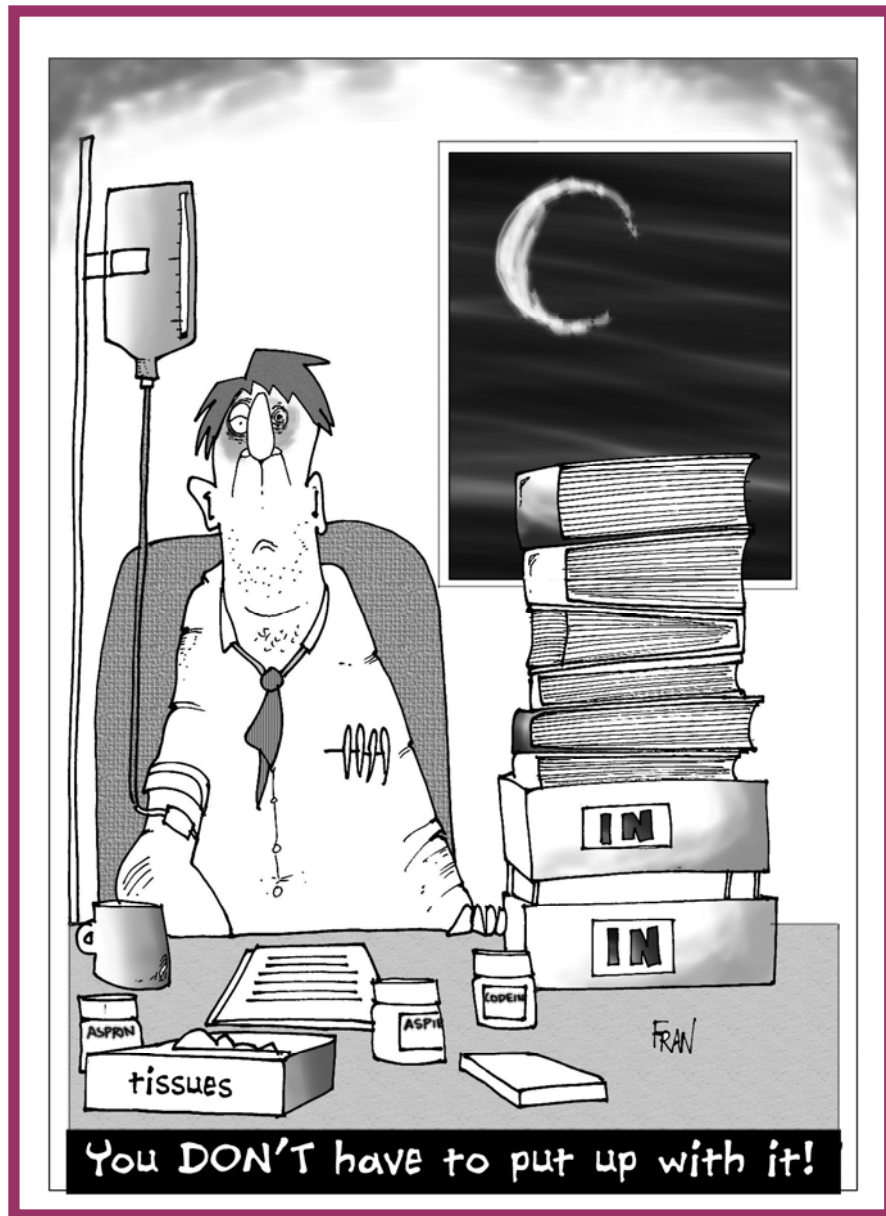


Probation Workload Protection



Advice for Members

Probation Workloads – Advice for Members

Below, you will find a list of the current timings in use within the National Workload Measurement Tool (NWMT). Members may use this advice to estimate whether they have enough work to do or too much or too little.

After the list of timings you will find a set of 'Frequently Asked Questions'.

The timings and the NWMT itself do not, in themselves, accurately describe the workload of any individual at any given point in time. There are any number of factors which need to be taken into account. The advice is for you to assess your own situation using these figures, if they apply to you, and then raise any issues of concern with your line manager in supervision.

What's not covered: To turn this on its head, current timings only cover basic case management and report writing. There are no timings for programmes, hostels, unpaid work, prison work, management tasks etc - but it's a start. A comprehensive set of timings is being developed by the Specifications, Benchmarking & Costings Programme (see below in FAQs). So this advice is particularly directed at case managers (Napo resists using the term 'offender' & 'offender manager') be they PO or PSO.

As a Case Manager, if you read the following, you should be able to roughly quantify your workload.....

The casework timings below are based on what is allowed – for *the average month*. This may be a bit confusing when set against the requirement to work 150 hours per 4 week period, but there it is. 150 hours per 4 week period equates to 162.5 hours per month
($37.5\text{h} \times 52\text{w} = 1950\text{hours}$. $1950 \div 12 = 162.5$)
This will be slightly different for some staff who are contracted to work fewer hours e.g. most PSOs - where the monthly figure is usually 160 hours
($37\text{h} \times 52\text{w} = 1924 \div 12 = 160$).



Establish how many hours per month you are contracted to work.

The box above should give you a clue.



Next, you need to make further adjustments (reductions) which may apply to you

Some of these may be 'ongoing'. For example, facility time for TU duties. will need to be factored in, as will any allowances that are made – e.g. if you are an AT user with a related allowance, or a newly qualified officer on a protected caseload.

Then there will be others that will probably vary from month to month, notably allowances for sickness, leave, and training.



Next – deduct 16% from the number of hours you have after Step 2

This covers things like supervision, team meetings, reading, dealing with non-case-specific emails, general admin. etc Start with your monthly figure, from above, and deduct 16%. Worked out monthly, for a full-time Probation Officer, (with no adjustments made at Step 2) this would be 136.5 hours (16% of 162.5 is 26 hours).

Now you should have arrived at a figure for the number of hours you have/have had available to 'do work' (your *CAPACITY*) , this month, last month, next month – whichever you are checking. Sometimes known as 'case related hours.

The flip side of the exercise is then to add up your 'workload' using the figures below.



How many of each of these do you have?

Case management timings (per average month)

Community Order

Tier 1

- Period 1 (1st 16 weeks) - 1.5 hours
- Period 2 (post 16 weeks) – 1 hour

Tier 2

- Period 1 (1st 16 weeks) – 3 hours
- Period 2 (post 16 weeks) – 1 hour

Tier 3

- Period 1 (1st 16 weeks) - 4.5 hours
- Period 2 (post 16 weeks) - 2.5 hours

Tier 4

- Period 1 (1st 16 weeks) - 9 hours
- Period 2 (post 16 weeks) - 9 hours

Pre release work

- 1 hour per month per case

Post Release work

- These timings mirror the arrangements for Community Orders because the tiering decisions will be made in the same way.

Reports

SDR

7 hours – to prepare. For planning purposes, a 'moderated' figure of 6 hours 30 minutes is used. This is because when considering how many reports can be allocated, assumptions are made that, for example, a certain percentage of reports will be Nil Reports, through 'no shows'. So the overall allowance for an SDR – planning forwards/allocating is 6.5 hours
This figure of 7 hours (or 6.5 hours) was supposed to have been reviewed in November 2006. That never happened but this is currently the only figure we have with which to work.

FDR

1.5 hours (inc. ROH Screening). This is the allowance for an 'in-court' hand-written FDR with a hand-written ROH screening taken from the middle of OASys. Other types of FDRs are growing up (e.g. a mini SDR, typed, on a short adjournment) and as yet we don't really have any good timings for these. 2.5 hours is an oft used figure for a typed FDR but there is no national consensus over this figure or what 'level' or 'type' of FDR it might represent.

HDC Inquiry

- 1.5 hours

Parole Reports

There is no timing for **Parole Reports** agreed as yet but we work on 12-14 hours ("We " being Napo in conjunction with the project group at the NPD using process mapping).

Duties

Court and Office duties should be relatively easily calculated, usually as half or whole days – thus 7.5 or 3.75 hours. There is a slight complication here, since you've already deducted 16% (effectively of each day) at Step 2. So technically, if you do occasional duties, e.g. once a week, then whole/half days here should be measured as 6.3 or 3.15 hours (i.e. without the 16%). But it is worth remembering that those whose work predominantly consists of duties still need an allowance of 16% in order to undertake all those other 'bits and pieces'.

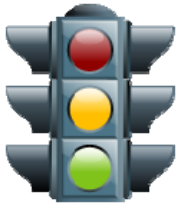
Admin Time

Admin time is additional Admin. timings are fairly minimal and would cover things like making up files, setting up cases on the system etc. If you do not have any admin support, this should be discussed with your line manager, as it may be a basis for enhancing the above timings for you.

Once you have completed Step 4, you should be able to match your available hours (Capacity) against the hours needed to cover your work.

You'll either be:

- **'Just right' (or nearly so – operating at between 95% and 110% of capacity),**
- **'Hours to spare',**
- **'In the red' – overworked!**



'In the red' is generally assessed as being more than 10% over in terms of the difference between the hours you have available to you and the hours required to do the work.

'In the green' is assessed as working at 95 – 100% of capacity

Amber is attributable to working at 100-110%

'In the blue' is where you have a workload level that is less than 95% of your available hours.

(The 'traffic light' simile – plus blue (??) will be familiar to those who work in areas where the national workload measurement tool is in use.)

Individual situations will fluctuate from month to month but if you are consistently working in excess of your available hours – DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!

STEP 5

Wherever you think you are – discuss with your line manager.

- Seek advice about how you should prioritise your work, particularly if you have too much – i.e. what doesn't get done when you are over-stretched.
- Do not suffer in silence. Talk to your manager and talk also to your local union reps/health & safety reps.
- And don't forget to use Napo's own advice and guidance which has been issued to branches as part of our Workloads Campaign.
 - OFF47/09 Advice on Timesheets & Workloads
 - Foreseeability Notification
 - HS08/09 H&S Advice on Workload Protection & Prioritisation
 - NPS HS-8 Stress Management

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is workload measurement important?

For a number of reasons: Unless we know how long tasks take, we can't know how much they cost. Without measurement, it is much more difficult to consider how tasks might be done more efficiently and effectively. AND, to quote the last National Director of Probation, "Workload measurement is an integral part of our approach to employee care and workload prioritisation"

What is the Specifications, Benchmarking & Costings Programme (SBC)?

This is a NOMS programme that works across both prisons and Probation. It aims to analyse all the work of both, breaking tasks down into their constituent parts, measuring them, costing them and putting them back together again. This then forms the basis for preparing 'specifications' which can be used if parts of our work are put out to tender under contestability – the down side. On the other hand, the Services are better able to argue for additional resources, if they can demonstrate the time tasks take and their cost. And this principle may be applied both nationally, at area level, at team level and even for individuals. This is the up-side of the SBC and is not dissimilar to the principles underlying the development of a National Workload Measurement Tool.

What is Process mapping?

This is what is used by the SBC to work out its timings and costings. It is a well established methodology with which Napo does not have an issue. Tasks are analysed and broken down into parts. A process is established – one bit of the job leading to the next, leading to the next etc. In essence, it's a flow chart that emerges with timings and costings attached to each part of the process. Once this has been done, there is a good basis for reviewing each process with the aim of improving it – 'process improvement'. Process mapping is usually undertaken by a facilitator interviewing small groups of staff in different locations to establish their views on process and timings. Several sets of interview data are then melded together to establish a 'norm'.

What is the National Workload Measurement Tool (NWMT)?

It is a tool designed to assist front line managers in managing the workload of their teams over a period of time. It is not in universal use throughout the country. Some areas (like London & Manchester) have developed their own tools. In May 2005, the then National Director of Probation made it clear to Chiefs that he expected them either to use the NWMT or develop their own tool *in agreement* with unions locally

Where do the timings come from?

The timings are based on an Activity Sampling exercise that was undertaken in 2003 (for pre- Criminal Justice Act 2003 Orders). They were then reviewed and revised by a joint workshop (Employer and Union Reps) in 2005, so that they could be applied to Orders made under the 2003 Act. They are supposed to be national indicative timings and it has long been recognised that they require monitoring, validation and updating. Areas have the ability to override these timings with their own local timings 'if it is considered preferable to do this'. *However* any such override should be agreed with the unions locally and should be used sparingly to reflect specific local conditions (e.g. an Area covering a large geographic area may feel the need to load some timings to reflect additional travel time for some tasks). On the whole, the national timings should be used, otherwise it becomes impossible to compare areas, one with another.

Are the timings up to date?

Not really but they are the best that is available. The monitoring, validation and updating mentioned above has never taken place. The work of the SBC should achieve this in due course. Napo is planning to place its own interactive workload calculator on this site soon, so that we can begin to develop our own database of timings. Changes to practice will need to be accommodated as will, for example, the effects of revised National Standards.

What is Activity Sampling?

Like process mapping this is a methodology for establishing timings associated with various tasks in Probation (as elsewhere). It was the methodology used to establish the original timings for the NWMT. Large groups of staff are asked to fill in detailed time-sheets over a limited time period, detailing how they spend their time – attributing time periods to different tasks on a 'real-time' basis. The information is then collated and used to calculate 'timings' for different activities.

Associated Documentation

A) Agreed Principles

The following principles for workload management and prioritisation were agreed by NAPO and the National Probation Directorate (when it existed!).

They have not been superseded in any way. They have their roots in the National Employee Care & Workload Prioritisation Agreement.

1. Recognition that:
 - it is management's responsibility to match resources to demands and ensure that staff do not carry excessive workloads; and
 - some existing tasks carried out by probation staff may well have to be set aside
2. A mechanism for monitoring the workload of individual members of staff as well as the demands placed upon them.
3. A mechanism to ensure that where the assessed workload of a member of staff exceeds an acceptable level, her or his manager will set aside specific tasks to reduce the workload to an acceptable level.
4. A mechanism whereby individual members of staff can approach their managers should their workload become excessive and a guarantee that their concerns will be addressed appropriately and acted upon accordingly

5. A list of tasks that can be set aside in circumstances where an individual's workload is identified as being excessive

6. Confirmation that if new tasks are to be assigned to individual members of staff, clear designation of the amount of time to be allocated to those tasks and clarity as to the demands which will be relinquished to accommodate those new tasks will be provided, in advance of their implementation.

7. A mechanism to ensure that appropriate reasonable adjustments are in place and recorded for any assistive technology user or other disabled member of staff

B) OFF47/09 - Advice on Timesheets & Workloads

C) Foreseeability Notification

D) HS08/09 H&S Advice on Workload Protection & Prioritisation

E) NPS HS-8 Stress Management

The above documents can be all be downloaded separately from the website.