CITY OF SAN JOSE
CAPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY

Memorandum

TO: Mike Wilcox

FROM: Dan Kadomoto

SUBJECT: FLSA impact on Proposed Fire Department Schedule

DATE: July 25, 2002

The Payroll department has reviewed your proposed Fire Department schedule referred to as a 2/4, for 2 days on and 2 days off. Our analyses of these schedules were conducted for the entire calendar year of 2003, with the transition to the new schedules starting in the third pay period of the calendar year.

Our analysis indicates that there will be no impact to the FLSA cycles by going to the new 2/4 schedules for calendar 2003.

Dan Kadomoto
Finance Department
Manager, Payroll /Business Systems & Support

cc: Mark Burton
Pat Sawicki
Ofelia Hsieh
Anita Pennington
Mary Flatley

Peter J. Nowicki
Battalion Chief

Moraga-Orinda Fire District
33 Orinda Way
Orinda, CA 94563

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Mike Murray
550 Ventura Avenue
San Mateo, CA 94403

11-19-2002

Mike,

Thanks for your recent call pertaining to the 48/96 work schedule. It has been enthusiastically accepted by the staff and membership (with a few exceptions). Beyond moral, we have also seen a steady decline in sick leave usage. Through the first 4 months, the decline has been 25-30%.

If I may be of any other assistance, please don't hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

City of Albuquerque

P.O. BOX 1293 ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87103

Albuquerque Fire Department

www.cabq.gov/fire

Martin Chavez, Mayor

June 12, 20002

Manual Alarcon, Fire Chief
San Jose Fire Department
Bureau of Field Operations
4 North Second St., Ste. 1100
San Jose, CA 95113

Dear Chief Alarcon:

Please find the attached answers for the Albuquerque Fire Fighter Local 244 48/96 Shift Schedule Questions. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact my office at 505-833-7300.

Sincerely,

Robert E. Ortega

Robert E. Ortega
Fire Chief

Cc: Marty Hoenisch, Fire Captain

THE CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION EMPLOYER

Albuquerque Firefighter Local 244
48/96 Shift Schedule Questions

1. Have there been any negative changes in fatigue or stress resulting from the change to the 48/96 schedule?

   There has been no documented increase in either fatigue or stress levels. The Fire fighters feel this is positive to both the personal and professional aspects of their lives.

2. Has there been any increase or decrease in the use of sick leave resulting from the change to the 48/96 schedule?

   Sick leave usage is consistent with the previous schedules worked within our department, (10-hour day, 24-hour shift, 14-hour night, and three days off. Three ten-hour days, three 14-hour nights, three days off.)

3. Have there been any increases or decreases in disability leave resulting from the change to the 48/96 schedule?

   None

4. What benefits or drawbacks, from the perspective of Fire Administration, have you seen since switching to the 48/96 schedule?

   There have been no drawbacks administratively with the schedule. I was assigned to the field when this schedule was implemented. At the time I was totally against the change to the 48/96, but since have become a stanch supporter of the schedule. It lends itself to a more rewarding family experience and also provides for a more positive approach to the work environment.

5. Has there been any increase or decrease in retention of personnel?

   Increases and decreases in personnel are still affected by monetary, disciplinary, and other issues not related to the work schedule.

6. Have you seen a reduction or increase in the use of shift trades?

   Trades of shifts have remained at their previous levels.

7. Have you seen an increase or change in productivity?

   We have no data in regards to productivity, but moral seems to have increased resulting in a better work environment which in turn increases job performance. This can be attributed in large part to the change in schedule that increased amount of concurrent time off.

8. Has the 50% reduction in commute hours and the resulting energy savings and pollution reduction resulted in any benefits to your City/District/Department?

We have no data as far as pollution, but there is a direct correlation between decreased commute times that in turn lead to less fuel consumption and decreased vehicle emissions. This also results in personal savings in the fuel cost and wear and tear on their vehicles.

9. Has there been a reduction in FLSA costs to your City/District?

We pay two hours less per person per FLSA period.

10. What problems or benefits, from the perspective of your Fire Administration, have you seen since switching to the 48/96?

From an Administrative perspective we feel if the membership is positive then the likelihood of increased productivity may be a by-product.

11. Has the 48/96 had a significant impact on attendance/scheduling of training?

This remains the same as the previous two schedules.

12. Has the 48/96 resulted in any staffing problems or benefits?

No staffing problems other than the normal areas covered by vacation, sick leave and injuries that are a part of the regular operations.

13. Has the 48/96 has any negative or positive effect on your Union activities i.e., Membership meeting, Political action etc.?

No

Chief's comments:

As I stated earlier, I was originally opposed to this schedule, after having worked it in the field my perspective has totally reversed itself. The benefits our many fold, not only within the work place, but also within the family experience. It allowed for a much greater point of participation and involvement in my children's school, sports, and other activities. It allowed me to dedicate personnel time to them. Within the work place it seems to reflect increased moral and a better work ethic for the majority of the fire personnel. At this point I feel the members of the Albuquerque Fire Department would fight very vigorously to keep this schedule in place.

Letter From BC Chuck Wilson, Manhattan Beach Fire/ Fire Tactics/ Assessment Center Instructor

From: cwilson@ci.manhattan-beach.ca.us
To: mikemjw@yahoo.com
Subject: 48/96 schedule

Hi Mike.

I speak with absolute conviction that this is the best schedule I have ever worked. Even as a manager. Reasons as follows. This schedule results in less time away from the family. I have the most wonderful wife in the world and do not like to leave at any time, but we both think this is a better schedule.

The **commute time** from a 3 & 4schedule is drastically cut (just look at your commute days if you work a Mon.-Wed.- Fri) which is not only driving time but prep to leave and return. I drive to work once and return home once in a 6 day period!.

Fatigue has been addressed by being flexible in the activities of the "go-round". If we get hammered on the first night, we can work around it with wake up and lunch times. I want us to present a professional image, so we do not lounge around in "robes" but there is a modified approach to allow rest.

Productivity. No question, productivity is better. Apparatus and equipment get their check-out by on-coming crews and they "own" it for two days leaving more time the second day. As a BC, I can unpack projects and work into the evening and not have to repack each day. Phone tags get completed and I believe the longer time allows me to stay focused on projects at hand, to get them completed, and they are more thought out as the focus is not always changed by going home.

We have not seen any increase in **injury or disability**. In fact **sick leave** has dropped 80%! We are a small sample, and other Departments have seen similar results. Clearly, many members of the Fire Service do not like ANY **change**. This is one where both sides get polarized, vocal and bring forward real and phantom issues. Why not try a one year **pilot program**, and either labor or management can opt out if it does not work. Both sides need to make a commitment to make it work.

We had 60% for the schedule ands 40% strongly opposed before we tried it. Now there is 99+% absolutely loving the 48/96 schedule. In fact, if anyone suggested another schedule, they might get hurt by many of our members. Figuratively speaking.

We do work up to 96 hours and the 72 is not viewed by our folks as bad. In fact, it results in OT with less commuting and many members work the 96's.

Our **Morale** has been greatly improved, and yes, we have the typical Department where there will always be "issues". Never have heard of a negative one regarding the schedule. The only person who still prefers not to work a 48 is 55 years old and lives in town, his wife is a teacher.

Family life events such as school car-pooling and **custody/visitation** have not been a problem.

Mike, in looking at your list, the issues represent" stumbling blocks" to avoid even a trial period. If your folks want it to work, it will.

If you want more info or further help, let me know. I have been real busy with my classes off duty, and am leaving for Hawaii this Sunday for 2 weeks. If I don't get back to you right away, please understand.

Chuck

Robert P. Halton - SENIOR BATTALION CHIEF
ALBUQUERQUE NEW MEXICO
31 Joe Mae Road
87015

Denis Bell
San Jose Fire Department
San Jose, California

Dear Dennis

I am very happy to reply to your inquiry concerning our departments use and success with the 48 hour on 96 off scheduling. Our organization has been using it for over four years and it has been a tremendous success. The schedule appears imposing at first glance however it affords our firefighters several benefits. The schedule has it's critics although among the members on the schedule there is only one critic who I think of as I write this. They are my relief and I can refer her to you if you need to make contact.

One of the most significant benefits has to do with lowering stress levels, it has been proven that coming to work is one of the highest stress times for an individual. Our members experience this elevated stress level only once every 6 days. I regards to fuel usage and conservation our members now make only one round trip to work every six days. This provided decreased travel incidence has afforded opportunities for car pooling as well as attracting applicants for outside our city a county boundaries.

Our organization in my opinion has benefited in many ways from this very member friendly schedule. I have been a promoted battalion commander since 93 serving longer in this position than any other in my organization. It is my opinion that this schedule has improved our morale our camaraderie and our fireground excellence. We are a metro sized organization with an engine company, # 5, which has been recognized as the thirty busiest in America. I supervise this company on B shift. This busy company is one of the happiest under this plan. They feel they can knock out a tour and have sufficient time off to recuperate and re-energize for the next shift. They do not feel the duty is constant or insufferable. Since the schedule I have had only one transfer from this house, prior to the schedule transfer request were constant.

We are very successful under this plan in terms of scheduling training and accomplishing our goals. I can endorse this schedule without reservation. I also have a good friend who recently implemented this schedule in his organization last year. His name is Fire Chief Rocco Forte of Minneapolis Minnesota please feel free to contact him and mention my name. He organization has found the schedule similarly beneficial. Our union President John Garcia can also be reached for comment.

If I can be of any other assistance please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Bobby Halton

CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
FIRE DEPARTMENT

400 15TH Street Manhattan Beach, CA 90266
Telephone (310) 802-5200 FAX (310) 802-5201

November 14, 2002

Mike Wilcox
203 Storey St.
Santa Cruz, California 95060

Dear Mike:

In response to our telephone conversation, I'm sending you a brief summary of what I believe to be the most beneficial by-products of the "48/96" shift schedule:

- Tangible increase in productivity, most probably attributable to the continuity of personnel enabling projects to be initiated and completed within the 48-hour cycle, without interruption or intrusion by other stimuli. This schedule also makes redundant many daily morning routines, (e.g. – briefings), thereby permitting more time allotments for job-related activity.

- Dramatic reduction in sick leave usage and a corresponding drop in overtime budgets. Our sick leave usage in the past couple of years has shown a 65-70% drop-off, far exceeding our predictions.

- Palpable boost to department morale. At virtually no cost to the governing municipality, a new wave of appreciation for the administration's sensitivity to employee needs was generated. This good will filtered to all levels of the organization and represented a forward-thinking attitude and a willingness to accept change. The troops were surprised and delighted.

As the years have gone by, all members, including administration, have come to further respect the wisdom of our decision to adopt the "48/96." We hope it works equally well for you and your department.

Kindest regards,

Ron Redmond, Battalion Chief - "A" Shift