agreement applies to the introduction of extended shift arrangements for technical staff employed in mail processing facilities (commonly known as 12 hour shifts).
2. The agreement is between the Australian Postal Corporation and the Communication Workers' Union (Telecommunications and Services Division).
3. The agreement shall operate for 2 years from the time it is agreed to by both parties.
4. During the period of the agreement any disputes or problems over the application or interpretation of the agreement shall be resolved in accordance with the dispute settling procedure outlined in the 1992 Enterprise Agreement between the parties to this agreement.

### B. OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES

1. This agreement only applies to Technical Staff located at Mail Processing Facilities. The introduction of extended shifts will not be automatic and will be subject to consultation and agreement with staff, the staff organisation and Australia Post.
2. The introduction of these extended shifts will be on a centre by centre basis and must not adversely affect the viability and operations of the Mail Processing Facility.
3. The introduction of extended shifts shall not result in an increase in either staff numbers or costs.

4. Extended shifts are not appropriate to functions requiring heavy physical involvement or where an inappropriate working environment exists (eg : high levels of heat, noise, etc).
5. Extended shifts are not appropriate where a constant high level of physical or mental commitment is involved.
6. Extended shifts are not appropriate where short cycle repetitive roles are involved (eg : processing type activities).

## C. CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

### 1. SHIFT DURATION

- 1.1 The ordinary hours of duty shall be 36-3/4 per week or an average of 36-3/4 per week over a cycle of shifts.
- 1.2 The daily hours of duty will be a minimum of 10 hours and may be up to 12 hours 15 minutes including meal breaks.
- 1.3 Shift times will be subject to consultation between the parties, must take into consideration operational requirements and will be subject to regular review.
- 1.4 The actual hours and minutes worked may vary at different mail processing facilities to suit local requirements.
- 1.5 Shift lengths may be varied to better cover operational needs and staff social needs.

### 2. SHIFT CYCLES / ROSTERS

- 2.1 Rosters are to cater for operational requirements and are to be determined by consultation between local management, staff and the relevant staff organisation, and, where deemed necessary, with an input from an agreed OHS Adviser. ( See Section 15 )
- 2.2 The cycle of shifts is to be agreed between parties subject to the following conditions:-
  - (1) As a general principle no more than three consecutive day shifts should be rostered, but in any event no more than four will be worked.

- (2) As a general principle no more than two consecutive night shifts should be rostered, but in any event no more than three will be worked.
  - (3) Working additional shifts beyond those rostered will be voluntary.
- 2.3 Consecutive night and day shifts are not to be rostered or performed.
  - 2.4 Alterations to rosters may be implemented following consultation between the parties concerned and, where deemed necessary, by an agreed OHS Adviser.
  - 2.5 Roster swaps should be avoided. Where required they will be subject to the approval of the Officer-In-Charge. All parties must ensure that adequate between-shift breaks are provided and fundamental Extended Shift Roster Principles are applied.
  - 2.6 Staff called in for non-rostered duty, eg Change of Shift (Personnel, Policy and Procedures - Clause 18.12.13), should be 10 hours clear of duty on either side of the shift.
  - 2.7 Staff may rest (for a reasonable period) at the mail processing facility at the completion of an extended shift if they do not feel competent to make an immediate departure for home..

### 3. PENALTY PAYMENTS

- 3.1 Shift duty penalty payments shall be in accordance with Clause 15 of the Australia Post General Conditions of Employment Award 1989.
- 3.2 Pursuant to Clause 11 (j) of the Australia Post General Conditions of Employment Award 1989, where an officer is not able to be released for a days leave the employee shall be paid, in its stead, one day's pay at the ordinary rate.

### 4. OVERTIME

- 4.1 Overtime is not to be performed where it will fall within a period of 12 hours either side of a normal day or night shift, except in emergency situations when immediate relief is unavailable. In such situations overtime shall be restricted to a maximum of 2 hours and is to be continuous with the normal shift.

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## 5. EMERGENCY DUTY

- 5.1 Emergency Duty rates, in accordance with Clause 16 of the Australia Post General Conditions of Employment Award 1989, shall be paid where staff were not informed of the requirement whilst on duty.
- 5.2 Emergency duty shall not apply to staff whose duty for the day is varied by alteration of the commencement of the scheduled shift to meet an emergency.

## 6. MEAL BREAKS

- 6.1 The type of meal break, ie. paid or unpaid, shall be agreed between State / local management, staff and the staff organisation.
- 6.2 Provided that no employee is required to work for a continuous period of more than five hours without a meal break, the time of taking the meal breaks shall be agreed between the parties.
- 6.3 Staff shall remain on-site and be available for duty during paid meal breaks.

## 7. ANNUAL RECREATION LEAVE

- 7.1 Accrual of Annual Recreation Leave will be based on four weeks at 36 3/4 hours per week.
- 7.2 For the purposes of additional Recreation Leave provided by Clause 23 of the Australia Post General Conditions of Employment Award 1989, the working of two 12 Hour Shifts, for example, shall be deemed to be the equivalent of working three ordinary shifts of 7 hours 21 minutes duration.
- 7.3 Additional recreation leave for 7 day shift workers provided by Clause 23 of the Australia Post General Conditions of Employment Award 1989 shall not exceed 36 hours 45 minutes.

## 8. SICK LEAVE

- 8.1 Sick Leave accrual will be based on 73 hours 30 minutes full and 73 hours 30 minutes half pay per annum.
- 8.2 The number of hours allowed without the production of a medical certificate in any Sick Leave year is to be regarded as 36 3/4 hours.

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HUMAN RESOURCES

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8.3 Three consecutive days Sick Leave for the purposes of the meaning of Clause 14.12.9 (ii) of Australia Post's Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual shall be read as 24 hours 30 minutes in consecutive shifts.

8.4 Sick Leave will be denoted in hours and minutes.

8.5 Sick Leave on a Public Holiday where an employee is rostered on duty will result in no debit from the employee's leave credits and no payment of penalty rates or payment in lieu for the shift not worked.

## 9. SPECIAL LEAVE

9.1 Special Leave entitlements are to read as 3 shifts.

## 10. BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

10.1 Leave entitlements under Clause 27 of the Australia Post General Conditions of Employment Award 1989 are to be read as 3 shifts.

## 11. OTHER LEAVE

11.1 For all other leave entitlements, an extended shift will be regarded in hours and minutes.

## 12. LONG SERVICE LEAVE

12.1 All details and entitlements relating to Long Service Leave will remain unaltered, ie accrual will be at the rate of 3/10 calendar month for each completed year of service.

## 13. HIGHER DUTIES

13.1 Performance in another position for one shift will, subject to normal higher duties principles, accrue that amount of time (eg - a shift of 11 hours 45 minutes would count for 1 day 4 hours 24 minutes based on a 7 hour 21 minute day) towards a higher duties increment.

13.2 A higher duties increment will accrue after 261 days, based on a 7 hour 21 minute day, in any two year period.

- 13.3 Leave which affects higher duty service will do so at the equivalent rate of one shift per absence, except for part shift absences.

#### 14. STAFFING

- 14.1 The introduction of extended shifts shall not result in an increase in staff numbers.
- 14.2 Staffing arrangements for extended shifts shall be the subject of consultation and agreement between staff and management on a facility basis.

#### 15. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 15.1 To identify and control safety and health hazards associated with extended shift rosters and to facilitate compliance with the OHS ( Commonwealth Employment ) Act, 1991, the impact of proposed rosters on staff health and safety is to be determined during the development of the rosters. The assistance of a mutually agreed OHS Adviser is to be sought to determine this impact and, if necessary, to advise on alternative rosters.
- 15.2 Consultation between management, unions and staff on the development and implementation of extended shift rosters is to be in accordance with the Australia Post OHS Agreement.
- 15.3 Extended shift operations within any mail processing facility will be subject to review involving technical staff, Health and Safety Representatives, management and the facility's OHS Committee.

#### 16. REVIEW PROCESS

- 16.1 If adverse indicators in performance or staff health and safety become evident to either management or staff, the roster is to be revised or discontinued after appropriate joint consultation.
- 16.2 Where there are other significant changes in circumstances which may warrant either party withdrawing from extended shift operations the conditions applying prior to the introduction of the extended shift operation will apply.

## 17. TRAINING

- 17.1 Staff undergoing training will be required to observe the working arrangements applying at the training venue.
- 17.2 In most cases staff will be aware of their requirement to attend a training course well in advance and, if possible, any entitlements to accumulated time off should be utilised before commencing the training course. Where it is not possible to avail of the entitlement beforehand, the credit should be availed of as soon as possible on return from the training course. Alternatively, staff with a credit in working hours have the choice of taking payment for that time in credit. Such payment will be at the normal rate of pay.
- 17.3 Where a debit has been incurred as a result of a staff member's attendance at a training course, either in the week prior or the week following, there will be no requirement to make up the time shortfall:

Provided that there is no change in the roster prior to commencing the training course.

## 18 RELIEF STAFF

- 18.1 Relief staff will receive at least 7 days notice (except in the case of illness of an employee) when required to provide relief for staff working extended shifts. Relief staff, who are not normally required to work extended shifts, will regard the extended hours as ordinary duty and not as overtime.
- 18.2 Relief staff who build up an excess of hours may either:-
- (1) be given time off in lieu at the earliest opportunity and before 2 months has elapsed since coming off the extended shift roster, or
  - (2) take payment for that time in credit and such payment will be at the normal rate of pay.
- 18.3 Relief staff who are in debit will be required to make up the required time before 2 months has elapsed. If, however, it is not possible for operational reasons to make up the shortfall within the 2 month period, management may waive this requirement.

Australia  
Post

POST

Headquarters  
GPO BOX 1777Q  
MELBOURNE VIC 3001  
324 Exhibition Street  
Melbourne, VictoriaGeneral Manager  
Australia Post  
QUEENSLAND

7 October 1992

Attention - Manager, Human Resources

## GUIDELINES FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF EXTENDED SHIFTS.

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide for comment a draft Agreement for Extended Shift Arrangements for Technical Staff in Mail Processing Facilities. It is intended that the Agreement be negotiated with the Communication Workers' Union (Technical and Services Division) in accordance with the facilitative provisions of the current ATEA/ATPOA Award. (Reference also Enterprise Agreement, Attachment 1, Clause 2 - Hours of Duty)

In South Australia, where technical staff at the Adelaide Mail Exchange have been trialling 12 Hour Shifts for over 12 months, similar Principles and Conditions of Service to those contained in the draft Agreement have been adopted. The attached documentation has been drafted taking account of the experience during that time, and includes contributions from both the management and staff in that facility. There remain, however, some differences of opinion relating to some aspects of the Conditions of Service, eg whether sick leave absences should be measured by the number of shifts, or by the number of hours.

It is understood that 12 Hour Shifts have been introduced into the Underwood Mail Centre and that the arrangements are based largely on what has happened in Adelaide. 12 Hour Shifts have also been introduced recently in the Hobart Mail Centre. In these circumstances it is important that a consensus is reached on conditions of service, etc. so that an Agreement can be reached with the Communication Workers' Union, Technical and Services Division (previously ATEA).

P/C I.R.C.C. 9/10/92

Please obtain input from R/M Mail Network and provide state comments. Mr Don Watson, Mail Network Region, & Mr Graham T. Lecker, C.W.U.A., have recently discussed this matter.

AS.

7 OCT 1992

The attached Agreement contains clauses which cover both Operational Principles and Conditions of Service for extended shift arrangements. These clauses have been developed along the lines of a Section 115 Agreement reached between Telecom and the then ATEA on this matter in 1990, which was subsequently certified by the AIRC.

In the meantime, if Technical staff in Mail Processing Facilities in your State are either currently working 12 Hour Shifts or are contemplating the use of such shifts it is suggested that the provisions in the attached draft agreement be applied on a trial basis until formal agreement is reached with the CWU (Technical and Services Division). The Federal Office of the Union concurs with this approach.

It is suggested that a participative approach involving technical staff be adopted when considering this draft agreement.

Would you please provide State comments and suggestions on the draft Agreement by 31 October 1992, please. It is our intention to negotiate an agreement with the CWU on extended shifts for technical staff as early as possible given that developments are advanced in several States.

It has also been suggested that extended shift arrangements may be appropriate in other technical areas, eg State Repair Centres or Workshops. Whereas the focus of this Agreement relates to Mail Processing Facilities any views your State may have on its possible application to other technical areas would be appreciated.



Perry McVey  
for Chief Manager  
NATIONAL OPERATIONS

Telephone -	(03) 2047417
Facsimile -	(03) 6635073
File Reference -	H901052-1

## **DRAFT**

# **AGREEMENT FOR EXTENDED SHIFT ARRANGEMENTS FOR TECHNICAL STAFF**

### **A. SCOPE**

1. This agreement applies to the introduction of 12 Hour shifts for technical staff employed in mail processing facilities.
2. The agreement is between the Australian Postal Corporation and the Communication Workers' Union (Telecommunications and Services Division).
3. The agreement shall operate for 2 years from the time it is agreed to by both parties.
4. During the period of the agreement any disputes or problems over the application or interpretation of the agreement shall be resolved in accordance with the dispute settling procedure outlined in the 1992 Enterprise Agreement between the parties to this agreement.

### **B. OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES**

1. This agreement only applies only to Technical Staff located at Mail Processing Facilities. The introduction of extended shifts will not be automatic and will be subject to consultation and agreement with staff, the staff organisation and Australia Post.
2. The introduction of these extended shifts will be on a centre by centre basis and must not adversely affect the viability and operations of the Mail Processing Facility.
3. The introduction of extended shifts shall not result in an increase in either staff numbers or costs.

## C. CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

### 1. SHIFT DURATION

- 1.1 The ordinary hours of duty shall be 36-3/4 per week or an average of 36-3/4 per week over a cycle of shifts.
- 1.2 The daily hours of duty shall not exceed 11 hours 45 minutes plus 1 unpaid meal break of 30 minutes duration.
- 1.3 Shift times will be subject to consultation between the parties, must take into consideration operational requirements and will be subject to regular review.
- 1.4 The actual hours and minutes worked may vary at different mail processing facilities to suit local requirements.

### 2. SHIFT CYCLES / ROSTERS

- 2.1 Rosters are to cater for operational requirements and are to be determined by consultation between local management, staff and the relevant staff organisation, and, where deemed necessary, with an input from an agreed OHS Adviser. ( See Section 16 )
- 2.2 The cycle of shifts is to be agreed between parties subject to the following conditions:-
  - (1) As a general principle no more than three consecutive day shifts should be rostered, but in any event no more than four will be worked.
  - (2) As a general principle no more than two consecutive night shifts should be rostered, but in any event no more than three will be worked. ///
  - (3) Working additional shifts beyond those rostered will be voluntary.
- 2.3 Consecutive night and day shifts are not to be rostered or performed.
- 2.4 Alterations to rosters may be implemented following consultation between the parties concerned and, where deemed necessary, by an agreed OHS Adviser.

.3.

- 2.5 Roster swaps should be avoided. Where required they will be subject to the approval of the Officer-In-Charge. All parties must ensure that adequate between-shift breaks are provided and fundamental Extended Shift Roster Principles are applied.
- 2.6 Staff called in for non-rostered duty, eg Change of Shift (Personnel, Policy and Procedures - Clause 18.12.13), should be 12 hours clear of duty on either side of the shift.

3. PENALTY PAYMENTS

- 3.1 Shift duty penalty payments shall be in accordance with Clause 15 of the Australia Post General Conditions of Employment Award 1989.
- 3.2 Pursuant to Clause 11 (j) of the Australia Post General Conditions of Employment Award 1989, where an officer is not able to be released for a days leave the employee shall be paid in its stead one normal day's pay (ie either 7 hours 21 minutes or 8 hours 10 minutes depending on the conditions in existence prior to commencing Extended Shift operations) at the ordinary rate.

4. OVERTIME

- 4.1 Overtime is not to be performed where it will fall within a period of 12 hours either side of a normal day or night shift, except in emergency situations when immediate relief is unavailable. In such situations overtime shall be restricted to a maximum of 2 hours.

5. EMERGENCY DUTY

- 5.1 Emergency Duty rates, in accordance with Clause 16 of the Australia Post General Conditions of Employment Award 1989, shall be paid where staff were not informed of the requirement whilst on duty.
- 5.2 Emergency duty shall not apply to staff whose duty for the day is varied by alteration of the commencement of the scheduled shift to meet an emergency.

6. MEAL BREAKS

- 6.1 Where two meal breaks are required on a shift, one paid meal break of 30 minutes duration and a second unpaid break of 45 minutes duration, are to be taken.
- 6.2 Provided that no employee is required to work for a continuous period of more than five hours without a meal break, the time of taking the meal breaks shall be agreed between the parties.
- 6.3 Staff shall remain on-site and be available for duty during paid meal breaks.

7. ANNUAL RECREATION LEAVE

- 7.1 Accrual of Annual Recreation Leave will be based on four weeks at 36 3/4 hours per week.
- 7.2 For the purposes of additional Recreation Leave provided by Clause 23 of the Australia Post General Conditions of Employment Award 1989, the working of two 12 Hour Shifts, for example, shall be deemed to be the equivalent of working three ordinary shifts of 7 hours 21 minutes duration.

8. SICK LEAVE

- 8.1 Sick Leave accrual will be based on 73 hours 30 minutes full and 73 hours 30 minutes half pay per annum.
- 8.2 The number of hours allowed without the production of a medical certificate in any Sick Leave year is to be regarded as 36 3/4 hours.
- 8.3 Three consecutive days Sick Leave for the purposes of the meaning of Clause 14.12.9 (ii) of Australia Post's Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual shall be read as 24 hours 30 minutes in consecutive shifts.
- 8.4 Sick Leave will be denoted in hours and minutes.
- 8.5 Sick Leave on a Public Holiday where an employee is rostered on duty will result in no debit from his or her sick leave credits and no payment of penalty rates or payment in lieu for the shift not worked.

9. SPECIAL LEAVE

- 9.1 Special Leave entitlements are to read as 24 hours 30 minutes.

10. BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

- 10.1 Leave entitlements under Clause 27 of the Australia Post General Conditions of Employment Award 1989 are to be read as 24 hours 30 minutes.

11. OTHER LEAVE

- 11.1 For all other leave entitlements, an extended shift will be regarded in hours and minutes.

12. LONG SERVICE LEAVE

- 12.1 All details and entitlements relating to Long Service Leave will remain unaltered, ie accrual will be at the rate of 3/10 calendar month for each completed year of service.

13. HIGHER DUTIES

- 13.1 Performance in another position for one shift will, subject to normal higher duties principles, accrue that amount of time (eg - a shift of 11 hours 45 minutes would count for 1 day 4 hours 24 minutes based on a 7 hour 21 minute day) towards a higher duties increment.
- 13.2 A higher duties increment will accrue after 261 days, based on a 7 hour 21 minute day, in any two year period.
- 13.3 Leave which affects higher duty service will do so at the equivalent rate of one shift per absence, except for part shift absences.

14. STAFFING

- 14.1 The introduction of extended shifts shall not result in an increase in staff numbers.

- 14.2 Staffing arrangements for extended shifts shall be the subject of consultation and agreement between staff and management on a facility basis.

## 15. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 15.1 To identify and control safety and health hazards associated with extended shift rosters and to facilitate compliance with the OHS ( Commonwealth Employment ) Act, 1991, the impact of proposed rosters on staff health and safety is to be determined during the development of the rosters. The assistance of a mutually agreed OHS Adviser is to be sought to determine this impact and, if necessary, to advise on alternative rosters.
- 15.2 Consultation between management, unions and staff on the development and implementation of extended shift rosters is to be in accordance with the Australia Post OHS Agreement.
- 15.3 Extended shift operations within any mail processing facility will be subject to review involving technical staff, Health and Safety Representatives and the facility's OHS Committee.

## 16. REVIEW PROCESS

- 16.1 If adverse indicators in performance or staff health and safety are evident, the roster is to be revised or discontinued.
- 16.2 Where there are other significant changes in circumstances which may warrant either party withdrawing from extended shift operations the conditions applying prior to the introduction of the extended shift operation will apply.

# IMPLEMENTATION OF 12 HOUR SHIFTS: LEGAL AND INDUSTRIAL FACTORS

Graeme Hitchell

The oldest Union in Australia is the Operative Stonemasons Society. At a meeting of the New South Wales section of that body held in the Parramatta Hotel, Sydney, 22nd September 1855 the following resolution was moved by Hugh Laundry, and seconded by Thomas Eaves:

"That in the opinion of this Society, eight hours should be the maximum of a day's labour."

This was carried unanimously and in less than a fortnight 8 hours became the accepted period of work, the only opposition coming from Tooth Bros., just then building their new brewery.

The Operative Stonemasons of Melbourne moved in the matter early in 1856, and after securing the extension of their own society and the cooperation of some other trades, successfully launched the 8 hour day at a monster meeting held in the Queens Theatre on 26th March, 1856 where it was agreed that it should come into force on 21st April. This date is now celebrated with an annual 8 hour demonstration.

That's a quote from W.G. Spence's book, *Australia's Awakening*. I thought it was a useful opening considering my first experience with 12 hour shifts and the Trade Union Movement. It was in 1984 when a colleague and I were collared a Union Secretary in a corridor during a negotiating session over a log of claims.

"Peter", he said, preferring to address his remarks to our advocate, "You've got to be 'expletive deleted' joking about this 12 hour day claim. There's a monument to (I think) W.G. Spence in Trades Hall for achieving the 8 hour day, I'm not about to have one erected in my honour for the 12 hour day." There ended the conversation.

The history of a 12 hour roster

At the time, the company interested in 12 hours shifts was undergoing considerable increased demand for its products and had decided to expand its production by working 6 days a week on a 24 hour basis. At the time, employees worked an 8 hour, 3 shift roster on a 5 day basis.

There were all the usual and understandable concerns about working weekends and public holidays and the company wanted to make the change as palatable as possible, not necessarily by throwing buckets of money at the problem but by good shift design. This inevitably led to a consideration of the 12 hour concept which had been receiving a fair amount of publicity and, by the response to today's seminar, that interest has not diminished.

To the employees the idea of working three days on and four off was great. The employers were initially indifferent to the concept but were heartened by the positive response to what would otherwise be an unpalatable change.

This was in late 1984 and the outcome of the negotiations I referred to earlier was to reach an agreement with the Union to discuss the existing 'production problems' and how they might be overcome. This agreement was on the basis that 12 hour shifts should not be discussed although they had been canvassed and debated by the employees. The first negotiation was awkward, to say the least, when the various parties sat down to discuss

production problems whilst having agreed privately not to discuss the 12 hour option.

At a mass meeting of employees the 8 hour roster which was proposed at this conference was rejected. It was agreed to ask the experts from the Brain-

Behaviour Research Institute (BBRI) to prepare a report on the alternatives. The report was very pragmatic, setting out the pros and cons of the two roster types. The OK for 12 hour shifts was given after a detailed objective assessment of the mental and physical demands of the work being carried out on 8 hour shifts. Final approval came after a follow-up study done some months after 12 hour shifts had been installed.

#### Union attitudes to 12 hour shifts

The reason for the story is to indicate that there existed considerable opposition to the 12 hour day from Trade Unions early in 1985. I suspect there would have also been considerable opposition to such a proposal in 1856.

Nevertheless I believe unions are now coming to grips with the situation and currently the ACTU have a committee reviewing their attitude towards the 12 hour day. Already a number of unions have agreed to introduce 12 hour shifts and there have been variations to Federal Awards allowing for such working hours.

Whilst this Committee has not finalised its deliberations and therefore not yet formulated a policy, I do know that discussions are well advanced. A draft policy has already been prepared although not available for public consumption.

At this stage it would appear that the ACTU will allow the further introduction of 12 hour shift work provided the following criteria are met. (By way of a disclaimer I am not suggesting that what follows is official ACTU policy but rather what my own experience suggests is most likely).

#### The acceptability of 12 hour shifts

Twelve hour shifts would be acceptable: where there is a continuous work process or where other special circumstances can be shown to exist; where 12 hour shift work will not impose excessive physical or mental

workload; where, after a proper examination of the possible injurious effects to employee health and social well-being, there are demonstrated benefits for the workers concerned; with the agreement of Union(s) and the support of an overwhelming majority of affected workers, and in conjunction with possibilities of reducing working time generally.

The Unions seem to be genuinely concerned for the well-being of their members and as you might expect, alongside the criteria first mentioned, is their need to negotiate some control mechanisms. The controls seem not unreasonable and if I'm not mistaken, they closely follow the principles enunciated by the BBRI.

These recommendations are:

- Have an absolute maximum of two night shifts in succession
- Have at least a 12 hour interval between shifts
- Have a short cycle period with regular rotations
- Have a forward rotating pattern
- Include at least two free weekends each month
- Have the day shift start not earlier than 6 am
- Allow workers some flexibility about shift change times and shift length
- Provide where practicable, an extended rest period in addition to normal breaks during night shift. Breaks should occur at the same time each night

#### Advantages for industry

Now, despite what might appear to be a formidable number of hurdles to cross before introducing a 12 hour shift, don't be put off. If the circumstances existing in your organisation are such that a 12 hour shift could be useful then

don't be reluctant because of the industrial difficulties.

The 'industrial' arguments are distinct from the physiological and philosophical considerations. They are listed here, not necessarily in order of preference.

1. The concept of longer hours per day in order to take a day in lieu is well established with the 35, 36 and 38 hour week campaigns.
2. The rostered day off is achieved by 'banking' time each day and, in essence, 12 hour shifts are no different.
3. Labour requirements are no more or less than they would be with 8 hour shifts.
4. Considering there is no labour saving in absolute terms, it follows shift penalties should remain constant.
5. There is no evidence that 12 hour shifts work to the detriment of employees in monetary terms.
6. Finally, roster change provides an excellent opportunity for employees to participate in the design of their roster and have a say in how the work is performed. Naturally their choice is not limited to rosters specified in existing awards which may have been written many years ago.

Industrially, I see no reason why these rosters could not be considered for day workers (subject to the usual health and safety considerations). After all, with the move to extended trading hours for shops it may well be timely for such a review of day hours. Why should the advantages be limited to people who work irregular hours such as shift workers?

Are these shifts appropriate for a production operation that only works day work and where maintenance

employees regularly work weekends (on overtime) because machinery is not available during normal hours? The reduction of overtime has been a constant cry of the Trade Union Movement over the years and I believe such redesign is worthy of consideration.

By way of warning, there are some employees who feel 12 hour shifts are too long, too difficult, too radical or all of the above. It is important to give these people the choice of alternate work rather than bludgeoning them into submission.

#### Implementing a 12 hour roster

What are the practicalities, assuming one reaches agreement with the appropriate Trade Union?

Broadly speaking, there are two ways to gain the legal status required to operate 12 hour shifts. The first of these is by way of registered agreement, usually on a consent basis. Provided Union support exists this becomes a formality which can be achieved fairly quickly.

The second format is by way of award variation and this particularly applies to those operating in larger industries with "in-house" awards. Creating a separate schedule (perhaps limiting coverage to the parties involved) within an existing award is possible.

State jurisdiction can be slightly more complicated but again can be overcome in a number of ways.

The Trade Union Movement is, (and I might add in many cases for good reason) a little cautious of management initiatives. The 12 hour day is a good example and I remember very well a case where a Union official said to me, "Graeme, I'm damned if I know what's in it for you, but let me tell you I'm going to find out".

An award variation or a registered agreement will be essential to avoid the risk of allegations of breach in award. With the number of awards in this

country, each having individual variations, generalisations are difficult but let me try nonetheless.

My own approach to introducing this change is to review the conditions of employment closely and to list the key variations or alterations that are necessary. Some of the main ones are summarised here.

### Annual leave

Most awards specify a clause along the lines of: "A period of 28 consecutive days' leave shall be allowed annually to an employee after 12 months continuous service".

Such a provision requires no modification provided the roster allows for the correct number of hours during each 28 consecutive days or in the case of 7 day shift workers, one extra week of leave.

~~Pro-rata leave is taken in accordance with the roster, so that an employee may take one calendar week's leave while his/her annual leave entitlement would be reduced by say, only 24 hours (i.e. 2 times 12 hours), if that is what the roster provided.~~

The golden rule in this area is to treat leave on an hours basis and debit leave balances in line with the roster. People will tend to take their leave corresponding to the periods of time they are rostered off, but at the end of the day the situation will balance itself out.

### Sick Leave

Here again awards that specify sick leave in hours rather than days are easier to administer. An employee entitled to, say, 64 hours sick leave per annum simply reduces her/his entitlement by the number of hours she/he would have received ordinary pay for the period of illness.

Employers with awards that specify a certain number of days per annum will be potentially faced with the problem of renegotiation of that provision or

accepting the possibility of increased payments for sick leave. My strong recommendation is to convert the provision to hours.

### Shiftwork

This clause is the primary area for change (for those awards with such a provision). Alterations need to be made to the definitions generally contained in such clauses dealing with day work, afternoon and night shift.

With a 12 hour roster there is really no need to retain a definition for an afternoon shift. Therefore definitions are needed only for day and night hours. Day work should be defined as being a day or shift starting on or after, say, 6 am (to allow for early starting times) and finishing on, or before 8 pm. This dramatically changes the span of hours for day work but is necessary to allow for the extended length of the shift and for the options of starting and finishing times.

Night shift similarly needs to be broadened so as to allow for a shift to start on or after 6 pm (to correspond with knock-off times for day work) and to finish on or before 8 am. Times outside these hours would be possible but I suspect would attract some opposition in terms of what traditionally constitutes day and night work.

The other alteration to the clause is in the area of the ordinary limits of work per day, week, 14 or 28 consecutive days. For seven day shiftworkers these are usually:

8 in any day  
48 in any one week  
88 in 14 consecutive days  
160 in 28 consecutive days

In the case of seven or five day 12 hour shiftworkers, the limits should be adjusted to:

12 in any day  
48 in any one week  
88 in 14 consecutive days  
160 in 28 consecutive days

Shift loadings as a percentage don't require much alteration other than to delete afternoon shift loading.

Some few awards specify a monetary payment for shiftwork. While I don't speak from experience, I assume these would require adjustment to maintain earnings on the same basis as under an 8 hour system.

Some careful review of the particular roster is required at this stage to ensure costs and earnings are not affected. It is impossible to generalise without knowing the specifics of the award and roster.

From my experience it is possible to construct the roster and penalties to avoid difficulties but it does require some careful number crunching.

### Hours of Work

If 12 hour days were to be considered for day workers some alteration to most awards would be necessary. Normally shiftworkers are covered by a separate clause dealing with shiftwork hours and I will deal with this separately.

The alteration necessary for day workers would be an extension to the limit of working hours to 12 per day.

### Contract of Employment

Generally these clauses deal with provisions for hiring and termination and those relating to notice and reasons for dismissals. These clauses may include reference to hours per week which may conflict with a 12 hour roster although with the introduction of 38 hour week and rostered days off, many awards have been altered to allow for differing hours per week.

### Overtime

Most awards provide for overtime to be paid after an employee works beyond or outside ordinary hours. In the case of 12 hour shiftworkers this commences with work beyond 12 hours.

It is inappropriate in my view to consider a roster which pays overtime rates after 8 hours or, as has been suggested to me in the case of the Metal Award, paid overtime after 10 hours.

### Meal Breaks

The union position on the number of meal breaks tends to be an expectation of two meal breaks in each 12 hour shift. Whilst this is a negotiable point it is one that has been conceded in the rosters in which I have been involved.

### Bereavement Leave or Compassionate Leave

Awards vary considerably, but they generally provide one, two or three days paid leave to employees who have lost a close relative for the attendance of the funeral and for other purposes associated with bereavement. If this is transferred to the 12 hour award it gives the impression of increasing the time allowed for this purpose. Three 12 hour days are more expensive than three 8 hour days.

One must take into account however that people are rostered to work on a considerably reduced basis. Under an 8 hour day, (40 hour week) people are rostered to work 260 days per annum or 71% of the available days. Under a 12 hour roster they would be scheduled to work 173 or 47% of the available days. It follows, statistically speaking, that there should be fewer claims under this provision.

If this provision can be expressed in hours the problem is eliminated. I can only repeat my earlier remarks that this change will facilitate leave taking, whatever the type.

### Payment of Wages

No specific variation is required but consideration needs to be given to the payment of employees who for rostering reasons may not be at work for several days at a time. The payment of wages by direct deposit has made this task significantly easier and

employees have utilised this method of payment extensively.

### Long Service Leave

Like annual leave, long service leave is expressed in terms such as "13 weeks leave after 15 years continuous service". Provided the concept of hours is retained when an employee takes long service leave, an amount is deducted from that entitlement in line with the rostered time during the period of absence.

### Average pay

Finally, let me specifically discuss the question of payment of wages. Those of you who have been through the reduction from 40 hours to 35 or 36 hours have no doubt agreed to review or introduce average pay. I believe this should be discussed extensively before the introduction of 12 hour shifts.

Communication is essential so that employees are aware of their entitlements and how their wages are calculated. It is a hygiene factor, but one which must be dealt with carefully and in considerable detail.

An average pay system has the advantage of delivering to the employee a similar sum of money each week (except for irregular overtime). However it has the disadvantage of being complex and difficult to communicate. Rosters which have varying penalties for day, night, Saturday, Sunday and public holidays require averaging over a lengthy period when calculating average pay.

In contrast, a system of paying for the work done in each pay period has the advantage that it is easier to reconcile the hours worked with the payment received. The disadvantage is that variations can be dramatic from week to week, particularly with the longer shifts. Such variations are usually unacceptable to 12 hour workers.

Fortnightly or monthly pay can reduce these variations, but in the private sector

such award provisions are relatively uncommon.

One solution which I have used successfully is to strike an hourly rate for the work which includes all the various penalties. Provided employees stay within the roster this will average out over a period of time.

### Conclusion

While there has been a long standing affection for the 8 hour day by Unions in this country, the last few years have seen a greater willingness on their part to discuss and agree to different arrangements for hours of work. Union leadership has been willing to take a few risks. There has been a shift in attitude and I believe that provides the opportunity for companies to explore these rosters as a means of improving workforce quality of life, increasing the involvement of employees in decision making while at the same time achieving a substantial adjustment to the way awards are structured. This form of restructuring can help companies remain competitive.

Administratively, 12 hour shifts require some thought but no more attention than any other form of shiftwork. In all the cases with which I am familiar, the longer shifts have been arranged around a continuous operation which by its very nature is complex to administer.

Legally speaking, there are numerous restrictions preventing employers from introducing 12 hour shifts. But in every case where all the parties involved have been willing to proceed, these legal aspects have been the easiest to resolve. The problems associated with 12 hour shifts are not insurmountable.

Note: Some Awards providing for extended hours on shiftwork

Photographic Industry Award, 1987  
Metal Industry Award - Site agreement for  
Dunlop Pulsar Batteries  
Vehicle Repair Service Retail Award  
Graphic Arts Award  
M.O.A. (State Electricity Commission  
Victoria) Award, 1975

UNDERWOOD TECHNICIANS  
12 HOUR SHIFT HEALTH SURVEY (APRIL-OCTOBER 1992)

1. AVERAGE AGE: 36 Yrs

DISTRIBUTION	50+	1
	45-50	5
	30-35	2
	25-30	3

2. CIGARETTE SMOKERS: 2

- \* 1 ceased smoking during this period
- \* 1 reduced intake by 20%

3. EXERCISE: 6 out of 11 undertook no regular exercise at the start of the survey. 5 reported no change. 1 commenced regular exercise.

4. ALCOHOL INTAKE: There was no reported change in drinking habits during survey period. 10 employees indicated they did not drink regularly.

5. SLEEPING HABITS: Q. Does work affect your sleeping habits? (at start of survey).

8 out of 11 participants believed shift work affected their sleeping habits.

Q. Have you noticed any change in your sleep pattern? (during survey period)

YES 5: \* decreased sleep 3  
          \* increased sleep 2

NO 6

Q. Do you find it hard to sleep well?

	Before	After
Hardly ever	4	6
Occasionally	6	4
Often	1	1
Most of the time		

6. DIET: Q. Has your diet/eating pattern changed (during survey period).

YES 2 (Improved)  
NO change 9

GASTROINTESTINAL COMPLAINTS: Only 1 out of 11 participants reported any significant symptoms.

(2)

WEIGHT: Increased 5 Average gain 2.02kg  
Decreased 5 Average loss 2.02kg  
No change 1  
(Overall no nett overall weight change in group)

CHOLESTEROL: Increased 3 Average gain .5 MMOL  
Decrease 8 Average loss 1.25 MMOL  
Average (before) 4.95  
Average (after) 4.1

7. STRESS ANALYSIS:

\* 9 of 11 participants reported an improvement in overall subjective stress values (30%). 1 (no change); 1 (increased).

Q. Stress levels	<u>Before</u>	<u>After</u>
Seldom Stressed	7	10
Sometimes Stressed	4	1
Often Stressed	0	
Heavily Stressed	0	
Excessively Stressed	0	

Q. Do you consider your work places heavy demands on you?

	<u>Before</u>	<u>After</u>
Hardly ever	3	9
Occasionally	8	2
Often		
Most of the time		

8. GENERAL HEALTH:

Q. Do you feel the 12 hr shifts have affected your general health in any way?

YES: 2  
NO: 9

Q. What change do you consider the move to a 12 hr shift has had on your health?

No Change 10  
Improved 1  
Deteriorated -  
Other -

(3)

9. PREFERENCES:

Q. Do you prefer the 12 hr shift system currently being trialled at Underwood?

\* YES: 10 (Before)  
NO: 1

\* YES: 8 (After)  
NO: 2  
UNDECIDED 1

Q. What is your current assessment of the 12 hr shift system?

Rating

Dislike 1  
Tolerable  
Acceptable 3  
Good 6  
Excellent 1

Overall rating 6.7 out of 10

10. BLOOD PRESSURE:

Before: Systolic 126  
Distolic 74

After: Systolic 124 (Decreased 3, Increased 1, NC 7)  
Distolic 80 (Decreased 2, Increased 7, NC 2)

## DISCUSSION PAPER

### EXTENDED SHIFT ARRANGEMENTS

Shift work is now, and has always been, an integral part of industrial society. It has been required because of the continuous nature of production processes, or the demand for around-the-clock services, or the need to process materials overnight ready for the next working day.

Shift work has been an essential factor in the development of the most successful industrialised economies. It has enabled the extended use of capital infrastructure, and has in effect provided the competitive edge to many enterprises operating in the international market place.

Whilst shift work has always been an integral part of the operation of industry and commerce in Australia, the vastly increased pressures for change now bearing upon this economy require employers and employees to consider new options for the arrangement of working hours which may benefit each party.

Changing attitudes to working and social arrangements, changing economic demands on households, changing attitudes to parental roles and changing technologies and work processes are all factors which need to be taken into account in determining future working arrangements.

Whilst employers are increasingly being required to consider alternate working arrangements as a means of securing the competitiveness of the enterprise, many employees are also seeking such flexibility as a means of increasing family incomes or as a means of providing longer periods of time off work and giving access to a wider range of leisure activities.

The purpose of this paper is therefore to present a range of issues that should be considered by employers and employees where the introduction of extended shift arrangements is being contemplated.

## INTRODUCTION



Shift work is essential to an industrial society for three main reasons:

- a) Social :- the need for provision of 'around the clock' services such as medical, emergency, security, postal, power generation;
- b) Technological :- the fact that some operations are a continuous process;
- c) Economic :- the need for optimal use of invested capital.

It is generally accepted that 'around the clock' operations are a fact of life in numerous industries. Continuous process operations such as smelting and petrochemical production and service occupations such as hospital staffing, police and fire protection require that people be available 24 hours a day.

From an economic stand point the heavy capital investment made in modern machinery necessitates around the clock usage in order to recover invested capital and remain competitive.

Consequently shift work must be recognised as an inevitable part of the job for a significant segment of the Australian workforce.

~~In many remote locations or operational sites the introduction of extended shift arrangements is rapidly increasing to:~~

- minimise the time off work in circumstances where generally accepted out of hours activities are not available; and
- increase the time available to the employee at their home base or significant population centre.

The need to ensure that shift design offers the best available use of resources is currently being addressed by many Australian enterprises. The introduction of extended shift arrangements is being considered under the award restructuring process. In many industry sectors the introduction of extended shift arrangements has been welcomed by, or introduced at the request of, employees as this allows more structured available leisure time.

Extended shift arrangements, with correctly designed rosters, may provide benefits to employees by reducing cumulative fatigue, increasing leisure time and relieving the pressure of seven day shift work.

For extended shift arrangements to be advantageous, it is recommended that the increased leisure time be used for recuperation and recreation and not as an opportunity for additional employment.



## CONSULTATION

As with any workplace change, it is essential that the benefits and disadvantages associated with the introduction of extended shift arrangements be identified and thoroughly discussed with those employees who will be involved. Established consultative mechanisms should be utilised to ensure that all the employees involved are aware of the proposed changes in work schedules.

## HEALTH AND PERFORMANCE

Work patterns associated with shiftwork can involve some conflict with normal circadian rhythms and may result in tiredness and fatigue. The response to shiftwork varies among individuals and is related to the extent of circadian rhythm disruption caused by the shift schedule. Experience shows that shift patterns that minimise this disruption are more likely to be better tolerated.

Apart from fatigue, people working on shifts appear to suffer a higher incidence of gastrointestinal disorders e.g. indigestion, which may be due to eating irregularly or to dietary changes. Research so far to determine other long term health effects of shiftwork has been inconclusive.

Thus, most studies indicate that extended shift arrangements do not result in more accidents or health problems. In fact a well planned shift schedule may alleviate problems by allowing increased recuperation time and providing more available leisure time which compensates for other changes to family and social life.

While it is recognised that extended shift arrangements do not present new health risks, a careful assessment of the physical and mental workload is required prior to their introduction.

The introduction of extended shifts is often regarded as a solution to the disruptive effects of more traditional shiftwork. They offer longer and more frequent blocks of leisure time, fewer night shifts in succession and provide a longer period for recuperation.

If the advantages are to be effectively utilised, it must be ensured that employees are instructed on the benefits of:

- using the time between shift schedules for recuperation, rest and leisure activities;
- the need to ensure that dietary requirements, for example nutritious meals, regular meal times, are maintained during the shift schedule.



## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Enterprises which incorporate extended shift arrangements should ensure that employees have access to OHS facilities. First aid and emergency services should be available, and all employees made aware of means of access to those services.

Occupational exposure levels, for example, exposure standards for chemical and physical agents and daily noise doses, are calculated as an average over an eight hour day. Where shift arrangements are such that longer hours are worked, it is necessary to re-assess these exposure levels and if appropriate set new levels to reflect the longer working day.

CAI recognises that pre-employment and pre-placement health assessments may form part of an integrated approach to the provision of a safe and healthy working environment. The introduction of extended shifts may involve the need to ensure that pre-existing medical conditions will not be adversely affected by the hours of work required.

The critical occupational health and safety concern of increased shift length is a possible increase in worker fatigue and subsequent impairment of individual judgement resulting in increased accidents.

Evidence to date indicates that this has not occurred. But the possibility undoubtedly exists, and all jobs need to be assessed for their safe adaption to extended shift arrangements. An assessment of the physical and mental workload of the job in relation to the extended roster should be made.

Subsequent to the introduction of new roster, accident statistics should be monitored to detect any untoward effect from this roster on accident performance.

## DESIGN FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED WHEN DEVELOPING A SHIFT SYSTEM

Factors such as the type of work being performed, the size and structure of the enterprise, existing management-union agreements, and numerous other factors influence the kind of schedules which may be implemented.

It is impossible to construct one single extended shift schedule which is optimal for all working conditions.

Workload factors to consider in the design of schedules include:

- physical effort;
- mental application and fatigue;
- monotony / diversity of task;
- social aspects.

The consideration of the above factors and the type of shift schedule to be developed will be dependent on the type of operations and the needs of the individual enterprise.

Based on present knowledge, criteria which should be considered when constructing shift schedules include:

- the shift schedule should have the least practicable number of night shifts in succession;
- there should be an appropriate period of rest break after each successive night shift roster; and
- forward rotating rosters should be preferred.

## MEALS AND MEAL AREAS

The disruption to normal eating habits is often cited as a potential problem for employees required to work longer shifts.

Provision should be made for employees who work extended shifts, to have access to meal areas and to facilities to heat meals during meal periods. Such employees should be counselled on the advantages of nutritionally balanced meals.

## INFORMATION AND TRAINING

Appropriate induction and training, to ensure that job tasks can be performed safely and efficiently is essential for all enterprises. Such training should be available to all employees irrespective of the shift arrangements of the enterprise.

It must also be ensured that supervisors are made aware of any special requirements which may arise due to the extended shift arrangements which are performed by employees.

## SUPERVISION

It is desirable that supervising staff be available either at the workplace, or in ready contact, to ensure that persons at the workplace have the appropriate support and assistance to deal with all circumstances which may arise during their shift.

AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS COMMISSION

Industrial Relations Act 1988  
s.115 application for certification of agreement

Australian Telecommunications Employees' Association/Australian  
Telephone and Phonogram Officers' Association  
(C No. 32567 of 1990)

TELECOM TWELVE HOUR SHIFT OPERATIONS AGREEMENT 1990

Telecom employees

Telecommunications services

DEPUTY PRESIDENT KEOGH  
DEPUTY PRESIDENT POLITES  
COMMISSIONER LEWIN

ADELAIDE, 24 JANUARY 1992

Application for certification of agreement pursuant to s.115(3) of the  
Act re shift work.

AGREEMENT

Further to the decision of the Commission on 4 June 1991<sup>(1)</sup> the Commission hereby certifies the attached agreement between the Australian Telecommunications Corporation (Telecom) and the Australian Telecommunications Employees' Association/Australian Telephone and Phonogram Officers' Association in relation to twelve hour shift operations. The abovementioned agreement shall be known as the Telecom Twelve Hour Shift Operations Agreement 1990.

BY THE COMMISSION:

COMMISSIONER

Appearances:

A. Forster for the Australian Telecommunications Employees' Association/  
Australian Telephone and Phonogram Officers' Association.

G. Giudice of counsel with B.M. Murphy and N. Draper for the Australian  
Telecommunications Corporation.

Dates and place of hearing:

1990.  
Melbourne:  
November 30;

1991.  
Melbourne:  
June 4.

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<sup>(1)</sup>Print J8056

A. This document records an agreement between the Australian Telecommunications Corporation (Telecom) and the Australian Telecommunications Employees' Association/Australian Telephone and Phonogram Officers' Association (ATEA/ATPOA) regarding the matters contained herein.

B The agreement shall take effect on and from the date of signing by the duly authorised representatives of the parties subject to its ratification by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission pursuant to section 115 of the Industrial Relations Act 1988.

C. The agreement shall remain in force for a period of three years.

#### SIGNATORIES TO THE AGREEMENT

For and on behalf of the  
Australian Telecommunications  
Corporation - (Telecom).

For and on behalf of the Australian  
Telecommunications Employees'  
Association/Australian Telephone and  
Phonogram Officers' Association -  
(ATEA/ATPOA).

Signed  
N. Draper  
Corporate Human Resources

Signed  
I.M. Musumeci  
Federal Secretary

Dated this twenty-first day of September 1990.

## GUIDELINES FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF TWELVE HOUR SHIFT OPERATIONS

1. Twelve hour shifts will only apply to 24-hour stations. Conversion to twelve hour shifts does not automatically include all staff working at the subject station on shift rosters and must be agreed to by Telecom, ATEA/ATPOA and the majority of shift staff.
2. Consideration of the introduction of twelve hour shifts should be on a centre by centre basis and must not adversely affect the viability of the station's operations with respect to service standards.
3. Twelve hour shifts are not appropriate to functions requiring heavy physical involvement or where an inappropriate working environment exists; (e.g. high levels of heat, noise, etc.).
4. Twelve hour shifts are not appropriate where a constant high level of physical or mental commitment is required.
5. Twelve hour shifts are not appropriate where short cycle repetitive roles are involved; (e.g. processing type activities).
6. Twelve hour shifts are not appropriate where uneven loadings in peaks increase demands in one shift over another.
7. As a general principle, the introduction of twelve hour shift operations shall not result in an increase in staff numbers or overtime. In exceptional circumstances where all other principles are met at a particular location, and an agreed health professional advises that existing rostering arrangements mean that strict adherence to this principle would result in adverse occupational health and safety impacts, variations from this principle may be considered in the light of that advice.
8. There must be the need for ongoing shift work at the station for at least two years.
9. Overtime is not to be performed where it will fall within a period of twelve hours either side of a normal day or night shift, except in emergency situations when immediate relief is unavailable. In such situations, overtime should be restricted to a maximum of two hours.
10. In all but exceptional circumstances, the maximum length of time a worker should have to remain on duty beyond rostered shift completion time is two hours.
11. If twelve hour shifts are in operation, the maximum number of consecutive night shifts to be rostered is two. In exceptional circumstances the maximum may be three.
12. Staff called in for non-rostered duty should be twelve hours clear of duty on either side of the shift.
13. Swaps on the roster should be avoided as far as possible. Where required they should be subject to the discretion of the officer-in-charge, who is to ensure that adequate rest breaks are provided and fundamental twelve hour roster principles are applied.

14. Staff may rest (for a reasonable period) on the premises at the completion of a twelve hour shift if they do not feel competent to make an immediate departure for home.
15. Twelve hour shift work rosters must be developed in consultation with workers and appropriate unions.
16. Twelve hour roster operation in any station will be subject to review within the first twelve months of operation. If adverse indicators in performance or staff health are evident, twelve hour shifts would be discontinued.
17. The services of an agreed health professional will be used in the compilation of rosters.

#### 1 - SHIFT DURATION AND STARTING AND FINISHING TIMES

- 1.1 A working week is to be consistent with subclause 11.2(a) of the Australian Telecommunications Commission Telecommunications Technical and Trades Staff (Salaries and Specific Conditions of Employment) Award 1975.<sup>(2)</sup>
- 1.2 Shifts will not exceed twelve hours and fifteen minutes duration.
- 1.3 Shift times will be 07.00 to 19.15 (day shift) and 19.00 to 07.15 (night shift).
- 1.4 Shift times are not to be varied by more than one half hour.

#### 2 - PENALTY PAYMENTS

- 2.1 Shift duty.
- 2.2 Both the day and night shifts to attract penalty payments.
- 2.3 Penalty payments will be as per subclause 19(1) - Shift duty, of the Telecom General Conditions of Employment Award 1989.<sup>(3)</sup>
- 2.4 Payment in lieu for an employee rostered off on a public holiday will be eight hours ten minutes.

#### 3 - OVERTIME

- 3.1 Overtime is not to be performed where it will fall within a period of twelve hours either side of a normal day or night shift, except in emergency situations when immediate relief is unavailable. In such situations, overtime should be restricted to a maximum of two hours.

#### 4 - RECALL

- 4.1 Recall rates as per clause 20 - Emergency duty, of the Telecom General Conditions of Employment Award 1989, should be paid to staff for emergency duty not on their roster where:

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<sup>(2)</sup>Print C6568 [A133]; (1975) 172 CAR 1046

<sup>(3)</sup>Print H9249 [T238]

4 - Recall 4.1 - contd

- (a) they are not told of an additional shift while on duty as per the Telecom Human Resources Policy Manual B4/11/4;
- (b) if they are called while off duty they are not given twelve hours notice of an additional shift.

## 5 - ROSTERS

- 5.1 Rosters are to be determined by consultation between local management, staff and ATEA/ATPOA, with an input from an agreed health professional.
- 5.2 Alterations to rosters are only to be implemented following consultation between local management, staff and an agreed health professional.
- 5.3 Swaps on the roster should be avoided. Where required, they should be subject to the approval of the station officer-in-charge, who is to ensure that adequate between shift breaks are provided and fundamental twelve hour roster principles are applied, as described in paragraph 1.

## 6 - SHIFT CYCLE

- 6.1 Cycles of shifts will be agreed between parties subject to the following conditions:
  - (a) As a general principle no more than three consecutive day shifts should be rostered, but in any event no more than four will be worked.
  - (b) As a general principle no more than two consecutive night shifts should be rostered, but in any event no more than three will be worked.
  - (c) Working additional shifts beyond those rostered will be voluntary.
- 6.2 Consecutive night and day shifts are not to be rostered or performed.

## 7 - BREAKS

- 7.1 Two paid meal breaks of 30 minutes duration are to be included in each shift. Staff may be required to remain "on-site" during these meal breaks but will be paid no penalty in situations where they are required to work for any or all of the break periods.
- 7.2 Provided that no employee is required to work for a continuous period of more than five hours without a meal break, the time of taking meal breaks is to be agreed by the parties.

## 8 - ANNUAL RECREATION LEAVE

- 8.1 Accrual of annual recreation leave will be based on four weeks at 36-3/4 hours per week.
- 8.2 For the purposes of additional recreation leave provided by clause 28 of the Telecom General Conditions of Employment Award 1989, the working of two twelve hour shifts shall be deemed to be the equivalent of the working of three ordinary shifts.

## 9 - SICK LEAVE

- 9.1 Sick leave accrual will be based on 73 hours 30 minutes full and 73 hours 30 minutes half pay per annum.
- 9.2 The number of hours allowed without the production of a medical certificate in any sick leave year is to be regarded as 36-3/4 hours.
- 9.3 Three consecutive days sick leave for the purposes of the meaning of section B8/2/25 of the Telecom Human Resources Policy Manual is to be read as 24 hours 30 minutes in consecutive shifts.
- 9.4 Sick leave will be denoted in hours and minutes.
- 9.5 Sick leave on a public holiday where an officer is rostered on duty will result in no debit from his or her sick leave credits and no payment of penalty rates or payment in lieu for the shift not worked.

## 10 - SPECIAL LEAVE

- 10.1 Special leave entitlements are to be read as 24 hours 30 minutes.

## 11 - BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

- 11.1 Leave entitlements under clause 32 of the General Conditions of Employment Award are to be read as 24 hours 30 minutes.

## 12 - OTHER LEAVE

- 12.1 For all other leave entitlements, a twelve hour fifteen minute shift will be regarded in hours and minutes.

## 13 - LONG SERVICE LEAVE

- 13.1 All details and entitlements relating to long service leave will remain unaltered, i.e. accrual will be at the rate of 3/10 calendar month for each completed year of service.

## 14 - HIGHER DUTIES

- 14.1 Performance in another position for one shift will, subject to normal higher duties principles, accrue twelve hours fifteen minutes (1 day 4 hours 54 minutes based on a 7 hour 21 minute day) towards a higher duties increment.
- 14.2 A higher duties increment will accrue after 261 days, based on a 7 hour 21 minute day, in any two year period.
- 14.3 Leave which affects higher duty service will do so at the equivalent rate of one shift (twelve hours fifteen minutes) per absence, except for part shift absences.

AOTC have a policy whereby they accept transfer of unused sick leave benefits when full-time officials return to AOTC.

The failure to achieve a policy of no disadvantage for union duties will severely limit the options of resourcing the federal and branch offices."

CARRIED

#### UNION TRAINING

Report by J. Brand.

#### MINUTE NOTE:

State Administration Committee Members to raise the question of training all C.W.U. Workplace Delegates and the possibility of the two Queensland Branches of the C.W.U. employing a Training Officer.

#### P.A.B. NOMINEES

Report by G. Theaker.

Moved G. Theaker

Seconded P. Gorman

"That a joint P.A.B. Seminar be organised for Tuesday, 15th September, 1992 and that attempts be made to secure the Senior P.A.B. Chairman to address the Seminar."

CARRIED

#### RULES COMMITTEE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Report by G. Theaker.

Moved G. Theaker

Seconded A. Hurley

"That the Queensland T. & S. Branch adopt as By-Law 1 -

The allocation of surplus votes at National Conference [Rule 6f(i)] be determined annually by the Branch Committee of Management at it's September meeting."

CARRIED

Moved G. Theaker

Seconded A. Hurley

"That the Queensland T. & S. Branch adopt as By-Law 2 -

The \$20 entry fee for membership as prescribed under Rule 32 be waived for those persons seeking to join the Queensland T. & S. Branch. That no mention of an entry fee be made on any literature issued by the Branch."

CARRIED

Moved G. Theaker

Seconded D. MacDonald

"That the Queensland T. & S. Branch adopt as By-Law 3 -

Those Officials both full and part-time travelling on Union business be entitled to the payment of the current Travelling Allowance rates as paid by Telecom Australia and varied from time to time."

CARRIED

Moved G. Theaker

Seconded P. Gorman

"That the Queensland T. & S. Branch adopt as By-Law 4 -

"The Queensland T. & S. representatives and deputies to the Administrative Committee be elected for 2 years and be elected at the August meeting following the biennial Branch elections. Nominations to be called for in the July Newsletter."

CARRIED

Moved G. Theaker

Seconded S. Mason

"That the Branch have ballot boxes constructed to satisfy Rule 69(d)(v)."

CARRIED

Moved G. Theaker

Seconded P. Gorman

"That the Queensland T. & S. Branch adopt as By-Law 5 -

The Committee of Management elect for a two year term at the August meeting following the biennial Branch elections -

1. Delegates and alternates to the Queensland T. & S. L.C.
2. Delegates and alternates to the State A.L.P. Conference
3. Delegates and alternates to the State A.L.P. Council.

Nominations to be called for in the July Newsletter."

CARRIED

Moved G. Theaker

Seconded J. Brand

"That the Queensland T. & S. Branch adopt as By-Law 6 -

The Committee of Management elect for a four year term at the August meeting following the biennial Branch elections Representatives and Deputies to the Promotions Appeal Board. Nominations to be called for in the July Newsletter."

CARRIED

Moved G. Theaker

Seconded M. Saunders

"That the Queensland T. & S. Branch adopt as By-Law 7 -

The February General meeting of the Queensland T. & S. Branch elect the Branch Returning Officer and Assistant. Nominations to be called for in the January / February Newsletter."

CARRIED

Moved G. Theaker

Seconded E. Anderson

"That the Queensland T. & S. Branch adopt as By-Law 8 -

All decisions taken by the Branch Committee of Management be numbered and published in the monthly Branch Newsletter. The numbering scheme to be repeated on an annual basis."

CARRIED

Moved G. Theaker

Seconded A. Hurley

"That the policy of ATEA/ATPOA to distribute Branch Council minutes to all Sub-Branches be discontinued."

#### An Amendment

Moved I. McLean

Seconded D. MacDonald

"To add the words "unless requested" at the end.

The President put the amendment first and it was

CARRIED

He then put the amended motion which now reads:

"That the policy of ATEA/ATPOA to distribute Branch Council minutes to all Sub-Branches be discontinued unless requested."

and it was

CARRIED

KEEP FOR FILE

The meeting was declared opened by the President R. Bateman at 5.17 p.m.

As per the Branch Committee of Management Meeting Attendance Book.

Moved M. Saunders                      Seconded P. Gorman

"That the minutes of the July Branch Council Meeting be received."

**CARRIED**

Moved M. Saunders                      Seconded P. Gorman

**"That the minutes of the July Branch Council Meeting be adopted."**

**CARRIED**

**12 HOUR SHIFTS - AUSTRALIA POST**

Report by G. Theaker.

Moved G. Theaker                      Seconded D. MacDonald

"That the Queensland Branch Committee of Management endorse the draft 12 hour shift agreement for Australia Post members. The agreement to be negotiated as soon as possible with State Australia Post management"

**CARRIED**

**STATE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE**

Report by J. McLean.

Moved I. McLean                      Seconded M. Saunders

"That S. Bevan, G. Theaker and P. Gorman be appointed with the State President and State Secretary to be the Telecommunications & Services Branch (T. & S.) representatives on the Administrative Committee."

**CARRIED**

Moved I. McLean                      Seconded P. Gorman

"That J. Brand, O. Gazzard and M. Swan be appointed as Deputy Administrative Committee Members."

**CARRIED**

Moved i. McLean                      Seconded P. Gorman

"That O. Gazzard, when not deputising for an Administrative Committee Member, be the Branch's official observer at the Administrative Committee meetings."

**CARRIED**

### MOTIONS FOR NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Report by G Theaker

Moved G Theaker                      Seconded A Hurley

That the following motions be placed on the agenda for the 1992 National Conference by a Queensland National Executive Member:

*"That the 1992 C.W.U. National Conference authorises the National President and Secretary to take all necessary steps to bring before the 1993 National Conference a scheme of agreement that would see the amalgamation of the Telecommunications & Services and Postal & Telecommunications Branches in each State*

*Such steps would include the reconstitution of the National & State Amalgamation Committees, agreed Branch Structures with the appropriate proportional representation and the necessary Rule changes."*

Reasons in Support:

*The 80%+ YES vote from APTU and ATEA/ATPOA members for amalgamation, can be attributed to the membership desire to have a Union that would create greater unity between all levels and designations in the Communications Industry.*

*Their understanding of true amalgamations is that brought about at the National, Branch and Workplace level. Their understanding was that Amalgamation at the National Level was but the first step in this process and that Amalgamation at the Branch level would occur soon after. The economies of scale for membership service can only be fully realised when the sharing of resources and the removal of duplication occurs at the Branch Level.*

*In A.O.T.C. co-location of Lines and Techs is occurring, and the need for the Union to seriously address the birth of a common designation, with common duties, common training with the same rates of pay and appropriate career structure is now with us.*

*This togetherness at the workplace should be reflected into the Branch of the Union that will provide a comprehensive rank and file structure which maximises democratic participation by all C.W.U. members.*

**MOVED UNDER RULE 10 - RULE CHANGE COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT**

***"That Rule 92 q(i) & (ii) be amended to read***

- (i) the number of Committee Members elected by and from members of the Branch allocated to the Technical Division shall be no less than 16 and no more than 24, except in the case of Branches with less than 4000 members in the Technical Division where the number shall be no less than 8, and
- (ii) the number of Committee Members elected by and from members of the Branch allocated to the Operator Division shall be no less than 10 and no more than 12, except in the case of Branches with less than 1000 members in the Operator Division where the number shall be no less than 5 "

MOVED UNDER RULE 10 - CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT (PART-TIME / FULL-TIME UNION OFFICIALS)

*"That the Queensland Telecommunications & Services Branch of the C.W.U. call upon the National Conference to initiate policy whereby the National Secretary & President of CWU commence urgent negotiations with AOTC, the purpose of these negotiations is to achieve a position whereby part-time/full-time officials are not financially disadvantaged for the period of union service. In the event of failing to achieve a satisfactory resolution the union to adopt a policy nationally whereby benefits discounted based upon non-recognition of service remain the responsibility of the union."*

Reasons in Support:

Conditions of employment for full-time officials has been "conditions the same as AOTC except no paid overtime" For part-time officials there has been a union principle they should not be financially disadvantaged for part-time union duties

*With the advent of involuntary redundancy 1/2/93 part-time and full-time officials will be discounted for union service if their AOTC service falls short of 25 years. For full-time officials prior furlough benefits are paid at their pre-union service salary. The union has already adopted the principle of basing superannuation benefits on their union salary. Furlough and Retrenchment benefits should be adjusted likewise*

AOTC have a policy whereby they accept transfer of unused sick leave benefits when full-time officials return to AOTC.

The failure to achieve a policy of no disadvantage for union duties will severely limit the options of resourcing the federal and branch offices."

CARRIED

#### UNION TRAINING

Report by J. Brand.

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#### RULES COMMITTEE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Report by G. Theaker.

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"That the Queensland T. & S. Branch adopt as By-Law 4 -

"The Queensland T. & S. representatives and deputies to the Administrative Committee be elected for 2 years and be elected at the August meeting following the biennial Branch elections. Nominations to be called for in the July Newsletter."

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CARRIED

## ACTU CODE OF CONDUCT ON TWELVE HOUR SHIFT WORK

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The ACTU Executive reaffirms its policy on shift work as set out in the ACTU Working Conditions Policy 1985.
- 1.2 Shift work involving twelve hour rosters may not introduce a new range of hazards into the workplace but rather may exacerbate existing problems faced by shift workers. The main hazards associated with twelve hour shifts continue to involve disrupted sleep patterns, fatigue, disturbance of eating habits, social dislocation and psychological problems.
- 1.3 Data show that shift workers (and former shift workers) suffer a higher incidence of gastro-intestinal disorders and gastric and duodenal ulcers than day workers. Shift workers also more often report colds or other respiratory illnesses than their day work counterparts. Further, the incidence of nervous disorders and drug-taking is higher for shift workers than day workers. Similarly, women shift workers have a higher incidence of menstrual problems. Recent studies indicate a link between shift work and cardiac heart disease.
- 1.4 Twelve hour shift work, with correctly designed rosters, may provide benefits to workers by reducing cumulative fatigue, increasing leisure time and relieving the pressure of seven day shift work. For twelve hour shift work to be advantageous, it is essential the increased leisure time be used for recuperation and recreation and not as an opportunity for additional employment.
- 1.5 While day work does not involve the same disturbances to circadian rhythms as night work, twelve hour day work may still involve disruption to sleep and eating patterns, fatigue, social dislocation and psychological problems.

### 2. Introduction of Twelve Hour Shift Work

- 2.1 The introduction of twelve hour shifts should be permitted only:
  - where there is a continuous work process or other special circumstances can be shown to exist;

- where twelve hour shift work will not impose excessive physical or mental workload;
- where, after a proper examination of the possible injurious effects to employee health and social well-being, there are demonstrated benefits for the workers concerned;
- after full consultation with union(s) and the two thirds majority support of affected workers, and
- in conjunction with possibilities of reducing working time generally.

The introduction of twelve hour shift work should be on a trial basis for twelve months to allow workers to evaluate changed shifts.

### 3. Women and Young Persons

- 3.1 State and Federal Governments need to review legislative restrictions on the employment of women and young persons.
- ~~3.2~~ Unions do not oppose the employment of women on twelve hour shift work but recognise the adverse effects of shift work on all employees.
- 3.3 Unions should oppose the employment of persons under the age of eighteen on twelve hour night shifts.

### 4. Control Measures

#### 4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 To minimise the health and safety risks of twelve hour shift work, unions should negotiate the following control measures. The application of these measures may vary according to the industry and workload involved.

#### 4.2 Shift Rosters

- 4.2.1 Rosters must be developed in consultation with employees through their unions and provision made for ongoing consultation and resolution of disputes about the rosters.

To reduce the hazards associated with night and shift work, rosters should be designed to:

- have a maximum of two night shifts in succession;
- have at least a twelve hour interval between shifts;
- have a short cycle period with regular rotations;
- include at least two free weekends each month;
- have the day shift not start before 6am;
- allow workers some flexibility about shift change times and shift length, and
- provide in addition to normal breaks, where practicable, an extended rest period during night shift. Breaks should occur at the same time each night.

4.2.2 In all but highly exceptional circumstances, the maximum length of time a worker should have to remain on duty before being relieved is 2 hours. *W.N.B.*

4.2.3 Overtime should not be worked in conjunction with twelve hour shifts. In no circumstances should overtime work override the basic principles of roster design.

4.2.4 Special rosters are required for workers exposed to hazards, where health and safety standards are determined on the basis of exposure over eight hours. These rosters must be designed in consultation with employees through their unions.

#### 4.3 Award Variations

4.3.1 In accordance with emerging overseas standards, unions should negotiate:

- an additional paid break per shift (the duration of this break will depend on the nature of the work);
- additional paid leave increasing with years of service;

- early retirement provisions,
- where a total rate is used the individual component parts of penalties, allowances, base rate etc. should be identified,
- job security for older and long term shift workers, and
- overtime limitations and maximum weekly hours.

4.3.2 Twelve hour shifts should not be paid at ordinary time rates - weekend and holiday penalties payments etc. should continue to apply.

4.3.3 Unions should oppose the introduction of twelve hour shifts which involve bonus/incentive schemes or other pressures to achieve production (eg piecework).

4.3.4 The introduction of twelve hour shifts should be submitted to the relevant industrial tribunal for formal ratification. This means that any provisions relating to shift allowances, maintenance of earnings etc must conform to the currently applicable wage fixing principles.

4.3.5 Awards which provide for the introduction of twelve hour shift work should contain a 'sunset clause' which may be activated by the union(s) at the expiry of the trial period referred to in paragraph 2.1.

#### 4.4 Administrative Measures

4.4.1 Employer support services can assist in minimising the inconveniences and disturbances of shift work. Such services could include:

- provision of adequate information in everyday language to address such issues as shift rosters, rest, fatigue, the effects of medication and other drugs, employer services etc (this information should be provided in appropriate languages);
- availability of nutritionally balanced meals and drinks during shifts;

- provision of transport services to and from the workplace and/or arranging more convenient utilisation of available transport facilities;
- provision of rest areas and social/recreational facilities;
- training for supervisors to increase awareness of the special requirements of twelve hour shift working;
- assistance in home renovations to facilitate sleeping during the day, and
- child care facilities.

Employers must negotiate with employees through their unions regarding the provision and administration of such services.

#### 4.5 Health and Related Matters

##### 4.5.1 Introduction

Most people are affected by shift work. In addition, older workers and those already suffering from digestive disorders, diabetes, heart diseases, psychological problems, alcohol and drug addiction and chronic sleep disturbances, face additional burdens.

##### 4.5.2 Health Services

##### 4.5.2.1 Employers should provide health supervision and health services for shift workers including:

- pre-placement health examinations to advise the worker about adjustment to the job assignment. Special provisions including transfer to day-time jobs may be required;
- periodic health examinations (within 12 months after starting night work and regularly thereafter). Again, transfer provisions or readjustment of the job assignment may be required; and
- health counselling and preventive health care including temporary or permanent transfer to day-time work.

##### 4.5.3 Procedures Following Health Surveillance

##### 4.5.3.1 The results of health surveillance should be confidential to the worker and should be released

to a third party (eg the employer) only with the written consent of the individual concerned. All results should be accompanied by a clear explanation of what they mean in practice. A certificate of fitness (or otherwise) should be provided to the employer by the medical practitioner. Aggregate data should be provided to unions.

4.5.3.2 Where there is a need to transfer from shift work, a period of adjustment should be provided to enable the worker to adapt to any reduction in income. Consideration should also be given to the preservation of superannuation entitlements for long-term shift workers who subsequently move to lower paid work for health reasons.

4.5.3.3 Where it is not possible to continue on shift work for health reasons, the employer shall take all necessary steps to find suitable alternative employment for the worker, and shall be required to maintain earnings in the interim.

# THE 3 DAY WEEK: 12 HOUR SHIFTS

Meredith Wallace

For some years there has been increasing interest among management, employees and unions in the 12 hour, 3 day working week, particularly where it is an alternative to the more conventional 3 x 8 hour shift roster. Employees are pressing for change, many Australian companies are considering 12 hour shifts and some have already introduced them. Although the trade-union movement has a traditional loyalty to the eight hour day, an official ACTU working party was set up in 1987 to report on 12 hour shifts and a policy has now been formulated which is consistent with the BBRI recommendations.

The Brain-Behaviour Research Institute (BBRI) has conducted research into shiftwork rosters for a number of years and we have now advised on, and installed 12 hour rosters in a number of industries and service organisations including manufacturing, the power and oil industries, public transport, communications, computer services and nursing.

In this paper I will answer some of the questions we are asked about the advantages and disadvantages of 12 hour shifts, outline some important roster design considerations and give a brief account of how some 12 hour shifts are progressing.

## The questions

1. Why change to 12 hour rosters? What are the benefits?
2. Where can 12 hour rosters be used?
3. How well do 12 hr rosters work? What are the problems?

Why change a roster? The reasons for considering 12 hour shifts

Rosters are most commonly changed when there is an alteration in some aspect of work such as the need to extend the number of production hours or in response to a request from the workforce. The latter may be prompted by dissatisfaction with a current roster and the request for a longer shift is usually associated with the desire for longer blocks of time off.

## Work force considerations

### *Social and family advantages*

Dissatisfaction with the current roster may have its roots in one or more of the following roster design problems: a long sequence of afternoon shifts interfering with family and social life, broken weekends off, frequent changes in rosters or inflexible roster operation

Generally, shiftworkers are interested in changing to longer shifts because there are considerable benefits in terms of social and family life. Although the total number of hours worked remain the same over a week or a fortnight, the 12 hour shifts mean fewer working days and longer blocks of time off. One benefit is the saving in time and cost of travel to work.

Another benefit is that this arrangement of working hours does away with the afternoon shift. This shift is disliked by most people because it interferes with social life and because a working parent has little chance to see the children while on a week of afternoon shifts.

## Health advantages

There are other reasons for considering 12 hour rosters which relate to health, particularly to fatigue. Sleep and fatigue problems on rotating 8 hour shifts can be exacerbated by a poorly designed roster. Some frequent 8 hour roster design faults include: split shifts, day shifts starting too early, too many nights in a row leading to sleep problems and direction of rotation not in the optimal direction (shifts should rotate day-afternoon-night).

Because of the longer blocks of time off which 12 hour rosters allow, the night shifts can be spaced so that adequate time is available for catch-up sleep and fatigue is not allowed to accumulate. The design of 12 hour rosters which will maximise this will be dealt with below.

## Management considerations

Work operation requirements may suggest a change to 12 hour shifts. For instance, an increase may be needed in the number of hours worked per day (e.g., from two shifts to three) and/or an increase in number of days worked (e.g., from 5 day to continuous 7 day operation)

The need to review roster design may be indicated by other factors such as the existence of excessive overtime. This can interact with the demands of shiftwork and lead to overly short breaks between shifts and an overall increase in fatigue. High absenteeism and turnover may have their roots in shiftwork related health problems and general dissatisfaction with the roster.

Probably the main advantage of 12 hour shifts for management is the improved quality of life for the workforce in relation to the points made above. This consideration is the one which has influenced most of the managements we have dealt with: Marked improvements in productivity have not been expected. There may be some organisational benefits because only two crew changes occur in each 24 hours, and in some instances there is

continuity between crews, where crew A hands over to crew B who in turn hand back to crew A 12 hours later. On the other hand, workers can be away from work for long periods of rostered days off during which they may lose touch with aspects of the job.

A second gain for management can come from improved industrial relations. following round table discussions between employers, employees, union representatives and BBRI consultants. Questions relating to the design of rosters and other aspects of shiftwork can be co-operatively and constructively dealt with by shift roster working parties'.

It should be noted that 12 hour shifts are not confined to 24 hour operations. We have recently recommended these shifts in a day-only operation where they have (at least in the short term) produced an increase in productivity and an improvement in industrial relations.

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## In favour of a 12 hour roster: Summary

In summary there are many reasons, particularly relating to lifestyle, to change to 12 hour shifts.

The longer shifts decrease the number of non-day shifts and increase the blocks of free time, giving shiftworkers more weekends and *more socially useful time off*.

The shorter blocks of shifts mean fewer night shifts with consequent *improved sleep and less build-up of fatigue*.

The cost of administering the 12 hour roster is roughly equivalent to that of the 8 hour roster

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† See for example the paper by Gordon Rowland on "The State Electricity Commission of Victoria & Shiftwork Reform" in *Improvements in Shiftwork* (ed. M. Wallace, BBRI, 1986).

There is evidence (presented below) that in the long term there could be an improvement in health and possibly a reduction in work related accidents.

### Against a 12 hour roster

A very important warning must be given at this stage. Twelve hour shifts are not appropriate for every kind of work. The nature of the work and the workload must be acceptable for long working hours. Conditions which would not be suitable for the introduction of 12 hour rosters include:

1. Jobs which are too heavy, too demanding or too monotonous
2. A work environment which includes exposure to potential physical hazards, (e.g., high heat or noise levels)
3. Where the existing form of shiftwork includes permanent shift rosters. Many employees on permanent shifts may not be able to change to a new system because of family, study or other commitments
4. A small, specialised workforce may need to be increased to allow for absentee cover
5. Where a large amount of overtime is expected or where there are seasonal, sudden or unforeseen demands for extra working hours.

### Summary of the "pros and cons"

Twelve hour shifts should *only* be contemplated if:

- the nature of the work and the workload are suitable for long working hours
- the roster is designed to minimise the accumulation of fatigue
- there are adequate arrangements for cover of absentees and
- overtime will not be added on to the 12 hour shift.

### Deciding on roster change: Consultation and research

When a change in shift rosters is being considered, consultation should take place between management, employees and union representatives.

The formation of a *shiftwork roster working party* involving representation from these groups can make sure that all points of view are considered. Shiftworkers who have been on the same roster for some years may be very conservative about change. It is important to explain the reasons for change and the criteria by which shift rosters should be judged. Involvement of the shiftworkers in the planning for roster change is essential.

The BBRI at this stage can make preliminary recommendations about the suitability of the workload, can advise on the construction of shift systems; develop some alternative rosters and analyse all proposals for the new systems according to agreed criteria.

The role which the BBRI can play in implementation of new rosters is explained in detail in the paper by Singer: *Implementation: Biological and psychological factors*.

The two most important considerations relating to 12 hour shifts are:

- the nature of the work load and
- the design of the roster.

### Work load assessment

Assessment of work load includes consideration of whether a job is too heavy in terms of physical and/or mental effort, or whether the work load is not sufficiently varied or too monotonous. Twelve hours may be too long if the nature of the work requires an unusual amount of mental concentration, accuracy or vigilance. Exposure to noise, heat, toxic substances, etc. will also limit the time which should be worked in one shift.

Measurement of the demands of a job can be carried out using self report and

objective techniques which do not unduly interfere with the work process. Some of these techniques have been described in an earlier paper (Wallace, 1986) and the factors which should be assessed are listed in Table 1.

Table 1

### Workload suitability assessment

The factors which should be assessed include:

#### Physiological:

circadian rhythms,  
mental and physical effort  
sleep,  
gastro intestinal functions

#### Psychological:

mental fatigue,  
mood  
job dissatisfaction

#### Performance:

accidents, safety, etc

#### Social and Family:

adjustments,  
leisure activities

### The design of a 12 hour roster

The critical factors for 12 hour roster design are that workload should govern shift length; that there should be no more than two nights in succession and that the number of short breaks between shifts should be minimised

The criteria which are applied in the design of rosters have been described in several earlier papers and are summarised by Knauth in "The effect of changing rosters on those who work them". These criteria are based on considerations of the way people respond to shift work and include the adjustment of physiological functions to night work; the reduction of well-being (e.g. insomnia, fatigue, loss of appetite) and the presence of health problems such as gastrointestinal disturbances, cardiovascular and nervous disorders.

Although many shiftworkers have the subjective impression that they feel better adjusted to nightwork after two or three night shifts, research has shown that the body rhythms *cannot fully adjust to shiftwork*. Even after three weeks of continuous nightwork physiological functions are only partly adjusted to nightwork.

Shiftworkers, very naturally, want to maximise their long blocks of time off and frequently want to work all their nights in a row "to get them over with". In fact it is better if only a single night shift is worked so that there is minimum distortion caused by partial adaptation. Two nights in a row is the *maximum* which should occur in a 12 hour roster. // *N.B.*

Sleep disturbances tend to increase if too many night shifts are worked in succession. The daytime sleep after night shifts is in general shorter and of a worse quality than the normal night sleep. After several night shifts in a row an accumulation of sleep deficits is to be expected, whereas after a single night shift the day sleep deficit can be compensated at once in the following night.

A system which has been used at Hoechst in Germany for many years is based on a single day shift, a single night shift and either one or two days off. In Australia this pattern is not popular because it does not allow for long blocks of free time. A "mixed block" design (N N D D or D D N N) can be used to extend the number of shifts worked without violating these recommendations. The change in the middle of the block from day to night ensures a 24 hour break. Examples of this "mixed block" roster are given in Tables 2,3 and 4

### Other features of 12 hour roster design

If a 12 hour roster is to be introduced, then the roster must be tailored to meet the particular work conditions. Some factors to be considered are: the number of operating days per week,

Table 2

12 Hour, Mixed Block roster for 5 crews.

	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
A			N	N		D	D						N	N
B	N	N		D	D							N	N	D
C		D	D					N	N			D	D	
D	D						N	N		D	D			
E					N	N		D	D					

	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
A		D	D					N	N			D	D	
B	D						N	N		D	D			
C				N	N		D	D					N	N
D		N	N		D	D						N	N	
E	N	N		D	D					N	N			D

This roster is worked by five crews averaging 33.6 hours/week over a 10 week cycle. Each block of N D D is followed by 6 x 24 hours off

Table 3

12 Hour, Mixed Block Roster for 4 crews.

	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
A	N	N		D	D			N	N			D	D	
B		N	N		D	D			N	N		D	D	
C	D			N	N		D	D				N	N	
D		D	D			N	N		D	D				

	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
A			N	N		D	D				N	N		D
B	D				N	N		D	D			N	N	
C		D	D			N	N		D	D			N	N
D	N	N		D	D			N	N		D	D		

This roster is worked by four crews, averaging 42 hours/week over an 8 week cycle, with 4 x 24 hours off following each block of N N D D.

Table 4

12 hour roster for 5 crews (blocks of 3)

	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
A	D	D	N						D	N	N			
B			D	N	N					D	D	N		
C				D	D	N						D	N	N
D					D	N	N						D	D
E	N	N					D	D	N					

	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
A		D	D	N					D	N	N			
B				D	N	N					D	D	N	
C					D	D	N						D	N
D	N					D	D	N						
E	D	N	N					D	D	N				D

This roster is designed for five crews working an average of 33.6 hours per week over a 15 week cycle. Each block of D D N is followed by 5 x 24 hours off and each block of D N N is followed by 4 x 24 hours off.

whether a full crew is needed at night, if there is a need for training days or special duty days, what crew overlap is

needed and what starting times fit best with local conditions such as availability of public transport. In some jobs the distribution of workload between day and night may be uneven and a 10-14 hour shift system may be an advantage, particularly where night crews are on standby rather than on full operation.

Before a roster change is implemented it is very important to solve any problems which may exist relating to pay, overtime, sickness and leave allocation. Legal aspects and industrial awards are dealt with in the paper by Graeme Hitchell.

### Some general points on 12 hour roster management

*Arrangements for absenteeism:* Workers should not be asked to cover the next shift. One solution is to have a standby roster which follows the usual roster but is two shifts removed.

*Pay:* usually a flat rate is calculated with penalties included. Awards written in terms of hours rather than days of work are easier to convert from 8 hour to 12 hour shifts.

*Overtime:* There must be an absolute limit to working hours. A maximum of 14 is recommended. *11 N.B.*

*Flexibility:* The individual should be allowed some flexibility within the system, but not the right to swap shifts so as to threaten health.

*Maintain contact:* Don't let management lose touch with shiftworkers. Overlap between shiftworkers' hours and management's may occur as infrequently as 5 days per month.

*Briefing:* crews may need to be briefed about current work after long breaks off. This may require a greater amount of written briefing or and overlap period for supervisors with the incoming crew.

*Provide information:* Give general information about a new roster to

people indirectly involved such as canteen and security staff

*Need for education:* Self care relating to sleep, nutrition and family adjustment to shiftwork can be taught and will prevent many problems.

*Consultation:* Frequent consultation with shiftwork advisors during the initial changeover can help when small problems need to be ironed out.

*Shiftwork dropouts:* Reasons for leaving or changing jobs within the company should be investigated if they relate to the new roster. An exit interview can provide valuable information about problems.

*Follow-up studies:* It is important to reassess the situation after a new roster has been in operation for approximately 6 to 12 months

How well does the 12 hour roster work?

Twelve hour rosters have been worked in the Hoechst factory in Germany for over 40 years and their positive effect on health and accident rates have been reported in an earlier BBRI paper (Singer, 1985).

The 12 hour roster has also become popular since the 1970s in the U.S. and Canada in the chemical and petroleum industries. Fifty plants in the US & Canada were surveyed in 1977 and none reported an increase in accidents as a result of 12 hour shifts (Northrup, Wilson & Rose, 1979). This has been attributed to management and employee recognition of the need for greater conscientiousness about safety.

Absenteeism and turnover did not change significantly with 12 hour shifts; physical health appeared to improve in some locations after one year's experience of the new shifts and morale improved in all plants, most particularly in younger workers. Older workers found more difficulty in changing (Northrup, Wilson & Rose, 1979).

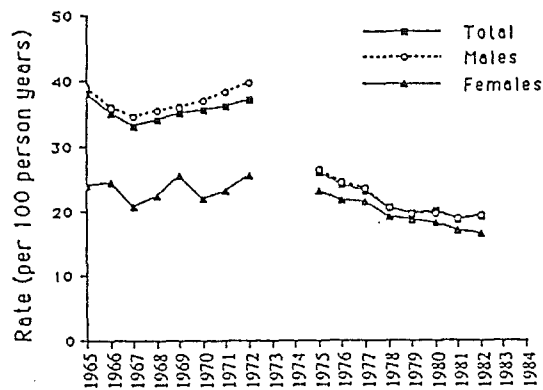


Figure 1: On-the-job, age-standardised rates for all injuries for eight years before and after changing to twelve hour rosters in a Canadian manufacturing company (Lees, Workman & Laundry, 1988)

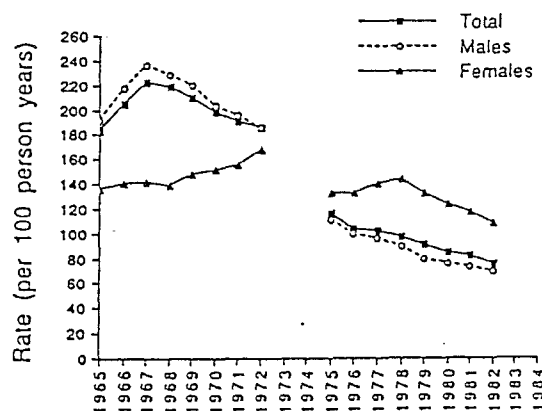


Figure 2 - Age-standardized morbidity rates for all illnesses for eight years before and after changing to twelve hour roster in a Canadian manufacturing company (Lees, Workman and Laundry, 1988).

Carefully researched data come from a 1988 study comparing accident and illness rates in a large Canadian manufacturing company taken from 10 year periods preceding and following a switch from 8 hour shifts to 12 hour shifts (Lees, Workman & Laundry, 1988).

In this study it was found that the average rate for all on-the-job injuries was significantly lower for males on the 12 hour shifts than on the 8 hour shift and did not differ for females (Figure 1).

Illness data showed that the incidence of headaches, gastric upset, diarrhea and alcohol problems in males were significantly lower during the ten years of the 12 hour shift system. Illnesses in females did not differ significantly between the 8 and 12 hour systems (Figure 2).

### BBRI studies

Follow up studies of physical and mental workload carried out 3 and 4 months after the introduction of 12 hour rosters in two organisations (Wallace, 1986) found that the prolonged working time did not produce a physical overload or increased fatigue. Hormone data taken during night shifts showed a low level of arousal, but data from an individual during a night emergency showed no impairment in the ability to respond to the situation.

Performance of power station operators on a simulated task showed a consistent trend for measures of speed and accuracy during 12 hr shifts to be superior to those during 8 hour shifts. In a second study conducted in a manufacturing plant on continuous operation there appeared to be no change in performance but early measures were confounded by an intake of new employees and some small changes in work practices. After 2 years there is no evidence for increased operator errors, work-related injuries or accidents.

*Self assessed mental and physical workload:* A higher mental workload was reported during the day shifts by power station operators in both 8 and 12 hour rosters. No differences between rosters, in mental or physical tiredness, were found for these operators. In the continuous process plant physical workload did not differ between 12 hour day and 12 hour night shifts but both physical and mental workload were rated higher for a few 2 hour periods during the 12 hour shifts when compared with 8 hour shifts.

*Mood ratings :* Generally, all workers reported they felt more sluggish on night shifts than on day shifts regardless of the type of shift roster. The ratings for all mood changes were generally low and in an acceptable range which would not lead to a permanent fatigue syndrome.

*Sleep :* The quality of sleep following 12 hour night shifts was significantly better than following the 8 hour shifts for the power station operators. In the manufacturing plant ratings of sleep soundness and restedness improved slightly, but not significantly, on 12 hour shifts.

*Overall results of assessments:* The physiological cost of work during 12 hour shifts in the two organisations mentioned here was within an acceptable level and is not likely to lead to a deterioration in health. From the physiological point of view, the 12 hour shifts do not represent a harmful overload. Subjectively the prolonged working time may evoke some feelings of fatigue during work, even if the workload is relatively low. Most employees report considerable satisfaction with the new rosters, particularly with regard to social and family life.

### Problems?

The problems associated with 12 hour shifts are largely associated with their initial implementation. These revolve around: the method of payment (pay averaging greatly facilitates the operation of the 12 hour roster); the arrangements for sick leave and the provision of staff to cover absenteeism and overtime.

Other concerns relate to the way employees use their large blocks of leisure time. Both management and unions fear that there will be an increase in the number of second jobs and part time employment which could have the effect of undoing the health and social benefits of the new rosters.

## Shiftwork Advisory Service

Members of the Brain-Behaviour Research Institute at La Trobe University have years of experience in occupational research, particularly in shiftwork and work related stress problems and can offer advice on shiftwork and rosters and, on a consultancy basis, can assess workload, design rosters and assist in their installation.

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# AN AUSTRALIAN CASE HISTORY OF 12 HOUR SHIFT ROSTERS

Greg Pattison

Amongst the many challenges facing the Australian economy today is the need to find ways to increase productivity, most specifically to make better use of our plant and equipment, in an environment where changing social values and attitudes to work are not necessarily compatible with what might be described as traditional solutions.

Experience at Lilypak suggests 12 hour shifts are an effective response to this situation. However the company doesn't see 12 hour shifts as the universal cure-all - there are a range of solutions; 12 hour shifts are but one.

Lilypak are manufacturers and marketers of disposable food packaging and food service items. The product range includes cups, plates, glasses, ice cream and yoghurt containers which are manufactured from paper or plastic. Manufacturing operations are located at three plants in metropolitan Sydney. The company has a work force of around 750 people and an annual turnover of about \$70 million.

Late in 1986 it became apparent the company was running out of production capacity for hamburger packs, one of the major product lines.

There were basically two solutions available. The first was to invest in additional capital equipment. The second was to increase production from existing machinery. Briefly the process for manufacturing hamburger packs is as follows: polystyrene is fed through an extruder and at the same time the heated plastic is expanded with gas. The expanded foam is forced through a

die and emerges as two continuous sheets which are rolled and stored for curing. Once curing has occurred the rolls of foam are then passed through an inline printer, thermoformed, cut and packed off. It is a process involving complex technologies representing an investment of several million dollars.

An extrusion line and the associated equipment is not the sort of thing that can be bought off the shelf. The time lag between ordering the equipment and having it on-line and producing quality product could be in the order of 15 months. So for Lilypak the first solution was not acceptable. The company would be out of capacity long before any new equipment could be operational. Furthermore, the level of investment required made this strategy non sustainable.

The alternative was to increase output from existing plant and that meant running it longer. Of the 168 hours available each week, the plant was operating an average of 108.

However, this was only part of the story. The extrusion process takes a fair amount of time to start up and stabilise so it was not unusual to lose one or two shifts at the beginning of each weekly start up. Furthermore, starting involves the production of unuseable extruded foam that has to be reworked to recover the polymer. It is a fairly wasteful process and the company was doing it 52 times a year! The extrusion process in fact runs best when it is started up, stabilised and left to run for as long as possible.

The situation facing Lilypak was serious. The company could not satisfy

the full needs of a major customer and since the company supplied other products as well it was recognised that this could place the entire relationship at risk.

Towards the end of 1986 the company opened negotiations with State and Federal officers of the Union covering production employees with a view to introducing 7 day continuous rosters on those machines associated with the production of hamburger packs. The union officials understood the seriousness of the situation, however they were not enthusiastic about introducing 7 day continuous shift rosters.

To complicate the issue further the company, from the outset, took the position that should the matter be satisfactorily resolved the agreed outcome should be registered with the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission.

This position meant that there would have to be variations to the Federal Award so the effect of the negotiations extended beyond the State branch of the union and involved the Federal office and several State Branches of the union.

This situation may not be unusual for organisations contemplating the introduction of 12 hour shifts. In developing the processes for negotiating the change it is important to recognise there may be several constituencies to be addressed, some of which may not be directly accessible to the company, consequently it is necessary to give all the principal parties to the negotiations time and the resources, particularly information, necessary for them to undertake the peripheral but critical negotiations with their other constituencies.

Returning to the Lilypak situation, by February 1987 negotiations had reached the point where broad understandings (it would not be correct to call them agreements) had been reached and it was mutually decided that the next step would be to put a 7 day continuous

shift roster system to the work force. If the response were favourable then it was believed it would not be too difficult to convert the broad understandings into agreement.

When the company entered the negotiations it did not have any preconceived ideas as to what type of 7 day continuous shift roster would be appropriate. The final roster which was put to the work force was suggested by the union and was one of which it had considerable experience from its involvement in other awards and industries.

The characteristics of the proposed roster system were as follows:

#### 7 day continuous roster

- 15 week cycle of rotating shifts
- Core pattern:

7 afternoons	1 off
7 days	3 off
7 nights	3 off

- 63 working days/cycle, 21 rostered days off interspersed in the core pattern and a 21 day break between cycles
- Annual leave taken at fixed times

Shift penalties and conditions to be applied were compatible with similar 7 day continuous roster systems. Furthermore, the company made it clear that participation in the new roster would be entirely voluntary. Nobody would be retrenched because of the changes and there would be no reduction in wages if, as a result of the changes, some employees transferred to lower paid classifications. People who elected not to transfer to the new shift system would remain on their existing shifts.

The proposed new roster affected about 50 positions (about 20% of the total work force). However because of the radical nature of the change and the possibility that the 7 day roster could, at some time in the future, be extended to

other parts of the operation it was decided to put the proposition to the entire work force, including a small satellite plant about 1 km away, which was managed from the major facility.

The 7 day continuous shift roster system and its attendant conditions were presented to a series of shift meetings in early March 1987.

By the time the second presentation had been completed (there were 6 meetings in all), it was apparent that the proposal was in deep trouble. It met with a negative reaction from all meetings.

Reasons for rejection by the work force

- Only 1 day break between afternoon and day shift
- Rotating shifts unacceptable
- Fixed annual leave taking
- Safety
- Work periods too long
- Insufficient incentive.

The company had some time earlier brought the matter before the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. This avenue remained open, however, there were no illusions that achieving an arbitrated outcome would be easy, nor did the company underestimate the problems of trying to force a change with a work force not committed to the change. In fact this approach was viewed as a last resort. Consequently, the company believed negotiations and discussions had to continue.

Two things happened about that time which turned out to be important elements in the ultimate outcome.

First, the management group began to question some of its planning assumptions such as whether it was possible to achieve our production needs without going to 365 days operations.

Second, it was felt more progress could be made if discussions could be moved away from the formal atmosphere of union/management meetings.

It is inevitable when discussions or negotiations involve a broader group, and in this case this included union officials and employer association representatives, the range of factors which influence the discussions are also broadened. Ultimately, these other issues have to be addressed and unions and employer associations have a legitimate role to play. In fact it was the company's experience that both associations made valuable contributions to the process.

However, it was also the company's view that identification of the key concerns of the work force and the identification of possible solutions would be easier if those "other" issues could be excluded for the time being.

Consequently when the company next met with the union and reported the absence of progress it was suggested that the next step to be considered was a working party of plant employees and management representatives with no participation by union officials or employer association industrial officers. This was agreed.

#### Shift roster working party

The working party which was formed had 10 members:

- 3 Union Delegates
- 3 Union Members
- 1 Fitter (observer)
- 1 Shift Supervisor
- Operations Manager
- Employee Relations Manager

To promote discussion it was decided to meet off-site. The first meeting of the working party was held mid March 1987.

There was not a lot of structure to the meeting, however a fair amount of time was spent looking at the brief and reinforcing the fact that neither union

members nor company officers were there to negotiate a new shift system formally but to look for possible solutions.

#### Working party brief

*"To examine roster systems and to develop a roster system which will enable the Company to satisfy its production requirements and meet the objections of staff to seven days rotating systems."*

(N.B. The findings of the working party did not commit the company or union).

The principal result of the first meeting was to identify more clearly the major objections of the work force to the original 7 day continuous roster.

#### Key objections

- Rotating shifts
- Fixed leave taking
- Work periods too long

The incentive issue was not discussed as wages and conditions were outside the working party's charter.

The obvious solution was a fixed shift roster and the management representatives undertook to look for examples of fixed shifts for the next meeting of the working party. It was about this time that the idea of 12 hour shifts began to be discussed amongst the Lilypak management team. Initially there was some scepticism.

First, the company wasn't sure it would get enough production. Second, there were already some 12 hour systems operating within the industry without the Union's sanction, so an extension of this type of arrangement was expected to meet with resistance.

By the time the working party met for the second time, the 12 hour shift concept was still not at all developed. The management members had, in the meanwhile found some fixed shift rosters. However even before they

went to the meeting it was clear they were not the solution.

The rosters examined presented many of the same problems that the original 7 day rotating roster had. It was fairly clear that the fixed shift roster left a lot to be desired. Work patterns were uneven, there were some very long work periods, the longest in the system we looked at was eight shifts in a row and there were even some single day work attendances.

At the next meeting the reaction of the rest of the working party was exactly the same as the management representatives.

What happened next was fortuitous. One of the union delegates offered a solution: "Come to work for a day and a half straight and have the rest of the week off."

Clearly that was not a possibility but it did promote discussion on different ways of organising work *which were not fixed to 8 hour shifts*. The working party tried 10 hours per day - that didn't divide into 24 hours too well. What about 12? What emerged very quickly was what Lilypak now calls the 12:28 roster system.

#### The 12:28 roster system

In simple terms the 12:28 roster operates a fixed 12 hour shift system, and employees come to work 12 days every 28.

As can be seen below it works around a simple pattern of two days on and two days off. This cycle is repeated 5 times and following the sixth work period of two shifts there is a continuous break of six days. Because the shift teams are offset the company achieves 24 days production every 28. To get an even spread of weekend work between the shift teams the roster must start on a Tuesday.

Summarising the major characteristics of the 12:28 roster they are these:

- Two permanent shift teams for day, two for night
- Fixed shifts
- Average 36 hour week
- Two days on - two off
- 6 days continuous break between shift cycles
- 24 days production every 28
- Flexible leave taking
- 3 weekend days/9 week days

The working party was very enthusiastic about what it had produced. Leaving aside the issue of 12 hour shifts *per se*, for the moment it appeared to satisfy all objections: The shifts were fixed, leave taking was flexible and work periods were significantly reduced.

In addition, it was clear there were major gains in leisure time with work days being reduced from a normal 18 per four weeks to 12.

However there remained a number of unanswered questions:

1. Were 12 hour shifts feasible within the working environment?
2. Would the increase in working days be enough to meet the company's needs?
3. What would be the impact of the roster on product cost?
4. What would be the reaction of the Union?

Table 1

The 12:28 Lilypak roster for the day teams over a four week period

	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M
T <sub>1</sub>	D	D					D	D				D	D	
T <sub>2</sub>			D	D				D	D			D	D	

	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M
T <sub>1</sub>			D	D			D	D			D	D		
T <sub>2</sub>	D	D			D	D		D	D					

T<sub>1</sub>: Team 1; T<sub>2</sub>: Team 2.

Generally the working party believed the 12:28 roster would be well received, however there was concern that expectations could be raised before the questions were answered.

It was unanimously agreed that the working party would report to the work force only that progress was being made and specifics were being discussed until some advance had been made towards addressing the four questions above.

By now it was early April 1987.

### Consultation with the BBRI

It was at this point the company decided to involve the Brain-Behaviour Research Institute (BBRI). It was felt that if we were to progress further then outside assistance would be needed. Taking a longer term view the company believed there was little to be gained if the sort of work to be converted to 12 hour shifts was unsuitable and if uninformed change resulted in occupational health and safety issues some time down the track.

Furthermore, it was the management's view that it had an obligation to employees to investigate fully the ramifications of what was being proposed.

Finally if, as the company required, the new arrangements were to be registered in the Arbitration Commission then there would need to be some objective assessments of what was proposed.

Turning to the four questions: The feasibility of 12 hour shifts could only be answered by a study conducted by specialists, in this case the BBRI, so an immediate answer was not available.

Some intensive investigation over a fairly short period of time established that the roster system would give the company the production we needed and, provided planning assumptions were reasonably on the mark, it seemed that it was also affordable.

The remaining unknown was the Union. At the beginning of April the company made contact with the State Branch of the union and advised it of the results of the working party. Lilypak also made it clear that it recognised the significance of what was being proposed and indicated the company's intention to engage the BBRI to assist.

By this time there was a fair amount of pressure from the work force for a report back so it was decided to hold shift meetings even though, at that stage, no formal meetings had been held with the union.

This earlier-than-planned release of the roster did present a problem. The company had a fairly strong idea that there would be a positive, even an enthusiastic response from the work force and as yet only about half the story was available. As suspected, the reaction was favourable, and it was necessary to emphasise to the work force that the system was at that stage an idea not a reality. What followed was a fairly systematic working through of the issues. The first thing to get underway was the study of the work to be involved.

A preliminary inspection by Professor Singer and Dr. Wallace established that *prima facie* the work looked OK, but endorsement from BBRI would require comprehensive testing to establish baseline data and then, assuming favourable results, further testing some 6 to 9 months after the shift system had been introduced to see what the effects were. The first round of testing was conducted in June.

### Acceptance by the union

Paralleling this work it was also necessary to develop a suitable wages and conditions package. That presented some challenges, not the least of which was adapting traditional concepts of a 5 or 7 days week to what would be in effect a 3 day week. This was further complicated by the company's

requirement that the agreement be registered. Nobody was too sure about how that was going to be done but as things turned out it proved to be a relatively simple matter.

Finally, but just as importantly, the company had to address the issue of acceptance by the Union.

By this time there was a fair head of pressure internally within the business because of the company's inability to supply a major customer fully. However the senior management team took a considered view and supported the management group directly involved by giving it time to work through all the issues. Time was a vital ingredient in the resolution of this matter.

Earlier it was mentioned the principal parties to the negotiations had a range of constituencies to address outside those directly involved. This was certainly the case with the Union. It was clear to the company that there was a divergence of views including a strong body of opinion within the union which was opposed to 12 hour shifts.

Two things were necessary to overcome this obstacle, time and information. The company made every endeavour to make sure the union was well informed about the progress of testing and made available to them as much literature as possible.

The union on its own behalf arranged for Professor Singer to address the Branch Executive. They also took independent advice from the ACTU Occupational Health and Safety Unit. These initiatives by the union were extremely important because they meant discussions could proceed on an informed basis.

Finally by mid June agreement had been reached with the union on a wages and conditions package.

What was required now were three things: (i) endorsement from the work force, (ii) formal endorsement from the union; and (iii) a final go ahead from the BBRI.

Shift meetings were held by union officials and the roster system and the wages and conditions package were agreed to by the work force. The system and wages and conditions package was endorsed by the State Executive of the union and then by a general meeting of the union mid July 1987.

### Progress towards implementation

By this time the company was fairly confident the results from the BBRI's tests would be satisfactory. Several people from the Institute had inspected the work, there had been interviews of the work force and it was the company's belief that if there were problems they would probably have surfaced. The company therefore commenced to prepare to implement.

The company had recognised from the very outset that the changes in shift rosters would not suit everybody so as part of the implementation plan the conditions originally applied to the original 7 day continuous roster were again used. These were: voluntary participation, a 3 month trial, no shift change, no income loss and the option to transfer to a job as similar as possible.

Volunteers were called for in early July. There were 48 positions to be filled and these were filled by 33 volunteers from the existing work force and by 15 new recruitments. Those employees who elected not to participate were transferred to other jobs on the same shift with no loss of income.

Final approval from the BBRI to commence 12 hour shifts was given on 24th July and the shift roster went live on 11th August, 1987, nearly 12 months after the company first raised the need for extended shifts.

### The Lilypak experience

A number of lessons can be drawn from the Lilypak experience. The two most important are these:

First, a change to 12 hour shifts takes time. It won't happen overnight and the people involved in and affected by the change need to understand from the outset time is a vital resource in the process.

Second, such a change requires a substantial commitment. Testing and investigatory processes are not cheap, but financial commitment is only part of the story. Just as vital is the commitment to stick with the process even when it becomes frustrating and progress is minimal.

The issue of the registration of the agreement was solved in the following way.

As part of the industry negotiations on second tier increases an enabling clause was inserted into the relevant Award which makes it possible, where there is agreement between the employer, union and majority of employees on alternative working arrangements for extended shift operations, for that agreement to be ratified by the Commission, and for that agreement to replace Award conditions wherever there are any inconsistencies within the Award. The agreement was ratified on 25th March, 1988 using this clause.

How successful is the new roster?

*Production:* The roster enabled us to achieve the production levels we needed. Waste has been reduced and product quality improved.

*Absenteeism:* Absenteeism is marginally below that of the rest of the factory. The differences are small and no conclusions as to the impact of the roster system can, or should be drawn.

*Staff turnover:* Staff turnover is about 20% below that of the factory overall. There are a number of variables to be considered including the work patterns and higher pay rates. The company has not analysed the situation in sufficient depth to draw any conclusions as to why turnover is less.

*Employee reaction:* Anecdotal data suggest that people like the roster system because of the increased leisure, the rates of pay and the fact they can get work over and done with. As one employee commented "It's like having a weekend every two days."

In terms of shift preference the BBRI's follow-up study showed 86% of employees preferred 12 hour shifts to 8 hour shifts.

Finally in terms of the physiological costs the second round of testing has shown that the cumulative fatigue arising from working two twelve hour shifts is less than that from the previous 8 hour shift pattern worked over 5 days.

### Conclusions

1. 12 hour shifts represent a viable solution to some of the issues affecting Lilypak.
2. It is possible to change working patterns so there is a win/win outcome. That involves some rethinking by both management and Unions.
3. Organisations contemplating 12 hour shifts need to identify the issues before looking for solutions. The role of the working party and its ability to keep to the issues was crucial in this case.
4. Don't expect 12 hour shifts will necessarily produce changes in staff turnover and/or absenteeism.
5. Don't try to make a move to 12 hour shifts without professional assistance. It is a complex issue - get hold of experts in the area.
6. Be prepared to put in an intensive communications effort.
7. Finally be flexible, be prepared to give a bit to get a bit.

VINCE BABY

FIND ENCLOSURE INFO ON 12 HOUR SHIFTS  
AS BEING FROM VIC HAMPSON (U/W MANAGER)  
APPEARS IT IS COMING BY A DR Z  
(CONSULTANT TO THE MEDICAL HEALTH SECTION  
OF AUSTRALIA POST.)  
THAT'S ALL HE KNOWS

DR EN CASTRISOS (I THINK IS SPEERING)

ATTACHED TO STATE MANAGERS OFFICE  
HUMAN RESOURCES DEPT

POSSIBLE PHONE NO 1726

LEDER