

Submission  
No 3

**THE MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS OF THE NSW  
AMBULANCE SERVICE**

Name: Suppressed  
Date received: 20/05/08

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Partially Confidential

20-508

To Whom It May Concern,

I have been a Trainee Ambulance Officer since

I would like to make a submission, in trust that the content of this letter may be used, but would request confidentiality with my details.

Firstly I would like to discuss meal penalties on night shift. We are entitled to a one hour break during shifts, whether taken as one or split up, where meal penalties apply between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> hour of our day and afternoon shifts. We gave up the penalties on night shift for the right to recline after midnight. The Standard Operating Policy Number SOP2006-048 states "for pay purposes only, meal breaks for night shift is deemed to have been taken prior to midnight". We are paid 13 hours for a 14 hour night shift, where often we do not get a break before midnight. I do not think it is fair for busier stations to work right through, sometimes not reclining or even dining and then not even get paid for the full hours worked.

Another problem in relation to pay and hours worked relates to the commencement of our shifts. The Standard Operating Policy PD2006-003 outlines our "commencement of shift" duties. There is an unspoken agreement that you arrive 15-20 min prior to the commencement of your shift to check the vehicle and complete the tasks outlined such as "station duties, time sheet, attendance book, secure personal belongings into vehicle, secure portable radio and vehicle equipment" as well as check and stock vehicle. These things are done, unpaid prior to every shift. That can equate to more than 60 minutes each four days worked, or over two hours per fortnight. Being early and ready to start at the commencement of shift is understandable but we are doing "station duties" without being paid.

I would like to briefly comment on the pay conditions generally. Busier stations, although get the benefit of call-offs and late meals get paid the same base rate as quiet stations. The new proposed rostering system includes one or two twenty min breaks. This reduces our penalties severely which means busy stations are worked harder and get paid the same as quiet stations. I think it is appalling the new roster expects Ambulance Officers at busy stations to work twelve hours with a small break, with less penalties. I would like to see this system benefit on-road Ambulance Officers.

I would also like to make a note that I have suffered trauma through attending numerous fatality jobs.

no District Inspector even contacted us about such a traumatic job and no support or debrief was offered. I sought advice, and was told continually to contact someone else. I personally received counselling

and

felt no support or understanding what so ever from management,

I have noticed that even though the information should be confidential, that a lot of people know of my situation and colleges often question my ability due to apparent "lack of life experience". I feel management does not support Ambulance Officers when they need it and do not adhere to confidentiality requirements.

The Health Services Union, I feel, offer very little support and practical advice, even to paying members. They are not fighting strong enough for a change in the Service, as many Ambulance Officers would support.

The benefits of being an Ambulance Officers, such as self-worth and helping the community do not reflect our pay and the way management is run. When a traumatic event occurs, very little genuine support is offered, which makes Officers isolated. There is distrust within the service and I feel my confidentiality is never assured. The Service expect us to work before our shifts, and on our nights without being paid for one hour and sometimes without dining. In return I feel our pay, penalties and working environment are not becoming any more pleasant, but more challenging. We do play a vital role in the community, but are not supported appropriately by management and our own union.

Kind Regards

20-5-08

**Meal Breaks****Document Number** SOP2006-048**File No.** 08/1156**Date issued** 1 June 2008**Author Branch** Operations**Branch contact** 9320.7607**Division** Operations**Summary** The purpose of this policy is to set out the correct meal break start time.**Applies to** All Ambulance Service of NSW staff  
All Operational Staff  
All Administration staff  
All Headquarters staff  
Division staff (select Aero medical, Northern, Southern, Sydney, Western)  
Operations Centres (select All, Aero medical, Northern, Southern, Sydney, Western)**Review date** 1 August 2008**Previous reference** SOPP 1.40**Status** Active**Approved by** General Manager, Operations**Compliance with this policy directive is mandatory.**



**MEAL BREAKS**

**DAY SHIFT**

Unless informed otherwise by the Operations Centre, when Officers are on station their meal break is automatically taken four (4) hours after commencement of day or afternoon shift.

After completion of meal break all Officers must call by radio to inform the Operations Centre that they have completed their meal break and are ready for road duties.

**NIGHT SHIFT**

For pay purposes only, meal break for night shift is deemed to have been taken prior to midnight.



**Ambulance Service  
of New South Wales**

## Standard Operating Policy

### Commencement of shift

Document Number PD2006-003

File No. 06/1087

Date Issued 1 June 2006

Author Branch Operations

Branch contact 9320.7607

Division Operations

**Summary** The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedure for commencement of shift.

**Applies to** All Ambulance Services of NSW staff  
All Operational Staff  
All Administration staff  
All Headquarters staff  
Division staff (select Aero medical, Northern, Southern, Sydney, Western)  
Operations Centres (select All, Aero medical, Northern, Southern, Sydney, Western)

Review date 1 August 2008

Previous reference SOPP 1.1

Status Active

Approved by General Manager, Operations

**Compliance with this policy directive is mandatory.**

**COMMENCEMENT OF SHIFT**

Each Officer on commencement of shift must:

- Sign the attendance book
- Enter shift commencement on his/her time sheet.
- Secure appropriate personal gear into allocated vehicle.
- Secure portable radio and ensure battery is fully charged and spare battery is placed in vehicle for the shift.
- Undertake daily check of allocated vehicles.
- Complete Station duties as per Station Instruction.
- Log onto vehicle at or before shift commencement via Mobile Data Transfer (MDT), if technology available
- Standby vehicle radio and await call from Operations Centre in respect of roll call.

**Note:**

*These duties (or any other duty listed in the Standard Operating Procedures & Policies) must not, under any circumstance, interfere or delay the duty crew from responding to any case during duty time.*