



EAC STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES - SECTION 15

REST PERIODS

Introduction

When the working day is longer than six hours, all staff are entitled to take a break of at least 20 minutes. Rest breaks must be taken during the period of work and should not be taken either at the start or at the end of a period of working time.

This procedure will improve the management of rest periods and ensure that staff receive reasonable and sustainable levels of rest and nutrition, and that this will ensure that we can maintain the essential levels of cover required to maintain service delivery.

15.1 Procedure for Control Staff

The Duty Control Manager will print out a meal break plan for Control staff at the beginning of each shift. In the absence of a Duty Control Manager the North Control Officer should create the meal break plan for the shift. To locate the meal break templates select 'My Documents' folder, then 'REMDC' folder, and then 'EAC Templates' folder.

- Only 1 Control Officer is permitted to be on a break at any one time.
- Only 2 EMDs are permitted to be on a break at any one time (exception 4th slot).
- Only 1 RPCC call taker permitted to be on a break at any one time (19:30hrs – 07:30hrs call taker to take their meal break before the 12:00hrs-00:00hrs call taker finishes their shift).
- Only staff on breaks permitted to be absent from the room.
- Any changes or variations from the established meal break plan should be agreed by the Duty Control Manager or North Control Officer.

15.2 Procedure for Operational Staff

With the introduction of the new Clinical Response Model and the implementation of the changes to the code set in November 2019 we need to review our current Operational procedures. The introduction of the new code sets will realise a range of benefits to both patients and staff. The changes of adopting the new clinically based national code set will see the proportion of patients receiving the highest level of response reducing from approximately 30% to a more appropriate 5%. The primary aim of this guidance is to allow resources to be focused on improving the response to those patients who genuinely require a response to a potentially life-threatening emergency. Staff will also benefit by this reduction and will have fewer disturbed rest periods.

The Trust recognises the challenges we face in providing rest periods for operational crews. Over the last few years we have experienced increasing demands placed upon our Service resulting in reduced compliance with the allocation of appropriate rest periods for staff. We need to address the health and safety concerns around staff not receiving the recommended rest periods during a shift and balancing the risk to patients who need our services.

NB: We will continue with the current Rest Period guidance whilst negotiations on rest periods continue through the Ops Joint Consultative Group (JCG).

This document provides guidance to EAC staff in line with EAC CRM Code Set alignment and the management of rest periods from an EAC perspective.

Rest Period Windows

11:30 – 15:00	Day Shift
16:00 – 18:30	Day Shift
23:00 – 02:00	Night Shift

NB: The 11:30 start times are intended for use by crews on earlier shift starts e.g. 07:30.

Rest Period Management Allocation

Rest periods will be scheduled to commence during three periods of the day. During the rest period window crews will be allocated to calls as below:

11:30 – 15:00 Day Shift	During the first 2 hours, if clear from an incident, crews will only be allocated to Category 1 and 2 calls. Within the last 1.5 hours, crews will only be allocated to CONFIRMED Category 1 calls.
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16:00 – 18:30 Day Shift	<p>During the first 1.5 hours, if clear from an incident, crews will be allocated to all calls.</p> <p>Within the last 1 hour, crews will only be allocated to CONFIRMED Category 1 and 2 calls.</p>
23:00 – 02:00 Night Shift	<p>During the first 2 hours, if clear from an incident, crews will only be allocated to Category 1 and 2 calls.</p> <p>Within the last 1 hour, crews will only be allocated to CONFIRMED Category 1 calls.</p>

Rest Period Management – Disturbed Criteria

Crews can be disturbed when on an allocated rest period as follows:

1 st Rest Period (Day Shift)	CONFIRMED Category 1 call
2 nd Rest Period (Day Shift)	CONFIRMED Category 1 and 2 calls
1 st Rest Period (Night Shift)	CONFIRMED Category 1 call

Additional EAC Guidance

Guidance	Explanation
Control staff will endeavour to return crews to base for their break. However, there may be occasions when crews have to make alternative arrangements.	<p>A crew can be instructed to take their allocated rest period at either an open hospital/HSC Canteen or the nearest suitable NIAS facility. If a crew declines this opportunity it MUST be noted on the Resource Log Entry (Jump Code RLE) for the vehicle. Such crews are considered to have been offered their rest period.</p> <p>A4C Terms and Conditions subsistence arrangements apply in line with Section 18.</p> <p>It is the individuals' responsibility to ensure they have resources with them to purchase a meal/snack should they be away from their station at the time of the break. Alternatively, crews should ensure that they carry their meal with them if that is their choice. The rest period starts when the crew arrives at the identified location.</p>

<p>Rest periods will be of 30 minutes duration.</p>	<p>If a rest period is interrupted, every effort should be made to allow the remainder of the thirty minutes break period to be taken as soon as possible. At least one part of an interrupted rest period must be of 20 minutes duration.</p>
<p>To maximise the chance that rest periods will be undisturbed, they will commence as soon as Control allocates them, and crews use the appropriate MDT code for the rest period.</p>	<p>Control Officers should instruct crews to key on for rest periods via their MDT or radio if no MDT is available, and then check that this has been recorded with the 'Rest Period Management' tool. If the rest period is interrupted this should be documented in the notes section of the call to ensure that any claims for a spoiled meal can be authorised.</p> <p>If the crew does not use an MDT or radio status code then the Control officer must manually input the start time at rest period allocation.</p> <p>Control officers should attempt at all times to ensure cover is provided for breaks by utilising RRVs or other resources – this should minimise rest period disturbance.</p>
<p>When a crew has reached the sixth hour of duty without having received a rest period the following procedure should be applied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As soon as the crew clear from their current call they should be stood down at the nearest appropriate location for a rest period. • Once the crew have arrived at the nearest appropriate location, or back at base, the Control Officer will stand the crew down for a 30 minute rest period. 	<p>After the sixth hour on duty, emergency resources should be allowed to start or complete their rest period as soon as possible at the nearest suitable location and will only be disturbed for CONFIRMED Category 1 calls.</p> <p>An appropriate location is deemed to be an open Hospital/HSC Canteen or the nearest suitable NIAS facility.</p>

This guidance reflects the content of previously issued memoranda and advice and will be reviewed within existing partnership working arrangements.