

Chrysler petition against "flexible operating patterns" / 3-2-120

Wednesday, October 24, 2012

Hello sisters and brothers.

We were informed last week that the company and the International would be imposing a 3-2-120 schedule (three crews, two shifts, 120 hours, made possible by each crew working four ten hour shifts, with B and C crew working ten on Saturday for straight time, for more details look at pages 99-106 of the Chrysler contract at uaw.org) or some "hybrid" variation (6-2-120) or shift rotation at Chrysler Warren Stamping (UAW Local 869). We have been getting a good response to the petition a few of us are circulating so I'm sharing it for anyone wanting to oppose these ridiculous schedules in their plants--the language could be changed for Ford and GM.

in solidarity

Martha Grevatt <grevatt.m@gmail.com>;

Attached Documents

A note about the 3-2-120, one of three "Flexible Operating Patterns" (FOP) in the Chrysler contract.

Petition: No 3-2-120! No 6-2-120! No rotation! Keep it like it is.

The 3-2-120 monster

revised Thursday, October 25, 2012

The 3-2-120 is one of three "Flexible Operating Patterns" (FOPs) in the Chrysler contract. Ford and GM contracts have their own non-traditional work patterns with their own names, but they are fairly similar. The 3-2-120 FOP means three crews, two shifts, 120 hours. It is a scheme to lower the cost of a 120 hour work week. Under a traditional two-shift schedule, to get 120 hours of labor would require each of the two shifts to work 60 hours per week in some combination of hours. It could be six 10-hour days, five 12-hour days, five 11-hour days and five hours on Saturday, or whatever. However the company works it, under the current language (and law) requiring time and $\frac{1}{2}$ after 40 hours in a workweek, the last 20 hours on each shift would be time and $\frac{1}{2}$.

The other option would be a three shift operation. That would eliminate the overtime pay but now there is a third shift making 10% shift premium and with back-to-back shifts a paid lunch is necessary (at least in production, some trades can still overlap). The paid lunch equals a loss in production equal to the difference between the total minutes of relief time on two shifts with an unpaid lunch break and the total minutes of the break time and lunch time on three shifts with a paid lunch time. At my plant the press room (and supporting trades) is on a three shift schedule with a 25 minute paid lunch break and two 15 minute breaks, or 825 minutes relief time per 120 hours of labor. With 50 minutes relief time in a ten hour shift with no paid lunch the relief time is reduced to 600 minutes per 120 hours of labor. But to get that extra 225 minutes of production our employer must pay 40 hours of the 120 at time and $\frac{1}{2}$. What's poor Sergio Marchionne to do?

Under the 3-2-120 there is an A crew, a B crew and a C crew. The A crew works four 10-hour days, Monday thru Thursday from (this is the schedule at Jefferson North about to be imposed, there could be different starting times at different plants) 6:00 AM until 4:30 PM with an unpaid half hour lunch. The B crew works four 10-hour days Wednesday thru Saturday from 6:00 PM until 4:30 AM. The C crew works 10 hours on Friday and Saturday from 6:00 AM until 4:30 PM, is off Sunday, and comes back and works 6:00 PM until 4:30 AM Monday and Tuesday. All three crews are working 40 hours straight time. So there are six days, Monday thru Saturday, with two shifts of ten hours of production, to equal 120 hours per week with no overtime pay, no third shift premium and no paid lunch. By contract there are 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours between shifts. The long range goal, beyond getting more work for less money, is the erosion of the well-established standard of the eight hour day and the weekend and the return of the six-day (and ultimately the seven-day) workweek.

The company also benefits by the reduction in overtime if it allows them to hire more workers at the lower, second-tier pay scale. Before the introduction of two-tier the auto companies were notorious for working excessive overtime rather than hire more workers, because hiring more workers meant paying more for benefits. Second-tier benefits are less costly and are not paid at

all for the first eight months of service.

Of course this is horrible for workers. Two out of three shifts are working ten hours every Saturday for straight time and the C crew is bouncing back and forth between opposite shifts. It will be hardest on the new hires. One variation being discussed is shift rotation, which would give everyone 1 out of 3 Saturdays off. But this would mean the end of shift (or crew) preference by seniority and the switching from shift to shift wreaks physical and psychological havoc. Studies show it lowers life expectancy. A worker starting on the A schedule would start off working Monday thru Thursday days, be off Friday thru Tuesday, work Wednesday thru Saturday evenings, be off Sunday, work Monday and Tuesday evenings, be off Wednesday and Thursday, work Friday and Saturday days, be off Sunday, and come back and work Monday thru Thursday days. So you get a five day interval between A and B schedule but then you are working 12 10-hour days in a 15-day period. It is all straight time because the hours fall in 3 work weeks. This was voted down at Trenton and Dundee engine plants where there were many complaints. The other variation is called 6-2-120 which means working the same days as the rotation schedule but staying on one shift. This is what our Local 869 shop chair said in a leaflet "is not all bad" because of the five days off in a row every couple weeks. But with the variations described above everyone is working 2 out of 3 Saturdays 10 hours for straight time.

The language on trades is unclear and everyone I've talked to reads it differently but it seems to suggest that trades would be on a different schedule. Yet we are told trades will be on 3-2-120 also because our schedule mimics production.

One argument in favor of FOPs might be that they lead to hiring, and opponents could be portrayed as privileging the interests of seniority workers over those of people desperately in need of jobs. This superficial assessment ignores UAW history. It forgets the UAW's past advocacy of the shorter work week (with no loss of pay) as a mechanism to increase employment. While the demand of the 1937 sit-downs for the 30-hour week was never accomplished, in 1976 the UAW negotiated Paid Personal Holidays to reduce the average work week and create a need for additional workers. These were lost during the first Chrysler bailout and never recovered. Some holidays have been won: Martin Luther King Day, Veterans Day and Election Day. However, since the 2007 contract, the 2009 modifications and the 2011 contract the trend has been to go backwards and reduce the number of workers needed by eliminating paid holidays (Monday after Easter, two out of four Election Day holidays, the four-day weekend when the Fourth of July falls on a Tuesday or Thursday, and the "floating holiday" that in two out of four years gave workers the Friday before Labor Day off) and the equivalent of 40 hours per year in paid relief time. Restoring these givebacks and the PPH days would be a far more humane way to increase employment than subjecting the entire workforce to a torturous work schedule.

The other bad thing about all of the FOPs is that under the 2011-15 contract the local has no say, not even the local union officials or for that matter plant management. The decision to impose a FOP on a plant is made by the Vice President of Chrysler for Employee Relations and Vice President General Holiefield of the UAW Chrysler Department. Without Vice President Holiefield's okay there is no FOP.

So we are circulating petitions and trying to get everyone to come to the union meeting October 28 to put pressure on our local officials to pressure the International to "drop the FOP." All we can do is try. I have made a point of opposing both the 3-2-120 and its variations, as the proposed alternatives are causing a great deal of division between the higher seniority workers—who would lose the right to shift preference under a rotation and would have to work two out of three Saturdays for straight time under 6-2-120— and the lower seniority workers, who would at least have one out of three Saturdays off in the rotation and 6-2-120 scenarios. I have heard some higher seniority workers complaining that by proposing these alternative versions of 3-2-120 the union is "catering to the two tier." In fact second tier workers do not like the FOP any more than anyone else and are signing and circulating the petition, but some are not signing because of comments like what I just described. So I am trying to unite everyone, first tier, second tier and trades under the demand to "keep it like it is."

Martha Grevatt

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