

Establishment of a New Standard Working Hours Period

Summary

Have the Federal government establish a standard work period that spans the entire week, divided into two periods. The work week is to be divided into periods, Monday to Thursday and Friday to Sunday. These work periods will be in addition to the current standard 8 by 5 working period already in place.

Proposed Working Hours

Monday to Thursday (M-T) Period

The standard weekly hours will be between 32-40 hours a week. The standard working period will be between 7am to 8pm.

Friday to Sunday (F-S) Period

The standard weekly hours will be between 32-36 hours per week. The standard working period will be between 7am to 9pm.

Employees working these hours are to be classified as full-time workers and therefore have the same superannuation, annual leave, overtime rates etc., rights as an employee working the standard 8 by 5 working hours.

Penalty and Overtime Rates

The penalties rates working outside the standard M-T and F-S hours are to be 15% (or whatever the Fair Work rate is), including for weekend workers, or the same as the penalty rate paid for working outside the standard 8 by 5 week-day hours.

Overtime rates will be based on the standard 8 by 5 weekday overtime rate when working outside the standard F-S hours. Therefore, no weekend overtime rates apply for working on Saturday or Sunday. For M-T workers the standard weekend penalty rates will apply.

Current standard Public Holiday rates to apply.

Benefits

Employees:

- Less work days and more days off.
- Option to work full-time with more days off.

- Peak-hour traffic periods reduced due to spread of the allowed work periods.
- It becomes more viable for a casual worker to be hired full-time, therefore gain the benefits of a full-time worker, such as employer contribution superannuation benefits
- Childcare providers can justify opening extended hours without having to pay extra wage costs. This will provide more flexibility for workers working outside the current 8 by 5 work hours.
- The potential for employers establishing a 32 hour work week will be more viable, as workloads can be distributed throughout entire week, rather than being fixed to a standard 4 day work week.

Employers:

- Reduce weekend and out-of-hours penalty rates.
- Make employing workers full-time more viable than using casual workers.
- Reduce the complexity of dealing with weekend penalty rates and casual rates.
- Businesses can operate extended hours 7 days a week, without major wage costs, therefore improving productivity. The average weekly hours of operation for a business can change from the standard 40 hours per week to between 64 to 72 hours a week without having to incur the additional penalty rate costs.
- Better utilisation of capital. Capital investments would not be left idle over the weekend period and would be utilised for longer periods each day.
- A Business could be established to operate solely from Friday to Sunday, without the extra cost of paying weekend rates.
- Instead of having workers attend for 4-to-5 day periods, workloads can be distributed throughout the whole week. Therefore, less office space required to cater for the volume of staff. For example, instead of having 100 employees present M-F, 60 could be present M-T, while 40 could be present F-S.