



CENTRAL UTAH INTERAGENCY FIRE ORGANIZATION

April 20, 2009

Memorandum

To: All Agency Personnel

From: Interagency Fire Management Officer
and
Central Area FFSL Fire Management Officer

Subject: Work/Rest, Length of Assignment and Days off Guidelines

Enclosed is the Work/Rest and Length of Assignment Guidelines for the Fishlake National Forest, BLM Richfield & Fillmore Field Offices and Central Area Forestry, Fire and State Lands.

The guidelines provide further clarification and directions on how the BLM Richfield & Fillmore Field Office, Fishlake National Forest and Central Area Forestry, Fire and State Lands will implement and abide by the national work/rest, length of assignment and days off policy.

The guidelines are in accordance with the standards set by NWCG and the Interagency Incident Business Handbook Chapter 10, Section 12.7.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kim Soper', written over a horizontal line.

Signed by:
Kim Soper
Interagency Fire Management Officer

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Fred Johnson', written over a horizontal line.

Signed by:
Fred Johnson
Central Area Fire Management Officer

Attachments

1- Work/Rest and Length of Assignment Guidelines

CENTRAL UTAH WORK/REST AND LENGTH OF ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES

The following provides further clarification and direction on how the BLM Richfield and Fillmore Field Offices, Fishlake National Forest and Central Area Forestry, Fire and State Lands will implement the work/rest and length of assignment guidelines.

The most valuable resources we have are our employees. Their health, safety and well-being should be considered paramount to everything else we do. As managers we need to make sure that we provide our employees with a safe work environment and that we provide them with adequate rest to perform their jobs safely. Employee fatigue is a key element that we need to be constantly monitoring and managing, especially as it relates to fire suppression activities.

The intent of work/rest policies is to ensure that ALL employees have had sufficient rest to accomplish their mission. In most instances employees will be working their regularly scheduled work days and adhering to the work/rest guidelines will not be a problem.

To whom do these rules apply?

- These policy interpretations are to be followed by all personnel involved with wildland fire management and DO NOT just apply to dedicated fire management personnel.

Who is responsible to manage this direction?

- The individual employee has the responsibility to manage work rest guidelines and understand policy direction. It is the responsibility of the employee's supervisor to monitor their employees rest cycle and assess employees' fatigue.

What funds can be used to pay for mandatory days off to meet work/rest guidelines on the home unit?

- Upon return from an incident on a day that is a regular work day(s), a paid day(s) off will be authorized and charged to; (FS) 66 and charged to the P-Code, (BLM) 060, functional area 0999-77. The days off must occur on the calendar days immediately following the return travel in order to be charged to the incident.¹
- Home unit Agency Administrators may authorize any additional day(s) off with compensation to further mitigate fatigue. If authorized, home unit program funds will be used.

Direction

Work/Rest Ratio

Each employee is required 1 hour of sleep/rest for every 2 hours of work/travel. A maximum of a 16-hour day will be followed with a minimum of 8 hours in non-pay (rest) status.

Work shifts that exceed 16 hours and/or consecutive days that do not meet the 2:1 work/rest ratio should be the exception, and no work shift should exceed 24 hours. However, in situations where this occurs (ex. initial attack) incident management personnel will resume 2:1 work/rest as quickly as possible.

All work shifts exceeding 16 hours, and every instance where work/rest cycles will be exceeded, requires a justification and will be documented by the appropriate Agency Administrator or Incident Commander. The excess hours log in the Appendix Tool Kit of the Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook is an acceptable method of documentation. A work shift includes all hours of work or travel since the last rest period meeting the 2:1 work/rest ratio.

¹ *1) *(The National Mobilization Guide states in Chapter 10, part 13.1)*

Meal Periods

Personnel in support positions and fireline personnel after control of the fire, a meal period of at least 30 minutes must be ordered and taken for each work shift. Ideally, a break of 30 minutes should be taken for each 6 hours on duty.

Incident assignments

Each employee must take a mandatory two days off after working 14 days on an incident assignment (excluding travel days to and from the incident). The day off means not reporting to work, it does not mean switching to another job code and continue working. Days off must occur on the calendar days immediately following the return travel. If the next day(s) upon return from an incident is/are a regular work day(s), then a paid day(s) off is authorized. Pay will be for hours based on regular workweek schedule (ex. 8 or 10 hours). A paid day off is recorded on home unit time records according to agency requirements.

For Type 3-5 incidents, paid days off should be rare exception. However, if necessary, the Agency Administrator (incident host or home unit) may authorize day(s) off with pay.

Pay entitlement, including administrative leave, for a paid day(s) off cannot be authorized on the individual's regular day(s) off at their home unit. Agencies will apply holiday pay regulations, as appropriate.

Time spent in staging and preposition status counts toward the 14-day limit, regardless of pay status, for all personnel, including Incident Management Teams.

Casuals (AD) and Contract resources are not entitled to a paid day off upon release from the incident or at their point of hire. However, they are required to follow the length of assignment and work/rest ratio policy.

Before an employee can accept an assignment, they are required to have had a full day off (consisting of a total of 24 hours) in the previous 7-day period. This applies to all employees' regardless if they have been involved in incident management in the days prior to assignment or conducting normal business prior to assignment. Apply policy per agency requirements.

All length of assignment rules apply to aviation resources, including aircraft pilots, notwithstanding the FAA and Agency day off regulations.

Assignment Extension

Prior to assigning incident personnel to back-to-back assignments, their health, readiness, and capability must be considered. The health and safety of incident personnel and resources will not be compromised under any circumstances.

Assignments may be extended when:

- Life and property are imminently threatened
- Suppression objectives are close to being met,
- A military battalion is assigned, or
- Replacement resources are unavailable, or have not yet arrived.

Upon completion of the standard 14-day assignment, an extension of up to an additional 14 day may be allowed (inclusive of mandatory 2 days off provided prior to the 22nd day, for a total of up to 30 days, exclusive of travel).

Single Resource/Kind Extensions:

The Section Chief or Incident Commander will identify the need for assignment extension and will obtain the affected resource's concurrence. The Section Chief and affected resource will acquire and document the home unit supervisor's approval.

Local extended or initial attack activities

Supervisors must manage work schedules for initial attack, dispatch and incident support personnel during extended incident situations. During periods of non-routine, local extended incident activity or initial attack activity, an employee who has worked 14 days must take 1 of their next regularly scheduled days off.

If an employee is assigned to an incident for 14 days on the home unit either at or away from his/her duty station, the employee is entitled to the 2 mandatory days off prior to returning to their normal job. If the days are on scheduled days off there is no provision to pay for their time.

Hosted crew assignments

Each individual will receive two days off after working 14 days on an incident. If the 14th day occurs on the employees normally scheduled days off they would not receive compensation. These days must be taken within the Richfield area unless otherwise approved by the hosting unit's Agency Administrator.

Severity

If assigned to Severity, individuals **are not** entitled to the mandatory 2 days off after a 14 day assignment. Severity is considered a detail, therefore the length of assignment policy does not apply.

Examples

Question: Employee works 22 hour shift during the first 24 hours of Initial Attack how many hours of rest are they required?

Answer: Employee is required to have 11 hours in non-pay (rest) status before they can begin their next shift. This is consistent with the 2 to 1 work/rest ratio for every 2 hours worked 1 hour is required for rest.

Question: Employee works for 5 days and receives an availability request for a 14 day incident assignment.

Answer: Employee can accept assignment. This is consistent with the 1 day off in the previous 7-day period policy.

Question: Employee works for 7 days and receives an availability request for a 14 day incident assignment.

Answer: Employee cannot accept assignment until they have taken one day off from work prior to the assignment. This is consistent with the 1 day off in the previous 7-day period policy.

Question: How many hours constitutes a day off?

Answer: Employee must have a minimum of 24 hours off to be considered a day off.