



GUIDELINES FOR SCHEDULED ATTENDANCE, (SA) A NATIONAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN ROYAL MAIL AND THE CWU

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1. Introduction

Scheduled attendance's (SA), were introduced under the terms of the National Safeguarding the Future of the Mail's business (SFMB) agreement, so that an extra guaranteed work force was available against specific workload commitments at peak-time. The terms were subsequently updated by the Recruitment and Retention Incentive (RRIS) agreement and by recent annual pay settlements including the harmonisation of conditions of service for full and less than full-time staff. There has never been any provision to vary these national agreements at local level.

2. Definition

Scheduled Attendance's are those, which, through an exchange of undertakings, existing employees guarantee to provide, cover for a particular attendance on a specified and a regular basis. They may, for instance be set up on a weekly (including, fortnightly or three weekly), monthly, or seasonal basis. In return, Royal Mail undertakes for specific period of time, subject to satisfactory attendants and performance, to pay for attendance at an enhanced rate. SA may be set up for PHGJ, Postman/Women, Cleaner, and Doorkeeper grades, but undertakings must take account of the normal duty pattern and rotation of staff. The allocation of scheduled attendance will be a matter for local discussion, but scheduled attendance should only be set up where they provide an economic way to secure a reliable service in line with the objectives set out in paragraph 2 of the SFMB.

3. Undertaking

Scheduled attendance will be the subject of written undertakings by the employee and by Royal Mail.

4. Duration of Undertakings

The duration of any scheduled attendance undertaking will reflect the period for which the extra attendance is required. However, if the scheduled attendance is expected to continue for 12 months or more than the agreement will last for one year from the date of the undertaking given to Royal Mail to attend for the scheduled attendance. At the end of this one-year period, a review will be undertaken locally to ensure that the pattern of such attendance still economically meets the Office's circumstances. Suitable adjustment will be made if appropriate and the attendance re-offered to employees on the locally determined basis, within the framework outlined here. If personal or business circumstances change, and undertaking maybe terminated within annual period by the giving of one month's notice by either Royal Mail or the employee.

5. Conditions

5.1 Pay

The rate of pay is national basic pay (i.e. excluding any London additions and any other payments or allowances, but including the part - reckonability of RRIS), at the appropriate hourly rate (i.e. for the grade, and age and length of service), and factors as set out in the personal framework.

5.1.1 Payment for less than full-time employees will be at single standard pay rates where their basic hours plus SA is less than the full-time conditioned hours, for weekday and Saturday scheduled attendance only. Where hours

performed on scheduled attendance together with any of overtime take the total hours worked (Monday - Saturday) above the basic hours for all time, the excess will be paid at a premium rates as detailed in the personal framework. Scheduled attendance hours performed on Sunday will always be paid at premium rates for part-time employees as for full-time employees.

5.2. Reckonability

5.2.1 Scheduled attendance payments are not reckonable for pension purposes. However, Sunday scheduled attendance's are pensionable and for members of POPS are also reckonable for pension contributions. They are not payable during sick leave or for any of absence however caused. They do not qualify for Saturday premium payments or for booked through or travelling time. They do not attract paid meal relief's or breaks. However Sunday scheduled attendance will attract paid meal relief's and book through time.

Scheduled attendance to qualify for NDA if appropriate. However, Saturday SA do not qualify for NDA.

5.2.2 They do not qualify for inclusion in the calculation of improved holiday pay, except for Sunday unscheduled attendance.

5.2.3 A scheduled attendance worked on the bank or public holiday are exceptionally to be treated in accordance with the provisions for bank and public holiday over time.

5.3 Eligibility

Scheduled attendance per week or normally be limited to 10 hours per person not counting Saturday or Sunday. The framing and duration of attendance should have due regard to operational constraints, and the 10-hour limit should not be used as an artificial barrier to sensible attendance patterns. (Note: that it has also been agreed with CWU that the issue of the 10 an hour limit, will not be a consideration in applying the 3.5% 1998 pay increase, and units will not need to address the issue of SA's that have been committed to in excess of the limit in order to apply to 3.5% limit in full). However, the expectation is that new SA commitments will not be entered into above the limit, subject to further negotiations within the context of the working time regulations. Attendance on Sunday should be constructed to meet the needs of the work but will normally be of not less than four hours duration. Shorter attendance may be introduced where insufficient work exists to justify a four-hour attendance or where insufficient work exists to justify a full attendance or where shorter attendance meet the wishes of the employees but subject to the minimum attendance of two hours

However, where the maximum allocation is taken up by any individual, care should be taken to ensure that the total number of additional hours worked over basic hours each week is not excessive. All managers have a responsibility under health and safety to ensure that the level and pattern of attendance worked by employees is not excessively long or unreasonable.

Scheduled attendance will be offered in the following order (when required and economic, appropriate modular training will be given):

- 1) Suitable staff of the scheduled attendance grade.

11) If there are insufficient volunteers from the appropriate grade and SA are still considered the appropriate and economic way to cover the work. Then the local manager may, following consultation and taking into account the cost of training that might be required, offer the scheduled attendance to suitable employees in other grades. However, it must be noted that the rate of pay will always be for the SA performed, (e.g. if an LA were performing a Postman/Woman SA, they are paid at the Postman/Woman's rate).

The responsibility for ensuring that the attendance is worked, including the provision of a suitable substitute (who must be a Royal Mail employee previously agreed by local management) rest with the person who was given the undertaking. If an SA is not covered with about adequate reason, Royal Mail will regard the agreement as being cancelled and the individual will not be eligible for further consideration for an SA for six months. Note: absence through the entitled period of annual leave would be an adequate reason as would notified sick leave. However a high rate as sick leave should be taken into consideration when individual SA come up for renewal. Otherwise conduct rules and procedures are the same as for existing employment.

Where a scheduled attendance is covered by the nominated substitute previously agreed, the payment for the attendance is that normal SA rates. However when uncovered SA's are covered on an ad hoc basis by over time, payment is at normal overtime rates.

6. Less than full-time employees

When an existing part-time employee contracts to perform an SA that is consecutive with their normal duty at the then, where it is sensible to do so, the hours of the part-time contract may be adjusted to include a period of scheduled attendance. (For example if a part-time employee is contracted to attend for ordinary duty between 18:00 and 21:00 hours Monday to Friday, and is allocated scheduled attendance from 17:00 to 18:00. The post can be converted from a 15 hour attendance per week to 20 hours by incorporating the SA into a duty time). This may only be done where the need for scheduled attendance is expected to be long-term. Where it is perceived that future-staffing patterns may result in abolition or redistribution of the attendance, such attendance's must not be reformulated into duties.

7. Control

It is emphasised that the same control that applies to the control and authorisation of overtime must also apply to schedule attendance. Reconciliation of SA worked and paid for should be performed as per overtime, records of SA's held by planning teams and management accountants must tally with the amount of hours actually in operation. There should be a regular review of scheduled attendance to ensure that they continue to fulfil the business requirements.

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