



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

CESO-ZA

9 Sep 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR CENWP-SO

SUBJECT: Waiver Request, Work-Rest Scheduling for Fish Transport Barge Riders, REF: EM 385-1-1 dtd 2003, 19.A.02.e

1. Background: Barge Riders serve as biological technicians employed to monitor water chemistry and fish condition during transit from the loading areas downriver to the release site. They must check the fish every 2 hours for the first 4 hours, then every 4 hours for the next 36-48 hours. The monitoring tasks are relatively light duty and last 20-40 minutes. On the return trip up-river the riders work regular work-rest schedules. Workers may continue this routine for up to 30 days at a time without a day off and perform these tasks routinely from April to October. Section 19.A.02.e states workers shall not be scheduled to work more than 12 hours in any 24-hour period without 8 hour's continuous rest, which can be lowered to 6 hours if quartered on-board. The workers in question do not perform the regular hazardous duties of vessel crews, and the total number of work hours is actually low – but the maximum time for rest is 4 hours. This work has been conducted under the current schedule for a number of years with no accidents or complaints of fatigue. NWP has requested a variance to allow workers to continue with the current schedule this season.
2. The work schedule should be changed to allow at least one continuous 6- hour period, and it seems this should be achievable upon contact with all the agencies involved in the fish transports. With the operation being so late in its season, it would be impractical to add personnel and may be too late to begin negotiations at this time. It is recommended that an attempt be made to contact the controlling agency and ascertain if a 6-hour period can be added now – but if it has to be analyzed prior to a decision, the riders may continue to work the current schedule for the remainder of the 2004 season.
3. The subject variance request is granted for the 2004 fish transport season only. Natural resources are valuable, but so are our personnel, and this shift schedule makes a seemingly low-hazard job more dangerous than need be. It should not be a big impact on the mission to work in a 6-hour rest period (minimum) each 24-hour period, and NWP should address this change at the earliest possible opportunity. Please contact Karl Anderson at (202) 761-7112 if you have any questions concerning this waiver.

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