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BY THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL



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Report To The Congress

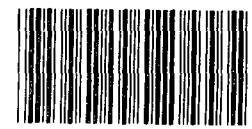
OF THE UNITED STATES

109438

Most Federal Employees On The Job 40 Hours Or More Weekly: Tighter Controls Among Proposals For Those Who Work Less

Most Federal employees observe agency work-hour policies. They arrive promptly, adhere to allowed breaks and lunch periods, and do not leave early. A small percentage do not adhere to these policies and do not make up lost time. As long as the law requires a specific number of hours per workday, agency managers and the Office of Personnel Management must prevent such unofficial absences. This report presents several ways to do this.

This report also discusses several long-term policy issues that the Congress should consider as it works to hold down personnel costs and increase worker output. Should the Government focus control on output or job performance rather than time at the workplace? Should control be loose or tight? And should the workweek be shortened?



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COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

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To the President of the Senate and the
Speaker of the House of Representatives

This report describes (1) Government policies and controls over scheduled hours of work for Federal employees, (2) the extent that employees follow these policies, and (3) alternatives for further limiting work-hour abuses. In addition, the report identifies emerging issues--the focus and degree of control and the length of the workweek--and provides information to help the Congress and agencies resolve these issues.

We are sending copies of this report to (1) the Directors of the Office of Personnel Management and Office of Management and Budget; (2) the Secretaries of Defense, Agriculture, the Treasury, and Health, Education, and Welfare; (3) the Administrator of Veterans Affairs; and (4) other interested parties.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James R. Stent".

Comptroller General
of the United States

D I G E S T

Contrary to widespread public perception, the vast majority of the Nation's 2.1 million Federal employees work at least the required 40 hours a week and adhere to lunch and coffeebreak rules. When time lost due to a small number of abusers is taken into account, taxpayers appear to be getting hundreds of millions of dollars of "free" labor each year from the many Federal employees who regularly work extra time without compensation. (See ch. 2.)

GAO reached this conclusion after analyzing questionnaire responses from about 3,000 randomly selected employees at the 7 largest Federal agencies (collectively employing 70 percent of all civilian workers). GAO also observed employee work-hour practices and interviewed 238 personnel officers, supervisors, and union representatives in the 7 agencies in various locations across the country. GAO studied time spent at the workplace, not the productive use of that time. (See p. 3.)

(Of the questionnaire respondents

--75 to 83 percent worked at least the
40 hours per week,

--18 to 27 percent worked 41 to 70 hours,
and

--17 to 26 percent worked 33.5 to 39.9 hours.

That some employees' extra hours are not compensated may violate the Fair Labor Standards Act. Projected to the universe of employees in these seven agencies, all uncompensated hours are worth between \$660 million and

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\$800 million per year at regular pay rates. Time lost due to work-hour abuses costs between \$85 million and \$120 million a year. The net gain to taxpayers may be between \$500 million and \$700 million. (See pp. 28 to 33.)

Work-hour and lunch/coffeebreak rules are violated for several different reasons. Some tardiness results from factors beyond the individual's control, i.e., traffic congestion and bad weather. Early departure is a less serious problem than tardiness because most of those who leave early charge the unworked time to leave.

(Extended lunchbreaks appear to be the most frequent abuse, particularly in urban locations where eating facilities are often congested.) Many who reported taking extended lunches said this was permitted by unofficial agency policy or was undetected by management or that they had made up the lost time by extending their workdays. Others said they had taken long lunches because they had not taken coffeebreaks.

Coffee/restbreak abuses were not extensive. In fact, many employees did not even take authorized breaks, although, as noted, some added unused coffeebreak time to extend their lunch periods. Even though this appears common, it is contrary to existing laws that distinguish between lunch periods and coffeebreaks. (See ch. 2.)

(Supervisors generally do not place high priority on monitoring work hours, because they trust employees to follow policy, believe most employees work 40 hours a week and make up any lost time, and believe deadlines are met.) Supervisors give even lower priority to monitoring breaks and lunches because they are more difficult to control and because eating and break facilities are inadequate or inconvenient in many buildings. (See p. 6.)

Unofficial absences are costly to taxpayers and unfair to the vast majority of employees who follow the rules. Workplace absences can be reduced in several ways.

For example, greater use of flexible work schedules would reduce tardiness by permitting employees to vary starting times. Similarly permitting lunch periods to vary in length could also help reduce lost time if employees who took more than the prescribed time had to extend the length of their workdays accordingly. Providing employees longer breaks in their daily routines is a practice that some believe reduces the effects of today's stressful environment.

Even within existing work-hour policies, management could reduce abuses by (1) arranging more convenient eating and break facilities, where possible, (2) ensuring that employees were aware of agency work-hour policies, and (3) ensuring that policies were fair and were enforced consistently and equitably. (See ch. 3.)

Work-hour policies vary depending on agency, work unit, and supervisor. On the one hand, varied policies are necessary in some cases because of different functions and work environments. For example, offices serving the public may require employees to take lunch at the same time each day to ensure continuous office coverage. Not all work environments may be conducive to flexible work and lunch schedules. And it seems prudent to vary coffee/restbreaks by the physical or mental demands of a job.

On the other hand, it is inequitable to the majority of Federal workers who abide by agency work-hour policies to allow some paid extended lunches. And it seems only fair that employees in similar positions working in similar environments have similar coffee/restbreaks.

Agencies could develop more equitable work-hour policies if they had more guidance. For example, agencies currently lack adequate information on the optimum number and length of breaks which should be given, types of employees that would most benefit, and circumstances in which breaks should be granted. GAO believes that the Office of Personnel Management should develop and provide managers such guidance and monitor and evaluate agency work-hour policies and practices. (See p. 40.)

LONG-TERM POLICY ISSUES

This report raises major long-term policy issues that should be considered by the Congress and the Office of Personnel Management as they work to hold down personnel costs and increase worker output.

One issue is the length of the workweek and its effect on employment and productivity. Legislation proposed in the 95th Congress would reduce the standard private sector and Federal workweek to 35 hours by 1982 and require double pay for overtime. Some private sector employers already schedule less than 40-hour weeks; in effect, Federal employees who take extended lunches without making up the time work less than 40 hours. Proponents believe shortening the workweek would decrease unemployment or at least prevent some employees from losing their jobs.

At the Federal level, the Office of Management and Budget believes a shorter workweek might require more Federal employees. In considering reductions in the Federal workweek, attention should be given to relating the shorter workweek to equal or greater levels of output or fringe benefit tradeoffs. (See p. 48.)

Another issue is the focus of Government control. The Government's control of work hours is based on 5 U.S.C. 6101, which requires agency heads to schedule 40 hours

of work per week, normally in 8-hour days, for each full-time employee. In addition, the Comptroller General, as authorized by statute, requires supervisor-approved daily records of time and attendance. To comply with these requirements, agencies use time-keepers and other means, such as timeclocks, sign-in and sign-out sheets, or most often supervisory observation. Because of the Government's unique characteristics, including the obligation to be accountable to the public, agencies will always need some controls.

As Federal programs and technology have become more complex, the Government has employed more professionals and highly trained technicians and fewer clerical and lower skilled personnel. For these higher skilled jobs the private sector typically puts greater emphasis on performance and output than on hours spent at the workplace. And the limited research available suggests that focusing control on worker output rather than on hours spent at the workplace may be desirable. More research is needed, however, before making such a change for Federal employees. (See p. 45.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

GAO recommends that the Director, Office of Personnel Management:

1. To better establish, monitor, and manage work-hour policies for the Federal work force, obtain Government-wide information on all agencies' official and unofficial policies and practices on scheduled work hours, lunch, and breaks; compare and evaluate those policies and practices; identify the need for additional guidance; and issue necessary guidance and require necessary changes. This guidance should, as a minimum, provide agencies sufficient information to determine increments for leave charges, protect against Fair Labor Standards Act overtime violations, and highlight the

benefits of assessing work-hour practices through internal audits or personnel management evaluations.

- With the information obtained above, assess whether the Federal Personnel Manual Bulletin 610-30 has been effective, that is, whether each agency has reviewed its lunch period practices and made necessary modifications. Where changes are needed, agencies should evaluate the alternatives discussed in this report. If flexible schedules or improved facilities are not feasible, agencies should lengthen lunch periods, for example, to 45 minutes or 1 hour, and correspondingly the workday to reflect the convenience and adequacy of existing facilities.
- Provide agencies more information and guidance on coffee/restbreak policies covering the appropriate number and length of breaks and types of Federal jobs that would most benefit. Developing such guidance would require research and study.
- Revise work-hour regulations to require that agencies communicate to employees, at least annually, agency work-hour policies.
- While actively encouraging agencies to participate in the 3-year experiment with flexible work schedules (under the Federal Employees Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules Act of 1978), promote the use of flexible and variable lunch bands and emphasize such potential benefits as fewer unofficial absences.

2. As one of the research and demonstration projects authorized in the Civil Service Reform Act, (design an experiment to test the use of performance measures rather than hours at the workplace as the basis on which personnel are paid.) This experiment should also test the effects of tight versus lenient controls.

Efforts to emphasize performance rather than time at work would be in keeping with the intent of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978. A major difficulty in implementing the act, which provides for employee incentives on the basis of performance, is lack of reliable data on performance.

GAO recommends that the Congress, in considering any bill to reduce the workweek, relate Federal work-hour decreases to changes in overall productivity or other measures of performance or fringe benefit tradeoffs. To do this, better data from work measurement, productivity, and cost systems would be needed. In addition, a total compensation comparability policy would need to be established by the Congress.)

Although the past three decades have seen many changes in the work environment and the work force, the work-hour policies of title 5 of the United States Code have seen little change. The Federal Employees Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules Act of 1978 was one effort to temporarily suspend some of the rigidities in title 5. Although additional changes may not be warranted at this time, the results of the research and demonstration project ~~recommended above~~ should be used to evaluate the need for changes in the legislation.)

The Office of Personnel Management agreed that it should become more actively involved in work-hour policies but not to the extent GAO recommends. In addition, the National Federation of Federal Employees and the Public Employee Department of the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations believed that collective bargaining would best settle many work-hour issues. GAO continues to believe that information, guidance, feedback, and evaluation are necessary. The Office of Personnel Management is also considering the recommended research project and a study of work-scheduling issues.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CSC	Civil Service Commission
GAO	General Accounting Office
HEW	Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
VA	Veterans Administration

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Federal Government, with 2.1 million civilian employees and an annual payroll of \$37 billion, is the Nation's largest employer and administers a myriad of programs vital to the health, welfare, and safety of the Nation and its 220 million people. Because of the Government's awesome responsibilities and because its operations are funded through taxes, its employees must comply with workday laws and policies designed to ensure adequate public service at a reasonable cost.

Many taxpayers feel that most Federal employees arrive to work late, leave work early, and take extended coffeebreaks and lunches. Because of this perception and because of public and congressional interest in increasing worker productivity, we reviewed Federal work-hour policies and the extent of employee compliance. We feel the review is particularly timely in light of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 and other reforms proposed in the 95th Congress, such as reducing the workweek. This review also follows up on and broadens the scope of our 1976 report on lunch periods of Federal civilian employees in Washington, D.C. (B-179810, Apr. 9, 1976; see app. V).

The current report first discusses existing work-hour policies, the extent of employee compliance, and what can be done to bring about greater compliance. The report then discusses some long-term work-hour issues and some policy changes the Congress should consider as it works to increase Government productivity.

NUMEROUS CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING POLICY

The private sector's 40-hour workweek was established by the Fair Labor Standards Act in 1938. Following 50 years of 42-hour weeks and a decade of 39-hour weeks, the Federal Employees' Pay Act was passed in 1945, establishing the 40-hour workweek as the standard for Federal employees. Like the Fair Labor Standards Act, it requires overtime pay for working over 40 hours per week. This law (now 5 U.S.C. 6101) empowers agency heads to schedule workweeks. Specifically it states that except when the agency head determines that the agency would be seriously handicapped in carrying out its functions or that costs would be substantially increased, he shall provide that

- "(A) assignments to tours of duty are scheduled in advance over periods of not less than 1 week;
- (B) the basic 40-hour workweek is scheduled on 5 days, Monday through Friday when possible, and the 2 days outside the basic workweek are consecutive;
- (C) the working hours in each day in the basic workweek are the same;
- (D) the basic nonovertime workday may not exceed 8 hours;
- (E) the occurrence of holidays may not affect the designation of the basic workweek; and
- (F) breaks in working hours of more than 1 hour may not be scheduled in a basic workday."

Therefore, agencies must schedule 40 hours of work per week for each full-time employee--when possible as five, 8-hour days, Monday through Friday with unpaid breaks no greater than 1 hour. Although the law does not mention lunch periods, the lunch period is an example of a break in work hours.

Under 5 U.S.C. 301 agency heads may grant employees brief rest periods when they determine that rest periods are beneficial or essential for efficiency.

The Civil Service Commission (CSC) has issued implementing regulations principally under 5 U.S.C. 6101. These regulations, contained in chapter 610 and various supplements of the Federal Personnel Manual, generally restate provisions of the law. One regulation (5 C.F.R. 630.206) authorizes agency heads to establish a minimum charge for employees' annual leave of 1 hour or less and to excuse, without charge to leave, employees who are tardy or unavoidably or necessarily absent for less than 1 hour. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) now has responsibility for these policies.

Title 6 of the GAO Policies and Procedures Manual for Guidance of Federal Agencies prescribes principles, standards, and requirements for accounting for employees' time and attendance. According to the manual, which applies to most civilian employees paid from appropriated funds, supervisors are to keep informed as to the attendance of employees for whom they are responsible in order to certify

time and attendance reports. Timekeepers are to have positive knowledge as to employees' presence. GAO is revising the manual. One revision will address flexitime and specify the responsibilities of supervisors and timekeepers.

Title VII of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (and previously, Executive Order 11491) requires Federal agencies to negotiate or consult with labor organizations before making changes in work-hour policies. Many work-hour policies have been included in labor-management agreements. A 1976 review of a CSC file of 2,806 labor agreements revealed 1,880 agreements containing provisions on the definition of the workweek, 914 agreements containing provisions on lunchbreaks, and 891 agreements containing provisions on restbreaks. These provisions usually prescribe regularly scheduled hours of work, the length and time of the lunch period, and the length of the restbreak.

SCOPE OF REVIEW

At the outset of the review, we found that inadequate data existed to determine the extent of compliance with Federal workday requirements. To obtain this information, we developed a study plan using two different approaches, each designed to validate the other. The first used an extensive employee questionnaire. The second used onsite observations and interviews.

Our questionnaire was sent to a random sample of 3,500 civilian employees from the seven largest Federal agencies. Collectively they employ 70 percent of the Federal civilian work force, and we have no reason to believe their work-hour practices differ from those of other agencies. We tested a draft of the questionnaire before mailing out the final one, and the response rate was 80 percent. Respondents were in a variety of job categories, pay grades, and geographical areas.

We designed the questionnaire to overcome several problems thought to be inherent in this type of survey. To overcome what we believed would be a natural tendency to resist giving negative information about oneself, questions were developed and arranged to give the respondent the opportunity to first give very positive work habit information and to follow any negative responses about unofficial absences with reasons for them and ways such absences may have been "made up." We did not request respondents' names and took special precautions to maintain respondent confidentiality.

Another potential problem concerned the ability to recall specific activities for a very long period. Consequently, we used "the last 2 weeks" as a frame of reference, gave respondents the opportunity to revise the 2-week data to reflect more normal patterns, and used this information to construct "typical" work-hour practices.

Onsite observations and interviews were conducted at several different offices of the same seven agencies whose employees were sent questionnaires. The 29 locations visited extended across the United States and included a mix of urban and rural areas. We interviewed 238 personnel officers, union representatives, and managers, and we observed employee practices to the extent possible. Our analysis of data collected during onsite visits supports opinions and statistics derived from the questionnaire. We failed to uncover any evidence that would lead us to doubt the validity of questionnaire responses.

Details on our study methodology can be found in appendixes I and II.

Both methods were used to study time spent at the workplace, not output or how well employees performed. Thus the term "hours worked" in the context of this report means only that the employee put in this amount of time.

CHAPTER 2

MOST FEDERAL EMPLOYEES COMPLY WITH AGENCY

WORK-HOUR POLICIES BUT SOME DO NOT

Using work-hour criteria set by statute, agencies have developed varied work-hour policies, implemented regulations, and negotiated union agreements that prescribe work-hour policies and practices. Some agency heads have delegated this authority to lower level officials. Thus varied policies also exist within some agencies.

The typical Federal employee comes to work on time, eats lunch within the officially allowed time, takes restbreaks as authorized, and leaves on time. Some put in more than 40 hours a week through uncompensated overtime or traveling on their own time. At the same time, some abuse work-hour policies and work less than 40 hours a week while receiving pay for the total time. More specifically:

- Varied policies and monitoring procedures contribute to some tardiness but fewer early departures.
- Extended lunchbreaks are the most common violation and result from unofficial policies, congested eating facilities, and lax monitoring.
- Agencies have varied and sometimes inequitable coffee/restbreak policies, but few employees extend breaks beyond the time officially allowed.
- Less than 2 percent of employees regularly violate all these policies.
- Some managers are not overly concerned with strict adherence to work-hour policies because their subordinates put in extra hours without compensation. Some noncompensation may violate the Fair Labor Standards Act.
- About 17 to 26 percent of employees work about 39 hours a week, about 56 percent work about 40 hours, and 18 to 27 percent work about 44 hours. They are all paid for 40 hours. The lost time costs the Government \$86 million to \$118 million, while the uncompensated overtime is worth \$664 million to \$809 million.

POLICIES AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES
CONTRIBUTE SOME TO TARDINESS AND
LESS TO EARLY DEPARTURES

Agencies, office managers, and supervisors have established varied policies concerning arrival and departure times. These include policies for scheduling hours, excusing tardiness, charging annual leave, and monitoring arrivals and departures. Although varied policies contribute to some tardiness, most tardiness results from traffic congestion, bad weather, or other factors beyond the individual's control. Early departure is a less serious problem than tardiness because most of those who leave early charge the unworked time to leave.

Workweeks fairly standard

The workweek for most employees consists of five 8-hour days, Monday through Friday. Over 90 percent of about 2,900 employees who responded to our questionnaire were required to work five 8-hour days. Because of exigencies of work situations, however, some workweeks have been scheduled to begin on different days of the week; exceed 40 hours; or rotate, beginning different days each week. For example, firefighters normally have three 24-hour days each week.

Most agencies have traditional fixed schedules; all employees are expected to work the hours set by the agency with few exceptions. Of those employees who commented, 81 percent said that their starting and quitting times were set by an agency, an office, or a work unit. Also 17 of the 33 organizations visited were on fixed schedules.

Some agencies have various forms of flexible schedules which allow employees to select and/or vary starting and quitting times within limits set by the agencies. These schedules basically replace fixed times of arrival and departure with two different types of time: (1) core time, when all employees must be present, and (2) flexible time, when employees may choose their times of arrival and departure. In addition to being present during core time, employees must account for the total number of required hours each day. Beyond this, precise working hours can be selected in accordance with the wishes and individual circumstances of each organization.

We found different degrees of flexibility. Of the 16 percent of questionnaire respondents who had flexible schedules, half selected relatively permanent starting and

quitting times from a list of alternatives established by the agencies and half selected their own starting and quitting times daily or biweekly. Sixteen of the 33 organizations visited used various forms of flexible schedules--4 allowed employees to select relatively permanent starting and quitting times from among various alternatives, and 12 allowed them to select their work hours daily or biweekly.

Monitoring procedures differ by agency, work unit, and supervisor

Other than GAO timekeeping requirements (which apply to most Federal agencies), there are no policies or written procedures for monitoring time at the workplace. Agencies may choose the method and degree of control which best fits their operations and work environments.

As shown in the chart below, most employees said their arrival and departure times were monitored by supervisors or not monitored at all. Supervisors at the organizations visited also indicated that they were primarily responsible for monitoring arrival and departure times. According to our analysis, these two methods are used primarily for monitoring employees that have fixed schedules.

<u>Methods used to monitor arrival and departure times</u>	<u>Percent of questionnaire responses</u>
Sign-in and sign-out system	14
Timeclock	14
Supervisory observation	38
Honor system	33
Don't know	<u>1</u>
Total (n=2,829) a/	<u>100</u>

a/The letter "n" is used throughout the report to indicate the number of questionnaire respondents.

The sign-in and sign-out system is used primarily for employees that have flexible schedules. The organizations visited used various types of sign-in and sign-out systems. These systems required employees to either

--sign in and sign out sequentially each day on a centrally maintained sheet,

--sign in and sign out next to a preprinted name and/or time each day on a centrally maintained sheet, or

--sign in and sign out each day on a personally maintained sheet.

As with arrival and departure times, most employees believe lunchbreaks are monitored by supervisory observation or not monitored at all. This applies to employees with both fixed and flexible lunch periods.

Supervisors use varying degrees of control to monitor time at the workplace, as shown below. Most stated that they monitored work hours closely or moderately but lunch periods and coffee/restbreaks less closely. This also was the case at the organizations visited. Supervisors appear to be more concerned with regulating arrival and departure times than controlling absences during the day.

Degree of Workplace Monitoring Control

	<u>Closely</u>	<u>Moderately</u>	<u>Loosely</u>	<u>Not at all</u>
	------(percent)-----			
Arrival (n=539)	53	37	8	3
Departure (n=533)	54	37	6	3
Lunch periods (n=528)	28	52	16	5
Breaks (n=517)	26	49	16	10

Supervisors indicated that the primary factors that influenced how they monitored and controlled work hours were the extent to which (1) employees could be trusted to follow policy and (2) deadlines were met without close supervision.

Tardiness often beyond employee control

Tardiness is not a pervasive problem. Over 87 percent of respondents indicated that they were typically not late to work. Of those who were usually late at least once during a 2-week period, the largest number said that they had been late only 1 or 2 days.

<u>Days usually late to work during 2-week period</u>	<u>Percent</u>
None	87
1-2 days	10
3-5 days	2
6-9 days	(a)
Every day	<u>(a)</u>
Total (n = 2,645)	<u>99</u>

a/Less than 1 percent.

On an average, employees who did not get to work on time were 20 minutes late. The largest number who reported being late said that they typically began work 5 minutes after their scheduled starting times.

Through onsite observations we concluded the respondents had reasonably estimated the extent of late arrivals. We monitored employee arrivals in various ways, including arriving before scheduled hours to observe times employees arrived and noting traffic patterns in and out of employee parking lots. We did not determine if late-comers had business excuses or had made up the time. Although these observation methods would exaggerate the extent of any tardiness, we concluded tardiness was not widespread.

Managers blamed tardiness on factors beyond employee control, such as traffic congestion and bad weather. Respondents gave the following reasons for being late.

<u>Reason for tardiness</u>	All <u>respondents</u>	Those typically late <u>1 or more days in 10</u>
	------(percent)-----	
Bad weather	23	12
Congested traffic	22	30
Illness in family or medical appointment	10	10
Taking care of personal errand	6	8
Public transportation	5	7
Carpool delay	5	6
Taking care of business errand	3	5
Difficulty in getting some- one to care for children	1	2
Knew that I would not have any work when I got there	(a)	2
Other (note b)	14	19
Never late	<u>32</u>	<u>-</u>
Total (n=2,700)	<u>c/121</u>	(n=460) <u>101</u>

a/Less than 1 percent.

b/Includes car trouble and oversleeping.

c/Respondents were allowed to choose more than one.

Keeping in mind that this question was in terms of the last time the respondent was late, the statistics show that an employee is more likely to be late due to reasons beyond personal control. For those typically late 1 or more days, congested traffic is the leading cause.

We also discussed with managers any efforts they made to balance the workloads of employees, since inequitable workloads were cited in one study as a cause of unofficial absences. They attempted to divide work evenly among staff who were "cross-trained" or had similar backgrounds and experience. Other work units had imbalances occasionally, but we concluded that real or perceived workload imbalances were not a large factor in unofficial absences.

Most respondents--64 percent--said that they charged leave or made up the time in some other way the last time they were late. Further analysis of the 36 percent who said that they had not made up the time showed that some appeared

to have made up at least part of the time by working at home, beginning work early, taking a shorter lunch than officially allowed, and/or working late.

Those who said that they had made up the time lost did so in the following ways:

	<u>All respondents</u>	<u>Those typically late 1 or more days in 10</u>
	----- (percent) -----	
Charged leave	51	18
Left work later	28	31
Took shorter lunch	15	16
Skipped break	13	16
Came in early another day	8	9
Took work home	4	6
Other	<u>6</u>	<u>4</u>
Total	<u>a/125</u>	<u>100</u>

a/Respondents were allowed to choose more than one.

Leave charges not always
required for tardiness

Most managers and employees blame tardiness on factors beyond employee control, such as weather and traffic conditions. Consequently employees may be reluctant to charge leave for something that they do not consider their fault and prefer to make up the time in some other way. Another reason for this reluctance may be that most agencies require leave charges in minimum increments of 1 hour. Some agencies, however, allow employees to charge leave in smaller increments, such as 15-minute intervals. Some employees did not know the minimum amount of annual leave which they could charge.

<u>Increments for annual leave charges</u>	<u>Percent of responses</u>	<u>Number of organizations visited</u>
15 minutes	10	1
30 minutes	5	-
45 minutes	(a)	-
60 minutes	72	32
Other	2	-
Don't know	<u>11</u>	<u>-</u>
Total (n=2,915)	<u>100</u>	<u>33</u>

a/Less than 1 percent.

As regulation allows, most agencies occasionally excuse tardiness up to 1 hour. Some organizations and supervisors, however, more frequently require leave charges or extension of the workday to make up tardiness. For example, most organizations on flexible schedules require that employees work longer to compensate for late arrival. Organizations on flexible schedules also are more likely to require leave charges for late arrival after the beginning of core time.

In addition, practices vary depending on the individual supervisor. Supervisors generally excuse infrequent tardiness. They are also reluctant to charge employees a full hour's leave for being only 5 to 10 minutes late because the agency could lose 50 to 55 minutes of productive time, that is, the employee would most likely wait until the next hour to begin working. By regulation (5 C.F.R. 630.206), agencies may not require employees to work for any part of a leave period charged against their account. This is a valid concern because, as stated earlier, those employees who said they were typically late for work were late an average of 20 minutes.

A more equitable solution would be to allow employees to make up time lost through tardiness by working later or charging leave in smaller increments. This would more closely match the amount of time lost and give agencies greater available staff time. This would not apply in situations when the employee's prompt presence was necessary for efficient office operations. Here stricter penalties would be necessary to ensure their presence.

Managers interviewed were divided on whether leave should be charged in smaller increments. Many said smaller increments would be more time consuming, harder to control, and less cost effective than the present system. Others

felt that if leave were chargeable in smaller increments, employees and supervisors would be more likely to charge leave for unofficial absences. This could help curb tardiness of less than 15 minutes that is now often excused. Our findings tend to confirm that employees are more inclined to charge leave when the amount of time charged more closely matches the time actually lost.

Early departure more controllable
and less frequent

Questionnaire responses, onsite observations, and interviews with managers disclosed fewer early departures than late arrivals. The biggest differences between the two problems were in the reasons given for each and the ways in which the time was made up. Illness or medical appointment was the most common reason for leaving early, followed by personal and business errands. Reasons such as lack of work or not feeling like working ranked low. Some early departures were caused by office procedures which might be unavoidable. For example, those working with classified documents may have to lock them up by a certain time each day.

The 10 percent of surveyed employees who said they typically left work early did so an average of 1 hour and 12 minutes early, although the largest number said that they typically left work 1 hour early. Because most employees must charge leave by the hour, most take advantage of the entire hour charged.

About 82 percent of those who left early said they made up the time. (This compares to the 64 percent who made up time lost through tardiness.) About 84 percent of those who made up for lost time charged leave. Even among those who left early and claimed not to have made up the time, we found that some had made up part of the time by beginning work early, taking a shorter lunch, working late, or taking work home.

	<u>All</u> <u>respondents</u>	<u>Those who typically left</u> <u>early 1 or more days in 10</u>
	----- (percent) -----	
Charged leave	84	64
Came in early	10	18
Took shorter lunch	5	8
Took work home	3	4
Other	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>
Total (n=1,382)	a/ <u>107</u>	(n=251) <u>100</u>

a/Respondents were allowed to choose more than one.

EXTENDED LUNCHBREAKS THE
MOST COMMON VIOLATION

Some employees extended their official lunchbreaks. Extended lunches occur more frequently and involve more time that is not made up than tardiness or early departures. Still managers do not view the incidences as a serious problem. They often attribute them to variables beyond employee control and say that most employees more than make up the time through unpaid overtime. Most organizations do not use formal procedures to monitor the length of lunch, and most supervisors do not try to control lunch periods as closely as arrival and departure times.

Lunch periods vary in
length and flexibility

Employees on traditional fixed schedules are generally allowed a fixed amount of time for lunch. The common lengths of lunchbreaks are 30 minutes, 45 minutes, and 1 hour. Of the employees surveyed, 63 percent were authorized 30 minutes, 17 percent 45 minutes, and 12 percent 1 hour. Seventeen organizations visited had fixed schedules; 82 percent allowed 30 minutes and 18 percent allowed 45 minutes.

Agencies on flexible schedules allow either fixed or flexible lunch periods. And the degree of flexibility varies considerably among agencies.

Some agencies do not require employees to take any designated amount of time for lunch, while others require supervisory approval if the lunch period exceeds the minimum time allotted. About 8 percent of questionnaire respondents had flexible lunch bands. Most had to take at least 30 minutes

for lunch; however, a few were not required to take any time. Of the 16 organizations visited that had flexible schedules

--9 had flexible lunch bands, generally allowing 30 minutes to 2 hours, although several had 1-hour maximums, and

--7 had fixed lunch periods, generally 30 minutes.

Agency policies also differ on the time and place of the lunch period. Depending on the job, some agencies require employees to take lunch at the same time each day to insure adequate telephone coverage. About 52 percent of employees surveyed had to take lunch at the same time each day, but only 6 percent had to stay at the workplace during lunch. Analysis showed that employees in trades and craft and in technical and clerical positions are more likely to be required to take lunch at the same time each day. Those in science and medical positions are more likely to be required to stay at the workplaces during lunch.

Some employees extend lunch, often following unofficial policy

Twenty-seven percent of the respondents reported they typically took longer lunches at least once in 10 days.

<u>Days usually take long lunch during 2-week period</u>	<u>Percent</u>
None	73
1-2 days	16
3-5 days	5
6-9 days	2
Every day	<u>4</u>
Total (n=2,799)	<u>100</u>

Those who typically took longer lunches extended their official lunches an average of 15 minutes.

	<u>Percent</u>
5 minutes	19
10 minutes	22
15 minutes	37
20 minutes	3
25 minutes	12
30 minutes	2
1 hour	<u>4</u>
Total (n=714)	<u>99</u>

These results paralleled our onsite observations as well as information supplied by supervisors interviewed. We ate in workplace cafeterias when available and experienced the same delays managers described, such as long lines and slow elevators. In organizations lacking cafeterias, we spent more time at lunch because we needed to go outside the building. At some sites the official lunch breaks were adequate. However, at some locations many employees took more than the allotted time because this was traditional or, in some cases, because managers allowed employees to add coffeebreak time to lunch time. Most employees at 12 of the 33 organizations visited usually extended official lunch breaks anywhere from 10 to 30 minutes.

Respondents said that they spent their lunchbreaks in these ways:

	<u>Percent</u>
Brought lunch from home--ate at workplace	46
Brought lunch from home--ate away from workplace	8
Bought lunch in workplace cafeteria	18
Bought lunch away from workplace	18
Did not take lunchbreak	2
Took lunchbreak but didn't eat	3
Other	<u>5</u>
Total (n=2,776)	<u>100</u>

As shown, about 72 percent either brought lunch or ate in workplace cafeterias--practices which should consume less time than leaving the workplace--while an additional 2 percent did not take lunchbreaks at all.

Responses of employees with 60 minutes for lunch were nearly split between (1) bringing lunch from home or eating in workplace cafeterias and (2) leaving the workplaces for lunch. But as the time allowed for lunch shrank, so did the percent of respondents who left the workplaces to buy lunch or spent the lunchbreaks in other ways.

<u>Number of minutes</u>	<u>Brought lunch from home or ate in workplace cafeteria</u>	<u>Bought lunch away from workplace</u>	<u>Spent lunch in other ways</u>
	------(percent)-----		
20 or less (n=112)	79	7	14
30 (n=1,847)	72	14	13
45 (n=492)	61	24	15
60 (n=346)	52	26	22

This also lends support to the claim that the majority of employees generally do not take extended lunchbreaks. Although the time officially allowed may not be adequate for a leisurely lunch, most employees seem to have adapted their eating arrangements to the time available.

Questionnaire respondents who extended their lunches gave the following reasons for doing so.

<u>Reason</u>	<u>All respondents</u>	<u>Those who typically took long lunches 1 or more days in 10</u>
	------(percent)-----	
Special luncheon	24	9
Longer lunch allowed unofficially/tradi- tion	19	30
Personal errand	14	8
Slow service outside building	12	15
Business lunch	10	11
Slow service in building	5	7
Exercise	2	2
Not anxious to return	2	2
Not enough work to do	1	1
Delayed by public transportation	(a)	(a)
Other agencies or pri- vate firms get longer lunch	(a)	(a)
Other	<u>11</u>	<u>13</u>
Total (n=1,464)	<u>100</u>	(n=728) <u>98</u>

a/Less than 1 percent.

Apparently such factors as interest in work, lack of work, and resentment of perceived private sector practices do not have much influence on the length of lunch. The reason most often cited for extending lunch was a special luncheon. These would be infrequent, supporting the premise that the typical Federal employee eats lunch within prescribed time limits. Of those who typically took longer lunches at least 1 out of every 10 days, the largest percentage said that longer lunches were allowed unofficially. Slow service outside the building was also a common cause.

All organizations visited at which most employees took extended lunches were located in or near large cities or metropolitan areas. Data from the respondents supported this finding.

<u>Number of days extend lunch</u>	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
	(percent)	
1-2 (n=442)	62	34
3-5 (n=151)	69	30
6-9 (n=55)	75	22
Every day (n=102)	73	22

Managers interviewed at urban sites acknowledged the accepted practice of extending lunchbreaks. They cited inadequate eating facilities and slow elevator service in high-rise office buildings as probable causes. One example is the HEW regional office in Atlanta, where most officials agreed that the 30 minutes allowed for lunch was not adequate. Since the building does not have a cafeteria, employees have to either bring lunch or leave the building to eat. As we experienced, it was impossible to leave the building and eat in 30 minutes. Because of poor elevator service, even employees who ate in the building had difficulty doing so in 30 minutes because many went to another floor for a drink to supplement their lunches. As we experienced, waiting for and riding on elevators often consumed 10 to 15 minutes.

We also observed lunch practices at more rural or isolated locations, such as an Internal Revenue Service center in New York. Although most employees were allowed to leave the workplace for lunch, most did not because of a lack of nearby eating facilities. Employees who worked in large open spaces and were required to eat at the same time left and returned together to the workplace. In this rather isolated, regimented environment, there were few extended lunchbreaks.

Another factor in extended lunches is that some work units have unofficial policies allowing employees to take longer for lunch. Some units or supervisors have permitted or overlooked extended lunches for so long that employees viewed the longer lunch period as unwritten policy. Other supervisors have advised employees, one by written memorandum, that a longer lunch is permissible.

About 22 percent of the respondents believed they were unofficially allowed to take longer lunches. This percentage closely parallels the percentage that rated their official lunchbreaks as sometimes or never adequate. (On the basis of their answers to other questions, we concluded that not all these employees took advantage of the extra time.)

Asked why unofficially allowed lunchbreaks were longer, the greatest number cited a lack of strict monitoring. Others said that coffeekbreaks could be added to the official lunch to allow for more time or that their agencies believed the time officially allowed was inadequate. We found the same reasons during onsite reviews.

The practice of combining coffeekbreaks with lunch to allow a longer unofficial lunch period is contrary to a Comptroller General decision (B-190011, Dec. 30, 1977) which states that scheduled lunch periods should not be expanded by forgoing restbreak(s). Lunch periods and restbreaks are authorized under different statutes for different purposes and therefore should not be combined. Usually employees are off duty and in nonpay status during lunch periods and thus free to leave work and use such time as they desire. On the other hand, employees are in pay status during restbreaks and should not generally be absent from the workplace. Expanding the lunch period through the use of a restbreak would also fail to promote efficiency on the part of employees, since the break would not be near the middle of the period of continuous work and in effect would reduce the workday below the required 8 hours.

As respondents indicated, lunchbreaks generally did not appear to be strictly monitored. As shown in appendix I all but five of the organizations reviewed relied on supervisory observation or peer pressure to monitor lunchbreaks. Similarly 96 percent of surveyed employees indicated that lunchbreaks were controlled through the honor system or monitoring by supervisors. Most supervisors (72 percent of those who responded and most of those interviewed) said that they did not attempt to control lunchbreaks very closely. One reason is that supervisors did not believe extended lunches created a problem because employees made up for the lost time.

Of the employees surveyed that had taken longer lunches than officially allowed, about half reported making up the time in these ways.

	All respondents	Those who typically took long lunches 1 or more days in 10
	------(percent)-----	
Charged leave	32	8
Left work late	21	23
Took shorter lunch another day	16	23
Came to work early	8	10
Took work home	3	4
Other	<u>a/ 20</u>	<u>32</u>
Total (n=812)	<u>100</u>	(n=342) <u>100</u>

a/Includes 11 percent who answered more than one of the listed choices.

In addition, many of those who said they had not made up the time appeared by the answers to other questions to have made up at least some of the time.

On the basis of our onsite reviews and questionnaire results, we concluded that Federal employees occasionally exceeded the time officially allowed for lunch and, when this happened, most often had made up the time by charging leave or working longer hours.

VARIED COFFEE/RESTBREAK POLICIES:
FEW EMPLOYEES ABUSE THEM

Most agencies have written or unwritten policies allowing coffee/restbreaks--brief periods when employees can actually stop working, while they relax, drink a beverage, etc., not just visits to the restroom. Breaks are usually granted when the employee's work is tedious and exacting and produces fatigue or eyestrain. Many agencies and offices also afford breaks to employees in other types of jobs. While most employees are allowed daily breaks, not all take them. Only a small percentage actually extended their breaks beyond the time officially or unofficially allowed.

Coffee/restbreaks inequitably provided

Agencies are given no guidance on when to permit breaks, how many to allow, how long they should be, and which employees should be permitted to take them. As a result, agency policies vary, causing inequitable treatment of some employees.

As shown below, questionnaire respondents cited various policies, although most said written policy allowed breaks. In addition, about the same number did not know the organizations' break policies as believed that breaks were not allowed.

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Official breaks (backed by written policy)	1,529	53
Unofficial breaks (no written policy but allowed)	991	34
No breaks	179	6
Do not know	<u>179</u>	<u>6</u>
Total	<u>2,878</u>	<u>99</u>

Different policies also exist for employees in similar positions. In all job categories, some employees had breaks while others did not. In addition, some professionals and managers were allowed breaks while other employees in technical, clerical, and trade and craft positions were not.

<u>Occupations</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Official breaks</u>	<u>Unofficial breaks</u>	<u>No breaks</u>	<u>Do not know</u>
		----- (percent) -----			
Technical	658	56	32	6	6
Clerical	536	58	28	7	7
Trade and craft	492	61	25	8	6
Science and medicine	239	62	29	2	7
Technical or Wage Board supervisor	246	60	36	5	0
Professional	380	28	56	6	10
Administrative	167	36	49	7	8
Manager	33	36	55	9	0

The responses closely correspond to information collected during onsite visits. Twenty-two of the 33 organizations visited had written policies, generally in union agreements, allowing breaks. Officials in the other 11 organizations indicated that breaks were unofficially allowed.

The number of breaks generally ranged from one to four per day, and the time varied from 5 to 20 minutes each. Most respondents and employees at the organizations visited were allowed two 10- or 15-minute breaks per day. However, some organizations visited did not specify an amount of time.

Within an agency, some offices or supervisors allowed breaks for all employees, while others restricted breaks to clerical employees. Also some offices or supervisors allowed different time limits for breaks. For example, most supervisors at the Internal Revenue Service's Chicago district office allowed all employees to take breaks by unwritten policy but two supervisors restricted breaks to clerical employees. And one of these two supervisors allowed two 15-minute breaks per day while the other allowed two 10-minute breaks.

Many employees are allowed to leave the workplaces for breaks. About 64 percent of employees responding to our questionnaire, as well as some organizations visited, indicated that employees may leave the workplaces for coffee/restbreaks. We defined "workplace" as any and all buildings or locations at which an employee works during a normal day. A Comptroller General decision (B-190011, Dec. 30, 1977) states that employees are not generally authorized to depart the place of work during restbreaks because they should be readily available. In extenuating circumstances, however, it appears reasonable to allow employees to leave the workplace--for example, allowing lab technicians to escape foul odors or employees to visit the nearest snackbar.

In private industry restbreaks of 5 to 20 minutes are common. The Department of Labor's 1977 Quality of Employment Survey showed that about half the full-time employees surveyed spent up to 30 minutes a day on regular coffeebreaks or scheduled restbreaks. Another 8 percent spent more time than that.

Although restbreaks result in loss of work time, they are generally thought to offer some benefits. Breaks offer brief respite from work that is monotonous or requires deep concentration. Studies have shown that higher production and accuracy make up for lost time, and the effect on morale

may compensate for loss of work time. Many also believe that whether officially authorized or not, employees will take the time off.

Our review disclosed no studies identifying positions in the Federal Government that would most benefit from authorized breaks. Some believe that employees in professional positions have sufficient "breaks" by varying their routine or duties; others contend that even official breaks for professionals or managers usually take the form of staff meetings or job discussions and are thus not breaks in the usual sense.

Coffee/restbreaks seldom lengthened

Although most employees are allowed two 15-minute breaks per day, many do not take both of them. Of 2,170 respondents allowed two breaks a day, about 40 percent said that they did not take two breaks a day, including 7 percent that never took breaks. Most respondents, however, took at least one break a day.

Our questionnaire did not ask employees directly whether they extended restbreaks. But on the basis of answers to other questions, we computed the extent to which breaks were being extended. Of those who said that they were not allowed breaks (179), 21 percent later said that they took breaks, most falling in the once or more a day category. About 13 percent of those respondents on five 8-hour-day schedules extended their break time by an average of 7 minutes when they took breaks, although the largest number of them extended the authorized break time by 5 minutes. The majority of those employees extending breaks seemed to do so habitually, taking one or more breaks a day.

Most managers at the sites visited did not view extended breaks as a serious problem; many said that their employees did not take breaks at all but instead made coffee in the office in order to continue working. We observed many employees drinking coffee at their desks who also appeared to be working. Of those we observed in snackbars, cafeterias, and at vending machines, most got their refreshments and left.

In addition, most supervisors that responded to our questionnaire (about 550) said that their employees either seldom or never took long breaks. On the contrary, they indicated that nearly half their employees occasionally or frequently took shorter breaks than officially allowed.

Of those who said they never took breaks, the highest percentage had clerical jobs which tended to be repetitive and tiring and more likely to benefit from breaks than professional or managerial positions. More technicians said they took one or more breaks per day than any other occupational category, followed by trades and crafts employees.

OVERTIME MAKES UP FOR SOME UNOFFICIAL ABSENCES

Some employees work more than 40 hours per week without compensation by coming in early, working late, taking short lunches, taking work home, and working weekends. Because some managers appreciate these extra hours, they are not overly concerned with insuring strict adherence to work-hour policies. Most managers said that occasional tardiness, early departure, or a long lunch was more than made up by uncompensated overtime.

About 35 percent of our respondents said they typically began work early.

<u>Days in 2-week period</u>	<u>Percent</u>
None	65
1-2 days	10
3-5 days	12
6-9 days	4
Every day	<u>10</u>
Total (n=2,654)	<u>101</u>

On the average these employees began work 24 minutes early, but the largest number began 15 minutes early.

Likewise employees who work late are in overtime status. About 34 percent of the respondents worked late.

<u>Days in 2-week period</u>	<u>Percent</u>
None	66
1-2 days	16
3-5 days	10
6-9 days	5
Every day	<u>3</u>
Total (n=2,648)	<u>100</u>

On the average these employees worked 43 minutes late. The largest number worked 30 minutes late.

In general, more employees arrived early than worked late. As shown by flexitime experiments, few people vary their starting times daily. With habits formed, employees usually leave for work at the same time each morning. If no commuting problems were encountered, early arrivals would be more frequent, allowing more employees to begin early.

Employees who adhere to scheduled hours but take shorter lunches than officially allowed also work more than 8 hours a day. Fewer respondents typically took short lunches than worked early or late.

<u>Days in 2-week period</u>	<u>Percent</u>
None	67
1-2 days	17
3-5 days	10
6-9 days	3
Every day	<u>3</u>
Total (n=2,800)	<u><u>100</u></u>

These 33 percent shortened lunch on the average by 16 minutes, although the largest percentage shortened lunch by 10 minutes.

About 28 percent of our respondents said that they sometimes or frequently took work home or worked on weekends.

	<u>Percent</u>
Never	52
Rarely	20
Sometimes	18
Frequently	<u>10</u>
Total (n=2,876)	<u><u>100</u></u>

Several factors may explain this distribution. The type of job often precludes working at home or alone. For example, the job may require interaction with other employees or the use of classified material. A typist needs an office typewriter; a computer analyst must have access to computer hardware; and most trades and crafts employees cannot perform their duties at home.

For those 28 percent who sometimes or frequently took work home or worked on weekends, the extra time averaged 5 1/2 hours per week, but the most frequent accumulation was 2 hours.

Respondents gave the following reasons for working longer than normal.

	<u>Percent</u>
Required to meet deadlines	40
Required due to understaffing	18
I enjoy my work	16
Expected by my supervisor	5
Make up for long lunch	2
Other (note a)	<u>19</u>
Total (n=1,325)	<u>100</u>

a/Includes financial need and individual job demands.

As shown, most employees said they worked extra hours because of job requirements. Similarly managers gave job-related reasons, such as travel outside normal hours.

Most respondents said they were not compensated for working overtime either at an overtime rate, at straight pay, or with compensatory leave. Of those who were compensated, most received overtime pay. Response analysis indicates that some employees subject to the Fair Labor Standards Act may not be compensated for overtime. Forty-seven respondents with jobs we classified as clerical and 21 in trade jobs said that they were not usually compensated for extra work. Uncompensated overtime worked in large enough increments directly violates the Fair Labor Standards Act. Under this act overtime need not be ordered or approved, but merely suffered or permitted.

Most higher grade employees are exempt from the act. Under title 5 most employees, including higher graded ones, can receive some type of pay or compensatory time for overtime, but the time must be officially authorized or approved. We found that as grade level increased, fewer respondents were compensated for overtime. Reasons may include the difficulty of getting authorization or the fact that at higher grades overtime pay is often less than the regular rate.

This overtime pattern for Federal employees parallels that in the private sector. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, about 27 percent of all full-time employees worked 41 hours or more each week in May 1978. About 57 percent of these employees--primarily managers, administrators, and highly paid persons--did not receive overtime pay.

THE TYPICAL EMPLOYEE WORKS
40 OR MORE HOURS A WEEK

Most Federal employees adhere to agency work-hour policies. Typically--at least once in a 2-week period--12 percent of employees in the seven agencies surveyed are tardy, 26 percent take long lunches, and 12 percent leave early. But, on the basis of our survey, the same individuals do not violate all work-hour policies. Those who occasionally disregard policies often make up the time in some way. The time lost is relatively small and, from an aggregate perspective, is more than offset by employees who work more than 40 hours a week.

In these seven agencies, only 2 percent typically arrived late to work, left work early, and took long lunches at least 1 day every 2 weeks. No respondents did all three every day. An extended lunch, the most common abuse, was more likely to be paired with another type of absence.

The number of people who abused more than one policy was less significant when considering that it occurred infrequently. In all types of unofficial absences, the largest number of respondents abused the policy only 1 or 2 days in a 2-week period. As an everyday occurrence

- no one violated all three policies,
- one respondent arrived late and left early,
- one respondent arrived late and took a long lunch,
and
- one respondent took a long lunch and left early.

By incorporating responses to all questions concerning scheduled work hours, we identified three groups of employees.

1. The majority, who work about 40 hours each week.
2. A group that works 41 or more hours a week in which the extra time is not compensated.
3. Another group that works less than 40 hours.

We calculated the average hours by subtracting unofficial absences and adding extra time worked. Because of different assumptions made in analyzing compensated and uncompensated

overtime, we estimated a range rather than specific values for the percentage of employees who belong in each group. (See app. IV for more details of the analysis.)

	Percent (<u>note a</u>)	Average hours (<u>note a</u>)
Employees who work 33.5 to 39.9 hours per week	17 to 26	39.036 to 39.178
Employees who work 40 to 40.9 hours per week	56 to 57	40.131 to 40.025
Employees who work 41 to 70 hours per week	18 to 27	44.097 to 44.752

a/Weighted by agency size.

On the average, the amount of time lost per employee per week is small. Projected to the universe of employees in the seven agencies, however, the lost time is more significant. We computed weighted average pay for employees in each group above. Then we multiplied the average time lost by the average pay for employees who worked less than 40 hours by 17 to 26 percent of all employees in the seven agencies. Thus the cost of the lost time ranges from about \$86 million to \$118 million.

We used the same procedure to value the uncompensated overtime of those who work 41 or more hours a week, substituting that group's average pay rate and percentage representation. The value of the contributed time ranged from about \$664 million to \$809 million.

Some factors affect the number of hours employees work

The type of job, area population, agency of employment, and satisfaction with work hours all may explain differences in the hours worked by employees in the three groups. To the extent that these are characteristics of employees that work less than 40 hours, agencies should attempt to change or counterbalance them. To reach this conclusion, we used discriminant analysis to determine the distinguishing characteristics among the groups of employees. (See app. IV.)

Type of job

As shown below, employees with certain types of jobs are more likely to work overtime than employees with other

types of jobs. Little job-based differentiation exists among those working less than 40 hours a week.

<u>Type of job</u>	<u>Less than 40</u>	<u>About 40</u>	<u>41 or more</u>
	------(percent)-----		
Clerical	23-34	61-65	5-12
Technical	19-29	57-58	14-24
Science and medicine	17-32	48-49	19-36
Professional	17-27	32	41-52
Administrative	14-28	25-28	47-59
Trade and craft	13-17	80	3- 7
Technical or trade supervisor	9-18	43-48	34-48
Manager	9	6- 9	81-84

Employees with clerical, technical, and trade jobs are more likely to work about 40 hours per week. We believe this conclusion is reasonable because these jobs usually demand that employees be at worksites to answer telephones or run machines, allowing them less flexibility. In addition, the Fair Labor Standards Act requires that most of these employees be compensated for overtime. Thus they are less likely to work more than 40 hours a week without compensation.

Professionals, managers, administrative staff, and supervisors of Wage Board or technical staff are more likely to work over 40 hours. These employees are usually exempt from Fair Labor Standards Act overtime requirements and can take work home at night. In addition, supervisors often arrive early and leave late to be present when employees arrive and leave.

Demographic and other characteristics

The amount of time employees work varies according to demographic, organizational, and attitudinal characteristics. One is the amount of time officially allowed for lunch. The less time allowed, the more likely employees work less than 40 hours per week. This seems logical with organizations unofficially allowing more time for lunch. Although condoned by management, we subtracted this extra time in our analysis.

Employees without extensive Government service are more likely to work less than 40 hours than those with extensive service. Although this could be due to several factors,

in recent years organizations may have become lax in communicating work-hour policies to new employees. Many managers that we interviewed had not provided employees any written communication on work hours. Also new employees tend to be in lower grades, with less responsibility. They may not yet be committed to agency goals and policies and willing to put in extra hours. In addition, it may be difficult for lower grade employees to compensate for unofficial absences by performing extra work because management does not want to incur overtime liability.

Dissatisfaction with work hours is a characteristic of those who work less than 40 hours and, to a lesser degree, those who work more than 40 hours. Employees who consider their hours inconvenient or undesirable may be less able to accommodate their work schedules than employees who are satisfied with their hours.

Finally employees who work in urban environments are more likely to work less than 40 hours per week than employees in rural areas. Unofficial absences are caused by congested traffic, slow elevator service in high-rise buildings, and congested eating facilities--all of which are found in a big city.

Agency of employment

The hours worked per week also vary according to the employing agency. Ranges of values, estimating the percentage of employees, are shown below by agency and number of hours worked per week.

	<u>Less than 40 hours</u>	<u>About 40 hours</u>	<u>41 or more hours</u>
	------(percent)-----		
Health, Education, and Welfare	25-36	46-49	18-27
Treasury (note a)	24-32	47-48	21-28
Navy	18-26	59	15-23
Veterans Adminis- tration	16-27	58-59	15-25
Army	16-25	60-61	14-24
Air Force	11-18	67	15-22
Agriculture	10-24	37-39	38-53

a/ Employment with Treasury was significant in this table, but in the discriminant analysis in appendix IV, other characteristics were more important.

The data reflect a number of distinguishing characteristics between Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) and Treasury employees and other employees in the sample which help explain why HEW and Treasury employees were more likely to work less than 40 hours. Comparing HEW employees with other agencies' employees

- more HEW employees had technical, managerial, and administrative jobs,
- fewer had trade or craft jobs,
- more worked in urban areas,
- more had 30-minute (shorter) lunch periods,
- more did not know how their work units controlled arrivals and departures, and
- more said their work units allowed longer unofficial lunches.

Comparing Treasury employees with the others

- more Treasury employees had professional or managerial jobs,
- fewer had trade or craft jobs,
- more worked in urban areas,
- more had worked 6 or fewer years for the Government,
- more were dissatisfied with their work hours,
- more had 30-minute (shorter) lunch periods,
- more ate out at restaurants,
- more did not know how their work units controlled arrivals, departures, and lunch periods, and
- more said their work units allowed longer unofficial lunches.

We discussed a draft of the report with HEW and Treasury representatives. Treasury representatives noted a Treasury occupational characteristic--investigative and inspector personnel who work administratively uncontrollable hours. In

addition, Treasury emphasized that commercial buildings often did not have adequate eating facilities and employees frequently conducted business during lunch.

Both Departments reiterated that, as the report shows, many employees made up workplace absences and many worked more than 40 hours without compensation.

Regardless of differences and reasons, agencies and the Office of Personnel Management should prevent unofficial absences which are not made up. The next chapter presents several ways to do this.

CHAPTER 3

BETTER MANAGEMENT NEEDED TO REDUCE ABSENCES

Although, as discussed in the previous chapter, there is no widespread abuse of work hours, unofficial absences appear numerous enough to warrant greater management attention. Not all employees make up this time, and some supervisors overlook such absences. Regardless of the reasons, supervisors are responsible for establishing and assuring adherence to legally required 8-hour workdays.

In response to GAO's 1976 report on lunch periods, the Civil Service Commission issued Bulletin 610-30 in May 1978, reminding agencies of the legal requirement to observe an 8-hour workday. The bulletin stated that (1) the problem of extended lunchbreaks was one which could not be resolved by a uniform standard or by a fixed, designated period of time applicable to all situations and (2) variable working situations, eating facilities, and individual employee needs and preferences should be considered in agency efforts to create a positive working environment.

Under the Federal labor-management relations program, Federal managers, before changing hours of work and lunch period policies, must negotiate with labor organizations accorded exclusive recognition and consult with labor organizations accorded national consultation rights on work-hour policies.

The alternatives below would alleviate some inequities and reduce unofficial absences.

- Allowing greater use of flexible schedules.
- Permitting longer lunches and requiring employees to extend their workdays accordingly.
- Arranging more convenient eating facilities.
- Ensuring that work-hour policies are fair and that employees are aware of them and enforcing them consistently.

OPM could also alleviate some inequities and reduce unofficial absences by providing needed information, direction, and evaluation.

ALLOWING MORE USE OF FLEXIBLE SCHEDULES

Flexible work schedules allow employees to vary starting and quitting times within certain limits while working a contracted number of hours. Although a small percentage of Federal employees and an estimated 5.8 percent of all employees in the United States have flexible schedules, their use is rapidly growing.

The private sector uses flexitime more extensively than the public sector. This has been attributed to pressures within the private sector for innovations that will increase profits. Also there have been fewer legal obstacles hindering experimentation and adoption of alternative work schedules.

Employees in our sample who had flexible schedules were more satisfied with their starting and quitting times than employees with fixed schedules. And employees dissatisfied with their work hours were more likely to work less than 40 hours a week. Previous studies, while acknowledging a few negative effects, have generally reported the following positive results from flexible schedules:

- Increased employee morale.
- Reduced tardiness.
- Reduced absenteeism.
- Increased productivity.
- Eased employee commuting.
- Easier recruiting.

Similar results were reported by supervisors at organizations visited that had flexible schedules. In addition, about 39 percent of the employees responding to our questionnaire indicated that flexitime would be an acceptable solution for eliminating tardiness and long lunches or breaks.

Some work situations may not accommodate flexible schedules. The degree of flexibility would depend on the

- amount of control management is willing to transfer to workers,
- relative isolation or interdependence in which workers function, and

--other characteristics of the work, such as the need for continuous coverage.

Because of legal impediments, flexible schedules used by Federal agencies have been simple variations of arrival and departure times. More flexibility will be possible in the future. The Federal Employees Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules Act of 1978 authorizes a 3-year controlled experiment of flexible and compressed work schedules. The legislation suspends certain provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act and of title 5 of the United States Code to the extent necessary to permit experimentation. It also generally allows agencies to determine whether they will participate in the program.

Thus agencies will need to evaluate their mission needs and work environments to decide whether any type of flexible schedules can be accommodated. Agencies chosen for experimentation must develop specific policies using OPM guidance.

ALLOWING LONGER LUNCHES

Prior suggestions for reducing incidences of extended lunches have included provisions for a longer official lunch and corresponding extensions of the workday. To lengthen lunch periods across the board does not now appear appropriate. Instead, agencies should consider providing alternative lunch periods or flexible lunch bands to better meet individual needs.

Fewer employees extend official lunch periods than previously thought. Only 27 percent of our sample typically took longer and almost half of them made up the absences the last time they took longer lunches.

The length of the Federal lunch period parallels that in the private sector. The Department of Labor's Quality of Employment Survey shows that about half of private sector employees are allowed up to 30 minutes for lunch and another 11 percent are allowed more than 30 minutes, but less than 1 hour. (About 28 percent are allowed 1 hour or more while 8 percent get no time at all.)

In most cases the lunch period offers employees enough time to eat. About 70 percent of the employees in our sample either brought their lunches from home or ate in workplace cafeterias. New designs and equipment in Government-sponsored cafeterias have cut serving time and quickened the

checkout process. And most employees believed their lunch periods were always or often adequate for the time needed to eat.

There is also a desire for shorter lunch periods. When given the option, employees converting to flexible schedules often choose shorter lunches. Similarly, of the employees surveyed, 89 percent indicated that they were not in favor of extending the workday to allow for a longer lunch.

Longer lunch periods may not solve the problems of employees extending lunch. We found more lunch period abuse at an organization that had a 45-minute lunch than at a nearby organization that had 30 minutes. Employees also said that given more time for lunch they would do other things that could take even more time, such as exercise, take a walk, or eat more leisurely.

To the extent possible, agencies should set equitable lunch policies. Agencies could offer flexible lunch bands for employees on flexible schedules or variable lunch periods for employees on fixed schedules. With flexible lunch bands, agencies allow employees to vary the length of lunch periods daily while adjusting starting and quitting times accordingly. Although 15 organizations visited had flexible schedules, only 9 provided flexible lunch bands. With variable lunch periods, agencies allow employees to choose a fixed schedule from among several alternatives that incorporate different lengths of lunch periods. Such variations usually accommodate those who either need or want more time for lunch than others or those who may desire to shorten the workday by taking less time for lunch. These alternatives are apparently viable since about 34 percent of employees that typically take longer for lunch make up the absences by adjusting starting and quitting times.

Lunch bands will correct inequities only if supervisors properly control them. At some locations lunchbreaks are monitored by the sign-in and sign-out system--generally for employees that have flexible lunch bands. Some employees must sign in and out only if they take lunch at a time other than regularly scheduled or if they plan to exceed the minimum amount of time allowed. For example, at the Treasury Department's Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms in Chicago, two managers had instituted different sign-in and sign-out systems for lunch. One group had to sign in and out only if they planned to exceed 30 minutes for lunch; a second group had to sign in and out for lunch regardless of the duration. Regardless of the monitoring procedure

used, because the law requires 8-hour workdays, supervisors must ensure that employees extend the workdays when longer lunches are taken.

PROVIDING MORE CONVENIENT
EATING FACILITIES

Agencies' work-hour policies should reflect the convenience and adequacy of facilities, including restaurants, cafeterias, coffee or refreshment stands, parking, public transportation, and other building and worksite facilities. As an alternative to changing policies to reduce unofficial absences, agencies could arrange more convenient facilities where possible.

The lunch period is sometimes extended because of inadequate eating facilities. One agency stated that because some eating facility concessionaires do not restrict their business to Government employees, crowded conditions sometimes delayed employees in their return to the worksites. When such crowded conditions occur in a Government-controlled building, business from the public should be discouraged and/or employees' lunch periods or coffee/restbreaks should be staggered. A General Services Administration review concluded that the small percentage of public patronage does not justify the additional expense of guards to control access to agency-controlled cafeterias, but the agency is willing to discourage outsiders by placing restrictive signs or locking exterior doors.

Within reason, agencies in a Government building may also control the cafeteria's hours of service. For example, one agency, suspecting that employees were eating breakfast on official time, has closed a building cafeteria at 8 a.m., the official starting time, and does not reopen until the lunch period.

Agencies may also facilitate shorter coffeebreaks. In VA's New York regional office, employees purchase coffee from a mobile cart that travels through the offices. The Long Beach Naval Shipyard has some vending machines in accessible locations. Although discouraged because of energy consumption and electrical hazards, some offices also operate communal coffeepots.

Employees sometimes believe that (1) they are "entitled" to extend official lunches because the agency has not provided convenient eating facilities and (2) a longer official lunch would be penalizing them for something beyond their control. The HEW Atlanta regional office is an example of

employee-management disagreement over building facilities and work hours. The region moved to a new building to provide employees modern, convenient workspace. Unlike the old building, the new one had slow elevators and no cafeteria, which caused employees to take longer for lunch. Although a cafeteria is planned, top management wants to extend the official lunch period from 1/2 to 1 hour--a move employees and the union strongly oppose.

USING BETTER MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

Management must make sure that all employees know work-hour rules and regulations and should periodically remind them of work-hour policies. At some organizations visited, employees had never been provided written communication on scheduled hours, lunch periods, or breaks. At others employees had not been reminded of policies since their initial employment orientation.

Questionnaire responses demonstrated that some employees did not know official agency policies for lunch periods, annual leave charges, or coffee/restbreaks. Such unawareness increases the likelihood of nonadherence to agency policies. When asked for acceptable solutions to frequent tardiness, long lunches, or long breaks, respondents' second most frequent answer was reeducating employees as to hours required or performance expected.

Another responsibility is supervision--seeing that established times are not ignored and disciplining flagrant offenders. Better supervision was employees' most frequently given solution to reducing unofficial absences. This response was understandable with more than half describing their work units' control of lunch periods as "the honor system" and about one-third using this description for the control of arrivals and departures. In addition, some supervisors described their attempts to observe and control work hours as "loosely" or "not at all."

About 65 percent of the respondents indicated that supervisors overlooked tardiness, long lunches, or long breaks. They believed that repeatedly overlooking these absences had a negative effect on employee morale, productivity, working relationships among employees, and relations between labor and management.

The means of managing work hours varies with location and type of activity. But in those organizations where unofficial absences are pervasive, managers should reevaluate

the effectiveness of established controls and, at a minimum, ensure that employees know organization work-hour policies.

NEED FOR INFORMATION,
DIRECTION, AND EVALUATION

The Government has little overall information on agency work-hour policies and practices. The information presented in this report had to be developed through extensive research.

In addition, little guidance has been provided for most work-hour policies. For example, no guidance exists on the optimum number of coffee/restbreaks, length, types of employees that should be granted breaks, or the circumstances in which breaks should be granted. Although breaks are believed to increase production and improve accuracy and morale, studies have not been made to identify positions in the Government that would benefit from formally designated breaks. Thus it was not unexpected for us to find varied policies.

In some cases varied policies are necessary because of different functions and work environments. For example, offices serving the public may require employees to take lunch at predetermined times every day to ensure office coverage. To vary coffee/restbreaks by the physical or mental demands of a job seems prudent. But other policies should show less variation. For example, it is inequitable for some work units to have unofficial policies allowing longer lunches while others do not. And agencies should afford similar coffee/restbreaks to employees in similar positions working in similar environments. Management should correct these inequities or ensure that different policies are necessary.

Managers also do not emphasize establishing and controlling work hours. The results include

- unofficial absences,
- apparent Fair Labor Standards Act overtime violations,
and
- few internal audits of work-hour policies.

Erosion of the workday through lateness and long lunch-breaks can affect productivity and increase the cost of providing Government services. One element of productivity is the amount of time that employees are available to

perform their duties. The availability of workers and the estimated work to be done should be used to compute the number of workers needed. Unofficial absences may reduce worker availability, increase the number of workers needed, and decrease productivity.

CONCLUSIONS

Agencies should be required to (1) reevaluate periodically the effectiveness of existing policies in view of the changing work environment and employee practices, (2) consider alternatives that could alleviate inequities and reduce unofficial absences, and (3) implement necessary changes after negotiation or consultation with labor organizations. OPM should ensure that agencies manage their work-hour policies and practices. OPM should provide information and guidance and monitor and evaluate Government-wide work-hour policies to identify and correct any which are unreasonable.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE DIRECTOR, OPM

We recommend that the Director:

--To better establish, monitor, and manage employee work-hour policies, obtain Government-wide information on all agencies' official and unofficial policies and practices on scheduled work hours, lunch, and breaks; compare and evaluate these policies and practices; identify the need for additional guidance; and issue necessary guidance and require necessary changes. This guidance should as a minimum provide agencies sufficient information to determine increments for leave charges, protect against Fair Labor Standards Act overtime violations, and highlight the benefits of assessing work-hour practices through internal audits or personnel management evaluations.

As part of this program:

--Assess whether the Federal Personnel Manual Bulletin 610-30 has been effective; that is, whether each agency has reviewed its lunch period practices and made necessary modifications. Where changes are needed, agencies should evaluate the alternatives discussed in this chapter. If flexible schedules or improved facilities are not feasible, agencies should lengthen lunch periods and correspondingly the workday to reflect the convenience and adequacy of existing facilities.

- Provide agencies more information and guidance on coffee/restbreak policies, covering the appropriate number and length of breaks and types of Federal jobs that would most benefit. Developing such guidance would require research and study.
- Revise regulations to require that agencies communicate to employees, at least annually, agency work-hour policies.
- While actively encouraging agencies to participate in the 3-year experiment with flexible work schedules, promote the use of flexible and variable lunch bands and emphasize such potential benefits as fewer unofficial absences.

AGENCY AND UNION COMMENTS

OPM agreed that it should further assess and, if necessary, increase and improve current guidance. The agency did not believe it feasible or desirable to collect and compare agency policies or to centrally manage hours of work for all agencies. OPM views its role in work-hour policies as consistent with its objectives under the Civil Service Reform Act--to deregulate to the maximum degree possible; impose minimal controls on agency direction; and provide guidance, advice, and assistance where useful.

The Public Employee Department of the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations and the National Federation of Federal Employees stated that collective bargaining would best settle many work-hour issues.

Although we agree that OPM should not manage agency work hours per se, we believe that OPM should manage overall policies. Those overall policies should be the result of study and consultation on the part of OPM and employee unions. Within this overall guidance, as the report states, agencies and employee unions need the flexibility to tailor policies to individual environments.

We believe that OPM cannot provide meaningful, useful guidance without information on existing agency policies, practices, inconsistencies, and problems. We are concerned that the role OPM envisions is too passive and would sustain widely divergent, inequitable work-hour practices. We continue to believe that OPM must establish a comprehensive feedback mechanism that provides credible, consistent data on agency policies and practices in order to set and maintain overall policies and to hold agencies accountable.

CHAPTER 4

LONG-TERM POLICY ISSUES

Many changes have occurred in the work environment during recent years. In the private sector, new industries have evolved, new ways of producing items and providing services have developed, and employee and employer attitudes toward work have changed. Workers are better educated and more occupy professional and high-skill jobs. Similarly the Federal Government has changed the composition of its work force and the complexity of its programs.

In contrast, workplaces have changed more slowly, especially in the design and control of hours of work. The length of scheduled workweeks has remained about 40 hours since the post World War II period. Rigid, fixed schedules with traditional controls remain the norm.

In recent years, as payroll costs have soared, more attention has been directed to workplace changes as a way to increase productivity. One change has been alternative work schedules, such as flexitime. By offering employees more freedom, employers hope to increase job satisfaction and productivity and to attract high caliber employees.

Thus far, this report has concentrated on time--hours spent at the workplace, unofficial absences, and other time allocated to work. But time lost through unofficial absences is not the only potential source of unused labor. Of equal concern is the full, productive use of hours spent at the workplace. Some agency managers believed their efforts would be better spent motivating low performers than monitoring the hours that adequate or high performers spent at the workplace. Although we did not measure the productive use of time spent at the workplace, we did explore several long-term issues that may be important in holding down personnel costs and increasing worker output.

SHOULD CONTROL BE TIGHT OR LOOSE?

Management philosophies differ on controlling hours of work. Some believe that rigid controls cause employees to arbitrarily limit their output and that self-control is generally a more effective motivator of high performance. Recent literature indicates the "new breed" of employees demands less control and greater autonomy. In addition, psychological experiments have shown that most people compelled to do things may react by reasserting their freedom. Their resistance to tight controls could manifest itself in poor

job performance. On the other hand, some people believe tight controls are needed to ensure productivity and that employees will do as little as possible unless someone monitors their daily activities closely.

Timekeepers in Federal agencies must have positive knowledge about most employees' presence without regard to grade or position and must maintain daily time and attendance records. In addition, some agencies and work units use methods such as timeclocks, sign-in and sign-out sheets, or supervisory observation to augment timekeeping procedures. Some work units' procedures, however, are limited to peer pressure or the honor system, especially for monitoring lunch or rest/coffeebreaks.

Formal controls, such as timeclocks and sign-in and sign-out systems, are generally considered inherently tighter than more informal controls, such as supervisory observation or the honor system. This is not always the case. For example, we found employees personally maintaining individual sign-in and sign-out sheets, and prior GAO reviews found employees clocking in for each other. We also found very close control of work hours by supervisors overseeing employees' time and attendance.

The tightness of a control method can vary depending on circumstances, consistency of application, and degree of supervision. Most supervisors said they attempted to control work hours "closely" or "moderately"; however, some used the words "loosely" or "not at all."

We found no conclusive evidence to support whether tight or loose controls are better. Respondents had mixed opinions about the effect of stricter controls on morale, productivity, labor-management relations, and employees' uncompensated overtime. Employees subject to formal control systems may be more concerned with signing or clocking out and accounting for required hours than completing an assignment or project. Employees who are not concerned about outdistancing other employees at the end of the day are more likely to work until they reach a natural stopping point or have completed a project. In addition, we found that employees whose time was monitored by formal controls abused time as frequently as employees whose time was monitored by other means.

Because of the Government's special characteristics and need to be accountable to the public, agencies must maintain some controls. However, one standard may not be adequate for all the Government's work. The system may vary by such

individual circumstances as the interdependency of jobs, type of output or service provided, stringency of deadlines, and physical location of employees and supervisors. Whatever the control, it should ensure the highest productivity.

SHOULD CONTROL FOCUS ON THE
JOB RATHER THAN ON TIME?

By long-existing law, Federal employees are paid for time at the workplace rather than output. Under the General Schedule pay system, Federal employees are paid yearly salaries but must account for work time on an hourly basis. Therefore, hours of work must be accurately recorded.

Until the recent past, the Government employed mainly clerical and lower skilled staff while the private sector employed mainly blue-collar personnel. In the private sector, blue-collar and clerical employees were usually paid hourly wages and work hours were accurately recorded either by manual timekeeping procedures or timeclocks. The Federal policy of paying for time rather than the job, therefore, logically paralleled private sector practices.

In recent years, the composition of the work force in Government has changed. The Government employs more professionals and highly trained technicians. The private sector usually pays professionals and managers for job output, not for the time they work. These are salaried rather than hourly paid positions because (1) output cannot be measured in hourly units and (2) output does not always correlate directly with hours spent at the workplace. Because companies expect salaried employees to have responsible attitudes toward their jobs, their hours at the workplace are not strictly recorded although management may keep a watchful eye. At the same time, companies expect these employees to work as long as necessary to get the job done and rarely pay them overtime for any extra hours. For salaried employees, companies also closely link performance to pay and promotion determinations.

We found little research on the effects of emphasizing performance rather than time. In one study of Canadian research biologists, behaviorists found an inverse relationship between effective performance and organizational emphasis placed on hours of work and punctuality. They concluded that high hierarchical control of behavior and high external programming of activities would likely accompany role behavior characterized by lesser achievement, noncreative problem solving, higher aggression, and hostility to change.

Although we found insufficient information on effects, some companies have evidently benefited from paying for jobs rather than time. Recently a few have put all employees on salary pay systems, and this idea is reportedly slowly growing in popularity. The change is based on the premise that the distinction between blue-collar and white-collar personnel is no longer valid. The companies believe that an all-salaried work force will increase organizational effectiveness by reducing administrative costs and producing more committed and loyal employees.

Various methods are used to relate time to pay for these newly salaried employees. As with white-collar employees, pay can be deducted under certain conditions or guaranteed regardless of absence or lateness. Some plans limit paid absences; others do not. Although timeclocks and similar devices are not used, supervisors still can dismiss individuals who are frequently late or absent. Supervisors usually maintain control records that note lateness, absence, sickness, or overtime and may use this information when appraising overall performance.

These companies have reported favorable work attitudes and productivity gains more than sufficient to compensate for any time that may have been lost due to unofficial absences. This concept of paying for the job rather than time may offer the same benefits for the Government.

Paying for the job rather than time may also facilitate linking Federal employee performance to pay--a subject that has been widely discussed. In recent years several reports have concluded that the Government needs to connect performance more closely to pay. In two such reports, we recommended legislation to establish linkage between performance and rewards ("Federal Employee Performance Rating Systems Need Fundamental Changes," FPCD-77-80, Mar. 3, 1978, and "Federal White-Collar Pay Systems Need Fundamental Changes," FPCD-76-9, Oct. 30, 1975).

The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 established such a linkage for certain Federal employees. It provided for a merit pay system for supervisory and managerial personnel in General Schedule grades 13 through 15 using performance appraisals as the basis for determining merit pay adjustments. It also established a Senior Executive Service to include grades 16 through 18 of the General Schedule, levels IV and V in the Executive Schedule, and equivalent positions. Performance appraisals will be taken into account in awarding rank in the Executive Service.

Work measurement systems can also be used to determine whether employees are producing the expected amount of work for a given period. Of the 550 supervisors responding to our questionnaire, about 73 percent indicated they could measure the work of employees they supervised.

Supervisors indicated that

--they were actually using techniques to measure the work,

--the measures were a good way to monitor productivity, and

--the measures were good enough to substitute for controlling hours of work.

Only one-third of the organizations visited had work measurement systems. Most supervisors believed that these systems measured aggregate work unit output, not individual output. We suspect the questionnaire responses may similarly refer to aggregate rather than individual measures. In a control system focused on output rather than on time, work measurements geared to individual performance would be the most helpful. Our report, "Federal Agencies Should Use Good Measures of Performance To Hold Managers Accountable," discusses the performance measurement problem (FPCD-78-26, Nov. 22, 1978).

Although the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 requires greater emphasis on some employees' performance, the Government continues to control time at the workplace. But with the employment of more professionals, the Government, as in the private sector, should focus control on output instead. Other than the few cases cited, however, we know of no studies that have shown the effects of doing this. The crucial question is whether such emphasis would improve productivity and other aspects of personnel management.

Because paying for output rather than time may provide some benefits, controlled experiments are needed to explore the feasibility and ramifications of such a change and to show the effects on productivity, employees, and other aspects of personnel management. Experiments should also identify the positions or types of jobs most appropriately covered. If applied only to employees exempt from overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act, discontinuing their title 5 overtime coverage should be considered.

SHOULD THE WORKWEEK BE SHORTENED?

The 40-hour workweek has been the established norm in the private sector since the passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938. Before that the length of the workweek declined from 72-hour workweeks common in the 1800s. The Federal Employees' Pay Act of 1945 instituted a standard 40-hour workweek for Federal employees, which is still in effect today.

We found little information on private industry's "scheduled" work hours--those hours that an employee is paid at the regular rate, minus the lunchbreak. Most statistics gathered are on "average" or "usual" work hours. Whether the aggregate hours include paid lunches is not always clear. In one Department of Labor survey, 43 percent of employees said they were paid for time taken off on mealbreaks. Statistics can also be misleading because some include part-time workers, which lower averages, and overtime work, which increase averages. Thus it is hard to say with certainty that there is a trend toward a shorter scheduled workweek. However, the average workweek has been declining slightly since the 1930s, which may indicate a decrease in scheduled workweeks.

The decrease is evident in both the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Current Population Series and Area Wage Surveys. For example, the percent of nonagricultural wage and salary workers who have 40-hour weeks decreased from 45.2 percent in 1948 to 44 percent in 1978. But in 1948, 26.2 percent worked between 41 and 48 hours per week. This proportion dropped to 11.2 percent by 1978, while the proportion with shorter workweeks increased. Although this decline could mean that scheduled workweeks are shorter, it could also reflect changes in the composition of the work force--more women and students who work shorter hours.

In the 1978 National Survey of Professional, Administrative, Technical, and Clerical Pay, the Bureau found that weekly hours (those on which straight-time salary is based) averaged 39 or 39.5 for most industry divisions surveyed. Hours were lower (38 hours) in finance, insurance, and real estate industries. This survey is used to determine comparable pay for Federal employees subject to the General Schedule.

In general, Federal managers said that private industry's scheduled work hours had no effect on employees' work-hour habits. However, those in New York said that Federal employees felt like second-class citizens because they worked longer hours than their private sector counterparts. Studies

have shown that private sector workweeks are shortest in the Northeast. As a result, Federal Government employment becomes less attractive and it is more difficult to compete with private industry for new hires, particularly clerical personnel.

Even within the public sector there is some disparity. In a New York field office, Department of Agriculture employees share offices with State employees who work 37.5 hours a week. The program manager said it was awkward to have employees in the same office doing the same type of work, but working different total hours.

Judging from union activity, shorter workweeks are almost inevitable in the private sector. A 1975 Bureau of Labor Statistics study of major private sector collective bargaining agreements, those covering 1,000 or more employees, showed that 11 percent had agreements for scheduled workweeks of less than 40 hours. Aside from outright reductions in the scheduled workweeks, unions have found other means of reducing time at work. For example, contracts signed in 1976 gave members of the United Auto Workers 12 extra days off with pay, bringing the total to 40. If that time were spread evenly over the year, union members would be close to realizing a 4-day 32-hour week at the same pay as the 40-hour rate.

Currently there is a union drive to reduce the 40-hour workweek. In April 1978 the All Unions Committee to Shorten the Workweek, composed of 700 union leaders, met in Detroit. This membership agreed that the fastest way to cut unemployment was to cut the workweek without cutting pay. Federal employee unions have not aggressively pursued a shorter workweek because of the potential impact on nonnegotiable items, such as pay and benefits. But House bill 11784, introduced in the 95th Congress, would affect the workweek of both private and Federal employees. The bill, reintroduced in the 96th Congress as H.R. 1784, would immediately cut the workweek to 37.5 hours and eventually to 35 hours by mandating double overtime pay for longer hours.

The argument that reducing the workweek would decrease unemployment is based on the premise that limiting everyone that has a job to fewer hours will force employers to hire more people. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) officials felt that a shorter workweek would increase the number of employees needed. Similarly the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 attempted to combat unemployment by reducing the number of hours employees could work without being paid overtime. This was to prompt businesses to add more people rather than increase present employees' hours.

According to some research, a shortened workweek would not decrease unemployment. This is a complex relationship and many other factors, such as those discussed below, are said to affect unemployment rates.

--Employees who find themselves with more time available due to a shorter workweek could obtain second jobs and block other persons from employment. (However, one review of second jobs revealed that the kinds of jobs held by "moonlighters" did not fit the job desires and skills of the unemployed. In addition, recent studies suggest that today's workers are more interested in leisure time than second jobs.)

--Unemployment would fall only when it became more profitable to hire a new employee. If it cost more to hire and train a new employee, a shorter workweek would increase ultimate output prices. Demand would drop as the price of products increased; this in turn would reduce the total manpower requirement.

--A shorter workweek would not necessarily increase employment if there was an accompanying increase in productivity. Unions recognize this, and some are supporting shorter workweeks merely to ensure retention of current employment rates.

A shorter workweek might increase productivity. Productivity could be increased by having the current work force produce more or by continuing the current level of service in less time or with fewer people. In the past, general reductions in hours of work have been accompanied by substantial growth in output per man-hour. Studies of worker fatigue made during World War II showed that both marginal productivity and overall efficiency suffered as a result of long working hours.

In addition, some studies suggest that time may be interchangeable with money as an incentive to perform. For example, in one study, laboratory technicians were given time off in exchange for reductions in the number of daily unfilled requests for blood samples. Performance improved; that is, more requests for blood samples were filled each day.

A shorter workweek could be categorized as a "fringe benefit." As such, it may be a subject for negotiation which could directly affect productivity.

CONCLUSIONS

The Government needs to explore ways to reduce personnel costs and increase worker productivity. Although changes in existing personnel controls may contribute to this endeavor, insufficient research has been conducted to prove or disprove the effects of the different types of control on productivity, other aspects of personnel management, and employees. Thus controlled experiments are needed to properly explore the feasibility and ramifications of such a change.

In considering whether to shorten the workweek, attention should be given to how this would affect productivity. Therefore, any plan to shorten the Federal workweek should insure that there would be either equal or greater levels of output or tradeoffs in fringe benefits or pay increases. In a report to the Congress on compensation comparability, we recommended that OMB and CSC develop a policy of total compensation comparability for determining Federal employees' pay and benefits. Officials at OMB said they would view a shorter workweek as part of a total comparability package--as a tradeoff for other benefits.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE DIRECTOR, OPM

We recommend that the Director, as one of the research and demonstration projects authorized in the Civil Service Reform Act, design an experiment to test (1) the use of performance measures rather than hours at the workplace as the basis on which personnel are paid and (2) the effects of tight versus lenient controls.

AGENCY AND UNION COMMENTS

OPM is studying the feasibility of performing a project to experiment with the concept of salary based on job performance, without regard to hours worked. The National Federation of Federal Employees supports this proposal. The project, as OPM notes, would be complicated by the necessity to avoid waiving annual and sick leave regulations. These regulations, which provide for accumulating and charging leave on the basis of hours worked, were not waived for experimentation purposes in the Civil Service Reform Act.

OPM is also considering a comprehensive study of issues concerning work scheduling--relating to such problems as pay administration, productivity, effective use of resources,

negotiability issues, uncompensated overtime, use of compensatory time, unique occupational work environments, and the restrictiveness of present law and regulations.

On the length of the workweek issue, the National Federation of Federal Employees believes a shorter workweek is needed in the current comparability system but opposes the total compensation comparability system in the form currently proposed by the administration. The Federation believes the current proposal is a move for the President to unilaterally set all conditions of work. As of late April 1979, the administration had not completed work on this proposal.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE CONGRESS

We recommend that the Congress, in considering the bill to reduce the workweek, relate Federal work-hour decreases to changes in overall productivity or other measures of performance or fringe benefit tradeoffs under a total compensation comparability system. To do this better data from work measurement, productivity, and cost systems would be needed. In addition, the Congress would need to enact a total compensation comparability policy.

Although the past three decades have seen many changes in the work environment and work force, the work-hour policies of title 5 of the United States Code have changed little. The Federal Employees Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules Act of 1978 was one effort to temporarily suspend some of the rigidities in title 5. Although additional changes may not be warranted now, the results of the research and demonstration project recommended above should be used to evaluate the need for changes in the legislation.

A COMPARISON OF WORK-HOUR POLICIES AND
PRACTICES AT 29 SITES VISITED

We selected agencies and regions to cover the largest number of Federal civilian employees in a geographical cross section within a reasonable time. The 7 largest agencies had 1.5 million employees, or 70 percent of all executive branch civilian employees in the United States. (See app. II for a breakdown of employees by agency.)

We did fieldwork in Washington, D.C. (headquarters for each agency), and at sites in or near Los Angeles, New York City, Chicago, and Atlanta. Twenty-nine sites were chosen to get a mix of urban and rural environments, types of employees (white collar and blue collar), and types of work-hour schedules (fixed and flexible). We interviewed 238 personnel officers, union representatives, and managers, usually GS-13's and above, who supervised 3 or more employees; to cover a variety of job categories, we selected managers from different work units.

We also observed employee practices, to the extent feasible, to substantiate information obtained through interviews. We ate lunch in Government cafeterias and nearby eating facilities to test the adequacy of official lunchbreaks. We noted whether employees drank coffee at their desks, as many managers said they did, or instead left the offices for refreshments. We also visited cafeterias and snackbars during the day to observe lunch/restbreak patterns. Also we observed employee parking lots, noting traffic patterns after the scheduled starting times and before quitting times.

The following is a summary of the onsite work.

A COMPARISON OF WORK-HOUR POLICIES
AND PRACTICES AT 29 SITES VISITED

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Site</u>	<u>Approximate number of employees (note a)</u>	<u>Type of workday</u>	<u>Technique for monitoring arrival and departure</u>	<u>Breaks policy</u>	<u>Breaks practice</u>	<u>Lunch policy</u>	<u>Lunch practice</u>	<u>Technique for monitoring breaks and lunch</u>
Agriculture	Agricultural Research Service Peoria, Illinois	400	Fixed schedule	Supervisory observation	Two 15-minute breaks allowed; one in the morn- ing and one in the afternoon	Most adhere to policy	30 minutes	Most adhere to policy	Supervisory observation
	Economics, Statistics and Cooperative Service Washington, D.C.	2,500	Alternative fixed sched- ules; 15- minute daily deviations	Sign-in/ sign-out sheets	No written policy; unspecified breaks allowed	Most don't take breaks; most drink coffee at their desks	30 minutes	Most take 30-minutes to 1 hour	Supervisory observation
	Forest Service Field Office Pasadena, California (note b)	100	Alternative fixed schedules	Supervisory and peer observation	No written policy; two 15-minute breaks allowed	Most don't take breaks; most drink coffee at desks	30 minutes	Most adhere to policy	Supervisory and peer observation
	Office of Investigation New York City, New York	50	Fixed schedule	Supervisory observation and daily time reports	Two 15-minute breaks per day	Most drink coffee at desks	30 minutes	Most adhere to policy	Supervisory observation

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Site</u>	<u>Approximate number of employees (note a)</u>	<u>Type of workday</u>	<u>Technique for monitoring arrival and departure</u>	<u>Breaks policy</u>	<u>Breaks practice</u>	<u>Lunch policy</u>	<u>Lunch practice</u>	<u>Technique for monitoring breaks and lunch</u>
Air Force	Griffiss A.F.B. Rome, New York								
	1. Rome Air Development and Northern Communications Area	1,500	Daily choice of times	Supervisory observation and honor system	Two 15-minute breaks per day	Most don't take breaks; most drink coffee at desks	Flexible lunch band 1/2 to 2 hrs.	Most adhere to policy	Supervisory observation and honor system
	2. Strategic Air Command	1,400	Fixed schedule	Supervisory observation	Rest periods not to exceed 15-minutes during each half of shift	Most don't take breaks	45 minutes	Most adhere to policy	Supervisory observation and honor system
	Headquarters Washington, D.C.	2,800	Fixed schedule	Supervisory observation	Rest periods not to exceed 15-minutes during each 4 hours of continuous work	Blue-collar take breaks; white-collar drink coffee at desks	30 minutes	Most take at least 40 minutes	Peer observation
	Space and Missile Systems Organization Los Angeles, Calif.	2,500	Fixed schedule	Supervisory observation	No written policy; unspecified breaks allowed	Most adhere to unwritten policy	45 minutes	Most adhere to policy	Supervisory observation
Air Force	Corps of Engineers Los Angeles, Calif.	600	Daily choice of times	Supervisory observation and sign-in/sign-out sheets	One 15-minute break each 4 hours of continuous work	Most adhere to policy	Flexible band 1/2 hr. to 2 hrs.	Most adhere to policy	Supervisory observation and sign-in/sign-out sheets for lunch

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Site</u>	<u>Approximate number of employees (note a)</u>	<u>Type of workday</u>	<u>Technique for monitoring arrival and departure</u>	<u>Breaks policy</u>	<u>Breaks practice</u>	<u>Lunch policy</u>	<u>Lunch practice</u>	<u>Technique for monitoring breaks and lunch</u>
Army (continued)	Fort McPherson, Georgia								
	1. Garrison	800	Fixed schedule	Supervisory observation	Rest breaks not to exceed 15 minutes during each 4 hours worked	Most don't take breaks; most drink coffee at desks	45 minutes	Most adhere to policy	Supervisory observation
	2. FORSCOM	1,000	Biweekly choice of time	Supervisory and peer observation and periodic desk checks	Rest breaks not to exceed 15 minutes during each 4 hours worked	Most don't take breaks; most drink coffee at desks	Flexible band 1/2 hr. to 2 hrs.	Most adhere to policy	Supervisory and peer observation
	Military Traffic Command Arlington, Virginia	600	Biweekly choice of time	Supervisory observation and bi-weekly time report	Two 15-minute breaks allowed	Most don't take breaks; some drink coffee at desks	Flexible band 1/2 hr. to 2 hrs.	Most adhere to policy	Supervisory observation
	Headquarters, Armament Materiel Readiness Comm. Rock Island, Illinois	3,700	Daily choice of times	Supervisory observation or sign-in/sign-out sheets	Two 10-minute breaks allowed; one in the morning and one in the afternoon	Most don't take breaks; most drink coffee at desks	Flexible band 1/2 hr. to 1 hr.	Most adhere to policy	Supervisory observation
Defense Contract Administration Services Region	Los Angeles, Calif.	800	Fixed schedule	Supervisory observation	Break or breaks not to exceed 20 minutes total	Most adhere to policy	30 minutes	Most adhere to policy	Supervisory observation

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Site</u>	<u>Approximate number of employees (note a)</u>	<u>Type of workday</u>	<u>Technique for monitoring arrival and departure</u>	<u>Breaks policy</u>	<u>Breaks practice</u>	<u>Lunch policy</u>	<u>Lunch practice</u>	<u>Technique for monitoring breaks and lunch</u>
HEW	Food and Drug Admin. Los Angeles, Calif. (note b)	100	Fixed schedule; or alternative fixed schedules	Supervisory observation	No written policy; two 15-minute breaks allowed	Most adhere to unwritten policy	30 minutes	Most take longer	Supervisory observation
	Office of Human Development Services Washington, D.C.	1,200	Fixed schedules	Supervisory observation	No written policy; unspecified breaks allowed	Most don't take breaks; most drink coffee at desks	30 minutes	Most take 45 minutes or 1 hour	Supervisory observation
	Regional Office Atlanta, Georgia	1,700	Daily choice of times	Sign-in/sign-out sheets and unannounced desk checks	No written policy; two 15-minute breaks are allowed	Most don't take breaks; most drink coffee at desks	30 minutes	Most take 45 minutes or 1 hour	Supervisory observation
	Regional Office Chicago, Illinois	1,200	Daily choice of times	Sign-in/sign-out sheets	Two 15-minute breaks; one in the morning and one in the afternoon	Most employees don't take breaks	Flexible band 1/2 hr. to 1 hr.	Most take at least 45 minutes	Supervisory observation
	Social Security Admin. Great Lakes Program Service Center Chicago, Illinois (note b)	2,700	Daily choice of times	Mechanical time accumulator and peer observation	No written policy; specified breaks allowed	One 15-minute break in a.m. and one 10-min. break in afternoon	30 minutes	Most adhere to policy	Supervisory observation
	Regional Office New York, New York	600	Fixed schedule	Supervisory observation	Two 15-minute breaks per day allowed	Most employees don't take breaks	30 minutes	Most take 60 minutes	Supervisory observation

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Site</u>	<u>Approximate number of employees (note a)</u>	<u>Type of workday</u>	<u>Technique for monitoring arrival and departure</u>	<u>Breaks policy</u>	<u>Breaks practice</u>	<u>Lunch policy</u>	<u>Lunch practice</u>	<u>Technique for monitoring breaks and lunch</u>
Navy	Naval Administrative Command Great Lakes, Illinois	400	Daily choice of time	Time and attendance sheets and supervisory observation	Two 10-minute breaks allowed, one in the morning and one in the afternoon	Most adhere to policy	Flexible band 1/2 hr. to 2 hrs.	Most adhere to policy	Supervisory observation
	Long Beach Naval Shipyard Long Beach, Calif.	7,500	Fixed schedule	Time clock or supervisory observation	No written policy; unspecified breaks allowed	Most employees drink coffee at worksite	30 minutes	Most adhere to policy	Supervisory observation
	Naval Air Systems Command Crystal City, Virginia	2,600	Choice of two fixed schedules	Supervisory observation or sign-in/sign-out sheets	No written policy; unspecified breaks allowed	Most don't take breaks; most drink coffee at desks	30 minutes	Most take 45-60 minutes	Supervisory observation or sign-in/sign-out sheets for lunch
Treasury	Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Chicago, Illinois								
	1. Regulatory Enforcement	60	Daily choice of times	Sign-in/sign-out sheets and supervisory observation	Two 15-minute breaks allowed	Most adhere to policy	Flexible band: 1/2 hr. to 1 1/2 hrs.	Most adhere to policy	Sign-in/sign-out sheets and supervisory observation (note c)
	2. Administration	35	Daily choice of times	Sign-in/sign-out sheets and supervisory observation	Two 15-minute breaks allowed	Most employees don't take breaks	Flexible band: 1/2 hr. to 2 hrs.	Most adhere to policy	Supervisory observation and sign-in/sign-out sheets for lunch

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Site</u>	<u>Approximate number of employees (note a)</u>	<u>Type of workday</u>	<u>Technique for monitoring arrival and departure</u>	<u>Breaks policy</u>	<u>Breaks practice</u>	<u>Lunch policy</u>	<u>Lunch practice</u>	<u>Technique for monitoring breaks and lunch</u>
Treasury (continued)	Bureau of Government Financial Operations Washington, D.C.	1,500	Daily choice of times	Sign-in/sign-out sheets and supervisory observation	No written policy; two 10-minute breaks allowed	Most don't take breaks; most drink coffee at desks	30 minutes	Most take at least 45 minutes (note c)	Supervisory observation
	U.S. Customs Service Los Angeles, Calif.	200	Alternative fixed schedules	Supervisory observation	Two 15-minute breaks allowed	Most adhere to policy	30 minutes	Most adhere to policy	Supervisory observation
	Internal Revenue Service Chicago, Illinois	1,400	Fixed schedule	Supervisory observation	No written policy; two 15-minute breaks allowed	Most adhere to unwritten policy	30 minutes	Most take at least 45 minutes to 1 hour	Supervisory observation
	Internal Revenue Service, Brookhaven Serv. Centr. Holtsville, N.Y.	1,700	Fixed schedule	Supervisory observation	Two 15-minute rest breaks allowed	Most adhere to policy	30 minutes	Most adhere to policy	Supervisory observation
Veterans Administration	Central Office Washington, D.C.	4,000	Fixed schedule	Supervisory and timekeeper observation	Two 15-minute breaks each 8 hours (note d)	Most don't take breaks; most drink coffee at desks	30 minutes	Most take 45 minutes	Supervisory observation
	Regional Office Los Angeles, Calif.	1,100	Fixed schedule	Supervisory observation	One 10-minute break within each 4 hours worked	Most adhere to policy	30 minutes	Most adhere to policy	Supervisory observation

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Site</u>	<u>Approximate number of employees (note a)</u>	<u>Type of workday</u>	<u>Technique for monitoring arrival and departure</u>	<u>Breaks policy</u>	<u>Breaks practice</u>	<u>Lunch policy</u>	<u>Lunch practice</u>	<u>Technique for monitoring breaks and lunch</u>
Veterans Administration (continued)	Regional Office New York, New York	800	Fixed schedule	Supervisory observation	One 10-minute break each 4 hours of continuous work	Most adhere to policy	30 minutes	Most take 35 or 40 minutes	Supervisory observation and sign-in/sign-out sheets in some areas
	VA Hospital Chicago, Illinois	2,200	Fixed schedules	Supervisory observation	Two 10-minute coffeekbreaks allowed	Most adhere to policy	30 minutes	Most adhere to policy	Supervisory observation

a/Represents employees at locations visited.

b/Limited work performed at these sites.

c/If the lunch period is taken at a time other than regularly scheduled or exceeds 30 minutes.

d/Management generally only allows two 10-minute breaks each 8 hours.

e/New union agreement clarifies flexible lunch policy with enforced extensions of the workday, according to Treasury's comments on a draft of this report.

QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY METHODOLOGY

We sent questionnaires to about 3,500 employees randomly sampled from the seven largest Federal agencies. These agencies encompassed about 70 percent of all civilian employees in the executive branch. We selected the agencies on size alone; we had no reason to believe the agencies or their employees were substantially different from other Federal agencies in their work-hour policies and practices.

We defined the sample universe as all full-time civilian employees stationed in the 50 States and the District of Columbia. A systematic sampling method with a random start was used to draw each sample. The table below shows the universe and the number of employees sampled by agency.

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Employees</u> (<u>note a</u>)	<u>Number</u> <u>surveyed</u>
Agriculture	114,427	507
Air Force	243,718	500
Army	317,057	500
HEW	158,633	506
Navy	311,635	500
Treasury	136,675	496
VA	<u>229,375</u>	<u>500</u>
Total	<u>b/1,511,520</u>	<u>3,509</u>

a/As of February 1978.

b/Total executive branch employment, excluding the Postal Service, was 2,146,355 in February 1978; thus these 7 agencies made up 70.4 percent of the total.

We selected this size sample to project the questionnaire results at the 95-percent confidence level with 5-percent error rate.

A postcard containing a control number was mailed with each questionnaire. The recipients were asked to mail the postcards back separately on completion of the questionnaires. This provided anonymity and allowed us to distinguish between respondents and nonrespondents for followup mailings.

Questionnaire results may always be biased for two reasons.

First, a questionnaire may not elicit the responses it was intended to gather. To try to ensure against this, we tested a draft of the questionnaire on about 10 employees in each of the 7 agencies before the first mailing--a procedure known as pretesting. As a result of the pretests, we made some structural changes, such as adding branching instructions and making some minor changes to the method of response. Interviews with the employees who participated in the pretest indicated that the questionnaire would gather the information desired. Although most of the pretest participants were in metropolitan Washington, we believed they were varied enough in occupation, pay grade, pay plan, sex, race, age, and work schedule to conclude that the pretest had eliminated any major faults in the draft questionnaire.

The second cause of bias is the difference, if any, between the group which responded and the group which did not respond. The table below shows response rates as well as undeliverable rates by agency. Undeliverable questionnaires usually are caused by the timelag between drawing the sample and delivery of the questionnaire. This timelag results in incorrect mailing information due to retirements, address changes, and deaths. The return rates for this questionnaire are all above 80 percent. Also the undeliverable rates are typical of other GAO surveys. Therefore, we believe there is little, if any, bias in questionnaire results attributable to the response rate.

Survey Responses

	<u>Number in sample</u>	<u>Undeliverable</u>		<u>Returned</u>	
		<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent of</u>
		<u>of sample</u>		<u>deliverable</u>	
Agriculture	507	26	5.1	422	87.7
Air Force	500	26	5.2	448	94.5
Army	500	30	6.0	425	90.4
HEW	506	23	4.5	396	81.9
Navy	500	34	6.8	402	86.2
Treasury	496	42	8.5	419	92.2
VA	500	23	4.6	428	89.7
Unknown (note a)	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>-</u>
Total	<u>3,509</u>	<u>204</u>	5.8	<u>2,954</u>	89.2

a/Respondents did not answer question.

However, two problems which occurred during sampling might have slightly biased the list of respondents.

First, in drawing samples for this study, 4 agencies stopped at exactly 500 names. Therefore, names at the end of their personnel files had no chance of being selected for our sample. On the basis of the total numbers of employees in each of these agencies, the sample drawn would have been increased by no more than 3 or 4 names each, or a total of 15 names had sampling continued.

Second, on parts of the personnel list provided by the Treasury Department, part-time employees were included. However, only three respondents were identified as part-time employees. Both these errors amount to less than 1 percent of the total sample and would have had an insignificant effect on the results.

QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

We designed the questionnaire to overcome several problems thought to be inherent in this type of survey.

To overcome what we believed would be a natural tendency to resist giving negative information about oneself, questions were developed and arranged to give the respondent the opportunity to first give very positive work habit information and to follow any negative responses about unofficial absences with reasons for them and ways such absences may have been made up. An example of this sequence is on pp. 68-69. Also, to encourage more honest answers, we asked respondents not to give their names or other forms of identification.

Another potential problem concerned the likelihood that individuals would not be able to recall their specific activities for a very long period. Consequently, we used "the last 2 weeks" as a frame of reference for providing work-hour information. To account for unusual or abnormal 2-week periods, we gave respondents the opportunity to revise the 2-week data to reflect more normal patterns. We used this information to construct typical work-hour practices.

ANALYSIS

We used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences to analyze the responses. The first set of analyses included descriptive statistics on each response item on the questionnaire. Examples of the types of statistics generated are totals, maximums, minimums, averages, and percentages. Answers to many questions were cross-tabulated to determine the relationship, if any, between these answers. In some instances, the sample was divided into subgroups, such as by agency, and statistics for each subgroup were computed and compared.

Discriminant analysis, which is similar to regression analysis, was also used. Discriminant analysis distinguishes between two or more groups of respondents. In our study, the groups were constructed on the basis of their workweeks expressed in hours. Only respondents working 5-day 40-hour weeks were included. The number of hours in the workweek was set at 40 and then raised upward and lowered by the amounts of time the respondent was late or early to work, left early, worked late, was not compensated for overtime, and took a long or short lunchbreak. Next the sample was divided into three groups of respondents--those who worked under 40 hours, those who worked about 40 hours, and those who worked over 40 hours. The discriminant analysis attempted to distinguish between these groups on the basis of characteristics of the respondents and their work environments.

The analysis results are summarized throughout the report and in appendixes III and IV.

For many questions some respondents did not provide answers or answered incorrectly. Consequently, we omitted cases with blank or incorrect answers to a particular question from all analyses involving that question. In many cases responses which did not follow the logic of the questionnaire were omitted from analysis. These were mainly cases in which the respondents did not follow the branching instructions. Because of these omissions, the number of responses analyzed varied from question to question. The number of valid responses is noted beside each question on the questionnaire in appendix III.

QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

The following survey was an integral part of our review. The "n" associated with each response represents the number of people who properly answered the question. The percent of responses may not always equal 100 because

--respondents were allowed to circle more than one answer,

--improper multiple responses were excluded, or

--insignificant answers in the "other" category were excluded. (This refers to cases when the number of responses was less than 1 percent of the total population.)

INSTRUCTIONS

Few employees receiving this questionnaire will need to answer all of the questions. To bypass questions not applicable to you, a system of branches is built into the questionnaire. Thus, you will see statements "GO TO QUESTION __," indicating which Question you should answer next.

Most of the questions can be answered by circling the number printed beside the appropriate answer. These numbers are for keypunching purposes only. For example:

1
2
 3

Occasionally, you may want to provide a written replv. Space is provided for that at certain questions and on the last page of the questionnaire. Additionally, if you have comments on any of the questions or related points not covered here, please type or print them on a separate sheet of paper.

BACKGROUND

Questions 1 through 9 request information about your job or position.

1. What is the title of your job or position?

See Attachment I

2. Circle the number beside the statement which best describes the kind of job you have. n=2,794

4.8% I have no freedom at all to organize my work as I want to.

11.4% I have little freedom to organize my work as I want to.

60.5% I am fairly free to organize my work as I want.

23.3% I am completely free to organize my work as I want.

3. Which pay schedule or pay plan covers your position? n=2,882

- 76.6% General Schedule (GS)
- 20.2% Wage Board
- 1.9% V.A. Nurses (VN)
- 1.2% Other (Please specify) _____

4. What is your current grade and step?

Grade _____ Step _____

See Attachment I.

5. With which of the following departments are you employed? n=2,942

- 14.3% Agriculture
- 14.4% Army
- 15.2% Air Force
- 13.7% Navy/Marine Corps
- 13.4% Health, Education, and Welfare
- 14.2% Treasury
- 14.5% Veterans Administration

6. Where do you work? n=2,923

- 10.5% Metropolitan Washington, D.C. (including suburban Maryland and Virginia)
- 15.2% NORTHEAST (Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware)
- 25.1% SOUTH (Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina)
- 13.7% NORTH CENTRAL (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan)
- 11.8% PLAINS and NORTHWEST (Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Utah, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Washington)
- 22.3% SOUTHWEST (California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma)

1.3% ALASKA, Hawaii

7. Which of the following best describes the city or metropolitan area in which you work? n=2,857

- 44.3% Large city-population over 100,000
- 10.2% Suburb of large city
- 12.2% City with population over 50,000 to 100,000
- 13.0% City with population 25,000 to 50,000
- 15.9% City or town with population less than 25,000
- 4.5% Other (Please specify.) _____

8. About how many years have you worked

n=2,924 In the Federal government? 14 years

n=2,645 In your current department? 8 years

n=2,601 Directly for your immediate supervisor? 3 years

POLICY

The next questions ask for information about the official policy in your work unit. In answering, use these definitions:

official-backed up by law, regulation, or written policy

supervisor-the person you report to directly today

work unit-if you supervise a group of employees, consider you and your group to be the work unit. If you do not supervise, consider your work unit to be all employees who report to the same supervisor.

work place-any and all buildings/locations at which you may work during a normal work day

1. How long are employees in your work unit required to work each day excluding lunch breaks? n=2,945

1.8% Hours are flexible-no daily limit is set

3.6% Less than 8 hours a day

90.1% 8 hours a day

4.3% More than 8 hours a day

2. Does the number of days you are required to work each week vary? n=2,862

7.5% Yes (GO TO QUESTION 4.)

92.5% No (CONTINUE)

3. How many days are you required to work each week?

_____ days See Attachment II

4. What is the maximum amount of time employees in your work unit are officially allowed for a lunch break? n=2,930

3.8% 20 minutes or less

63.0% 30 minutes

16.8% 45 minutes

11.8% 60 minutes

4.0% Other (Please specify.) _____ minutes

0.5% Don't know

Also See Attachment II

5. Are you required to take your lunch break at the same time each day? n=2,933

51.8% Yes 48.1% No

6. Are you allowed to leave your work place during the lunch break? n=2,932

94.5% Yes 5.5% No

7. Which of the following describes rest breaks in your work unit? (For this questionnaire, these breaks are brief periods when you can actually stop working, while you relax, drink a beverage, etc. Do not include visits to the restroom.) n=2,879

5.2% Not allowed to take breaks (GO TO QUESTION 12.)

53.1% Breaks are official (backed up by written policy)

34.4% Breaks are unofficial (not backed up by written policy but traditionally allowed)

6.2% Don't know (GO TO QUESTION 12.)

8. On the average, how many coffee or rest breaks are allowed in your work unit in one day? (Do not count lunch.)

_____ breaks See Attachment II

9. Circle the best estimate of total minutes allowed in one day for breaks (e.g. two breaks of 15 minutes each would total 30 minutes):

5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 over 60

See Attachment II

10. Are you required to take coffee or rest breaks at the same time each day? n=2,495

34.7% Yes 65.2% No

11. Are you allowed to leave your work place during coffee or rest breaks? (Your work place is defined as any and all buildings or locations at which you may work during a normal day.) n=2,472

63.7% Yes 36.3% No

12. What is the minimum amount of annual leave which you can charge at one time? n=2,915

9.5% 15 minutes

4.8% 30 minutes

0.2% 45 minutes

72.0% 60 minutes

2.2% Other (Please specify.) _____ minutes

11.3% Don't know

(Also See Attachment II)

13. In each of the following areas, does a union agreement set policy in your work unit:

	Yes	No	Don't know
2,805 starting and quitting times?	15.3%	61.6%	23.1%
2,750 coffee or rest breaks?	16.3%	59.5%	24.6%
2,747 lunch breaks?	15.5%	61.2%	23.3%

SCHEDULED WORKING HOURS

The next questions ask about your starting and quitting times at work.

- In general, how satisfied are you with your starting and quitting times? n=2,879
 - 36.7% Very satisfied
 - 51.7% Satisfied
 - 9.3% Dissatisfied
 - 2.3% Very dissatisfied
- Which of the following best describes the way your starting and quitting times are set? n=2,866
 - 8.2% I chose the times from a list of alternatives (GO TO QUESTION 4.)
 - 5.8% My times are different each day-- they start when I arrive (GO TO QUESTION 18.)
 - 75.0% Times for all employees are set by the agency, office, or work unit
 - 5.5% Times are set by another agency or office which sets hours for the buildings in which I work
 - 5.5% Other (Please specify.) _____
See Attachment III
- In your opinion, are your prescribed starting and quitting times necessary for your unit's work to be completed effectively? n=2,404
 - 61.9% Yes
 - 32.1% No
 - 6.0% Don't know

4. Circle the time which is closest to the time you are scheduled to start work each day:

- 7:00 7:15 7:30 7:45
- 8:00 8:15 8:30 8:45
- 9:00 9:15 9:30 9:45

Other (Please specify.) See Attachment III

5. Circle the time which is closest to the time you are scheduled to quit work each day:

- 3:00 3:15 3:30 3:45
- 4:00 4:15 4:30 4:45
- 5:00 5:15 5:30 5:45

Other (Please specify.) See Attachment III

6. In the last 2 weeks, how many days did you begin work earlier than your scheduled starting time? n=2,655

- 63.6% none (GO TO QUESTION 7.)
- 10.8% 1-2 days
- 11.5% 3-5 days
- 3.6% 6-9 days
- 10.4% every day

On the average, how much earlier did you begin work on these days? n=956

_____ hours _____ 25 minutes

7. Were your actual starting times during these 2 weeks typical? n=2,370

- 93.4% Yes (GO TO QUESTION 8.)
- 6.6% No (CONTINUE)

How many days during a 2-week period would you normally begin work early?

_____ days See Attachment III

How much earlier would you normally begin?

_____ hours _____ minutes

8. In the last 2 weeks, how many days did you arrive at work after your scheduled starting time? n=2,644

- 85.6% none (GO TO QUESTION 9.)
- 11.6% 1-2 days
- 1.9% 3-5 days
- 0.3% 6-9 days
- 0.5% every day

On the average, how much later did you arrive at work on these days? n=373

_____ hours _____ 20 minutes

APPENDIX III

9. Were your actual starting times during these 2 weeks typical? n=2,567
- 94.4% Yes (GO TO QUESTION 10.)
5.5% No (CONTINUE)
- How many days during a 2-week period would you normally arrive late to work?
_____ days See Attachment III
- How much later would you normally arrive at work?
_____ hours _____ minutes
10. For various reasons which they often cannot control, employees may have difficulty getting to work at their scheduled time. To put your answers to these questions in perspective, the last time you were late arriving to work what was the reason? (Circle all that apply.) n=2,700
- 31.7% Never late to work (GO TO QUESTION 12.)
 - 23.2% Bad weather
 - 22.1% Congested traffic
 - 4.7% Public transportation
 - 4.6% Car pool delayed
 - 9.7% Illness in family or medical appointment
 - 1.4% Difficulty in getting someone to care for children
 - 0.4% Knew that I would not have any work when I got there
 - 5.9% Taking care of personal errand
 - 2.7% Taking care of business-related errand
 - 13.8% Other (Please specify.) _____
See Attachment III
11. The last time you were late to work, did you charge leave or make up the time in some other way? n=1,702
- 36.1% No (GO TO QUESTION 12.)
63.8% Yes (CONTINUE)
- How did you make up the time? (Circle all that apply.) n=1,068
- 14.7% Took less time for lunch
 - 28.0% Left work later than scheduled
 - 3.7% Took work home with me
 - 50.5% Charged leave
 - 7.8% Came in early another day
 - 13.0% Skipped break
 - 5.8% Other (Please specify.) _____

APPENDIX III

12. In the last 2 weeks, how many days did you work later than your scheduled quitting time? n=2,646
- 64.1% none (GO TO QUESTION 13.)
 - 17.4% 1-2 days
 - 10.7% 3-5 days
 - 4.9% 6-9 days
 - 3.0% every day
- On the average, how much extra time did you work later than your scheduled quitting time? n=898
- _____ 1 hours _____ 4 minutes
13. Were your actual quitting times during these 2 weeks typical? n=2,505
- 91.5% Yes (GO TO QUESTION 14.)
8.5% No (CONTINUE)
- How many days during a 2-week period would you normally work late?
_____ days See Attachment III
- How much extra time would you normally work?
_____ hours _____ minutes
14. In the last two weeks, how many days did you leave work earlier than your scheduled quitting time? n=2,652
- 84.8% none (GO TO QUESTION 15.)
 - 13.6% 1-2 days
 - 1.2% 3-5 days
 - 0.2% 6-9 days
 - 0.3% every day
- On the average, how much earlier did you leave work on these days? n=380
- _____ 1 hours _____ 22 minutes
15. Were your actual quitting times during these 2 weeks typical? n=2,501
- 91.8% Yes (GO TO QUESTION 16.)
8.2% No (CONTINUE)
- How many days during a 2-week period would you normally leave work early?
_____ days See Attachment III
- How much earlier would you normally leave?
_____ hours _____ minutes

16. Employees often cannot control their reasons for leaving work early. The last time you left work early, what was the reason? (Circle all that apply.) n=2,703
- 27.7% Never leave work early (GO TO QUESTION 18.)
 - 7.7% Run business-related errand on the way home
 - 15.8% Run personal errand on the way home
 - 32.7% Illness in family or medical appointment
 - 2.6% Arrived earlier than usual
 - 1.0% Necessary in order to use public transportation
 - 7.8% Bad weather
 - 1.7% Skipped lunch or break
 - 2.6% Did not feel like working any more
 - 1.7% Other carpool members left early
 - 2.4% No work left to do
 - 9.9% Other (Please specify.) _____
17. The last time you left work early, did you charge leave or make up the time in some other way? n=1,731
- 17.1% No (GO TO QUESTION 18.)
 - 82.8% Yes (CONTINUE)
- How did you make up the time? (Circle all that apply.) n=1,382
- 5.4% Took less time for lunch
 - 5.1% Came to work early on the same day I left early
 - 4.5% Came to work early on another day
 - 2.5% Took work home with me
 - 84.4% Charged leave
 - 5.1% Other (Please specify.) _____

18. How often do you take work home or work on weekends? n=2,881
- 51.4% Never (GO TO QUESTION 21.)
 - 20.3% Rarely
 - 18.4% Sometimes
 - 9.7% Frequently
- The last time that you took work home or worked on the weekend, how much extra time did you work that week? n=1,269
- 5 hours 12 minutes
- Is this about the number of hours you normally work at home and on the weekend? n=1,255
- 45.5% Yes (GO TO QUESTION 19.)
 - 54.4% No (CONTINUE)
- In a normal week how many hours would you work at home and on the weekend? n=685
- 1 hours 57 minutes
19. How are you usually compensated for extra work you do outside your normal workday? n=1,366
- 3.4% Never do extra work outside my normal day (GO TO QUESTION 21.)
 - 1.4% Paid at regular pay rate
 - 24.0% Paid at the overtime pay rate
 - 1.2% Allotted compensation leave (comp time) at time and a half
 - 7.4% Allotted compensation leave (comp time) at straight time
 - 54.3% Not compensated
 - 8.3% Other (Please specify.) _____
20. When you work longer than your normal workday, what is the usual reason? (Circle all that apply.) n=1,325
- 57.6% Required to meet deadlines
 - 25.7% Required because of understaffing
 - 7.4% Expected by my supervisor
 - 22.3% I enjoy my work
 - 2.6% To make up for time I took for a longer break or lunch
 - 27.7% Other (Please specify.) _____

See Attachment III

APPENDIX III

21. Which of the following best describes the way starting and quitting times are observed and controlled in your work unit? (Circle only one.) n=2,839
- 13.6% Sign-in and sign-out system
 - 13.6% Punch a time clock
 - 37.9% Reliance on supervisors to monitor
 - 32.0% Employees on the honor system
 - 0.8% Don't know
 - 7.1% Other (See Attachment III)
22. In your opinion, how does the length of your work day compare with that of employees in jobs similar to yours who work for private companies in your area? n=2,885
- 11.4% Mine is longer
 - 2.9% Mine is shorter
 - 69.3% About the same
 - 16.3% Don't know

LUNCH BREAKS

The next questions ask for information about lunch breaks and actual practices in your work unit.

1. Has the length of your work unit's official lunch break changed within the last 2 years? n=2,887
- 6.4% Yes
 - 85.3% No (GO TO QUESTION 3.)
 - 8.2% Don't know (GO TO QUESTION 3.)
2. How has the official lunch break changed for your work unit? (Circle all that apply.) n=180
- 38.3% The length has become shorter.
 - 15.0% The length has become longer.
 - 41.1% The length has become more flexible.
 - 13.3% Other (Please specify.) _____

APPENDIX III

3. Which of the following best describes the way your work unit observes and controls lunch breaks? (Circle only one.) n=2,800
- 2.0% Sign-in and sign-out system
 - 0.9% Punch a time clock
 - 40.4% Reliance on supervisors to monitor
 - 53.1% Employees on the honor system
 - 1.2% Don't know
 - 2.3% Other (See Attachment IV)
4. In some flexible working hour experiments, employees may vary the amount of time they take for lunch. For example, they might be able to take as little as 30 minutes or as much as 2 hours as long as they make up the time by coming in earlier or working later. Are you in an experiment like this? n=2,871
- 92.5% No (GO TO QUESTION 6.)
 - 7.5% Yes (CONTINUE)

5. In your flexible work hour structure, are you required to take some time for lunch? n=210
- 83.3% Yes
 - 13.8% No (GO TO QUESTION 19.)
 - 2.9% Don't know (GO TO QUESTION 19.)

What is the minimum amount of time you must take? n=164

30 minutes

(Consider this your official lunch in answering the questions which follow.)

6. Which of the following best describes the length of your work unit's official lunch break? n=2,786
- 48.2% Always adequate for the time needed to eat
 - 24.8% Often adequate for the time needed to eat
 - 16.9% Sometimes adequate for the time needed to eat
 - 9.9% Never adequate for the time needed to eat

APPENDIX III

7. Is your unofficial (traditionally allowed) lunch break longer than the official one?
 n=2,757
 22.2% Yes
 72.1% No (GO TO QUESTION 8.)
 5.5% Don't know (GO TO QUESTION 8.)

Which of the following best explains why your unofficial lunch break is longer? n=576

- 20.1% The agency believes the official time is inadequate.
- 11.6% Employees can add coffee or rest breaks to the official lunch time.
- 38.7% Lunches are not strictly monitored in the work unit.
- 24.6% Other (Please specify.) _____
See Attachment IV
- 4.9% Don't know

How many extra minutes do you get in the unofficial lunch break? n= 548

18 minutes

8. How do you usually spend your lunch break?
 (Circle only one.) n=2,822
- 45.3% Bring lunch from home - eat at workplace
 - 8.4% Bring lunch from home - eat away from workplace
 - 17.2% Buy lunch in workplace cafeteria
 - 17.6% Buy lunch in restaurant or facilities away from workplace
 - 1.8% Do not take lunch break - continue working
 - 3.4% Take lunch break - do not eat lunch
 - 6.3% Other

APPENDIX III

9. If your official lunch break was longer, which one of the following best describes how you would usually use the extra time? n=2,753

- 29.0% Eat a more leisurely lunch
- 12.5% Eat away from workplace
- 14.2% Take care of personal errands
- 17.6% Exercise or take a walk
- 7.6% Work
- 2.5% Change my scheduled workday
- 5.7% No change - already take a longer lunch
- 10.9% Other

10. Would you prefer extending the work day to provide a longer official lunch break?
 n=2,822
 10.6% Yes 89.4% No

11. In your opinion, how does your official lunch break compare with that of employees in similar jobs at other Federal agencies in your area?
 n=2,826

- 2.6% Mine is longer
- 15.1% Mine is shorter
- 59.4% About the same
- 22.8% Don't know

12. In your opinion, how does your official lunch break compare with that of employees in jobs similar to yours in private companies in your area? n=2,830

- 3.4% Mine is longer
- 34.9% Mine is shorter
- 34.8% About the same
- 25.6% Don't know

13. In the last 2 weeks, how many days did you take a shorter lunch break than officially allowed?
 n=2,799

- 65.6% none (GO TO QUESTION 14.)
- 18.0% 1-2 days
- 10.7% 3-5 days
- 2.7% 6-9 days
- 3.0% every day

On the average, how much less time did you take for lunch on these days? n= 881

_____ hours 20 minutes

APPENDIX III

14. Were the lengths of your lunch breaks during these 2 weeks typical? n=2,762

94.0% Yes (GO TO QUESTION 15.)
5.9% No (CONTINUE)

How many days during a 2-week period would you normally take less time than the official lunch?

_____ days See Attachment IV

How much less would you normally take?

_____ hours _____ minutes

15. In the last 2 weeks, how many days did you take a longer lunch break than officially allowed? n=2,799

71.7% none (GO TO QUESTION 16.)
17.0% 1-2 days
5.5% 3-5 days
2.1% 6-9 days
3.7% every day

On the average, how much longer did you take for lunch on these days? n=727

_____ hours _____ 20 minutes

16. Were the lengths of your lunch breaks during these 2 weeks typical? n=2,763

93.9% Yes (GO TO QUESTION 17.)
6.0% No

How many days during a 2-week period would you normally take longer than the official lunch?

_____ days See Attachment IV

How much longer would you normally take?

_____ hours _____ minutes

APPENDIX III

17. The last time you took longer than officially allowed for lunch, did you charge leave or make up the time in some way? n=2,738

47.7% Never take longer than officially allowed (GO TO QUESTION 19.)
23.5% No (GO TO QUESTION 18.)
28.7% Yes (CONTINUE)

How did you make up the time not worked due to exceeding the official lunch break?

n=812
16.0% Took less time for lunch another day

8.5% Came to work earlier than usual

20.8% Left work later than usual

2.7% Took work home with me

31.7% Charged leave

20.3% Other (Please specify.) _____

See Attachment IV

18. The last time you took longer than officially allowed for lunch, what was the reason? (Circle only one.) n=1,464

11.2% Knew that I could take a longer lunch unofficially

0.4% Delayed by public transportation

5.0% Slow service in facilities in building

12.4% Slow service in facilities outside building

8.0% Strict lunch hours traditionally are not observed in my work unit

10.0% Business discussed during lunch

0.5% Not enough work to do

13.7% Taking care of personal errands

1.7% Not anxious to get back to work

23.8% Attended special occasion - such as retirement or holiday luncheon

0.2% Employees in other agencies or in private firms get longer for lunch

1.8% Exercise/take a walk

11.2% Other (Please specify.) _____

19. In general, how satisfied are you with your lunch break arrangement? n=2,921

- 31.7% Very satisfied
- 54.2% Satisfied
- 11.3% Dissatisfied
- 2.7% Very dissatisfied

BREAKS

The next questions ask for information about rest or coffee breaks and actual practices in your work unit. Remember that for this questionnaire breaks are periods when you actually stop working in order to relax, drink a beverage, etc. Do not include visits to the restroom.

1. How often do you take a rest break or coffee break? n=2,895

- 14.4% Never (GO TO NEXT SECTION ON SUPERVISION.)
- 5.5% Once or twice a month
- 7.5% Once or twice a week
- 19.2% Once a day
- 53.3% More than once a day

2. How many minutes do you take in one average break? (Circle the appropriate number.)

5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 Over 40

See Attachment V

3. In your opinion, how do your breaks compare with those of employees in jobs similar to yours who work for other Federal agencies in your area? n=2,531

- 17.5% My total break time is shorter
- 1.1% My total break time is longer
- 51.7% About the same
- 29.6% Don't know

4. In your opinion, how do your breaks compare with those of employees in jobs similar to yours who work for private companies in your area? n=2,524

- 19.6% My total break time is shorter
- 2.6% My total break time is longer
- 38.9% About the same
- 39.0% Don't know

SUPERVISION

These questions refer to supervision.

1. Which of the following do most supervisors you know consider misuses of working hours? (Circle all that apply.) n=2,863

- 69.3% Arriving late
- 52.9% Leaving early
- 53.4% Long lunches
- 51.1% Long breaks
- 6.9% None of the above
- 13.1% Don't know

2. In the past 2 years, have you been subject to any of the following because of arriving late, leaving early, or taking long lunches or breaks? (Circle all that apply.) n=2,841

- 7.3% Private discussion with supervisor
- 3.9% Verbal reprimand
- 0.8% Required to take leave without pay
- 0.4% Withheld promotion
- 1.4% Affected performance rating
- 10.5% Required to take annual leave
- 1.6% Other (Please specify.) _____

80.5% None of the above

3. In the past 2 years, have you filed any of the following because of actions taken on late arrivals, early leaving, or long lunches or breaks? (Circle all that apply.) n=2,839

- 0.5% Grievance
- 0.8% Complaint
- 0.2% Appeal
- 0.6% Other (Please specify.) _____

98.2% None of the above

4. In your opinion, do some supervisors observe and control working hours more strictly than others? n=2,872

80.0% Yes 8.0% No 12.0% Don't know

5. In your opinion, are employees in similar work situations treated fairly by the ways supervisors control misuses of working hours? n=2,840

48.7% Yes 18.7% No 32.5% Don't know

6. Do supervisors ever overlook employees' tardiness, long lunches, or long breaks? n=2,852

64.8% Yes
17.9% No (GO TO QUESTION 8.)
17.2% Don't know (GO TO QUESTION 8.)

7. Which of the following do you think occurs when employees' tardiness, long lunches or long breaks are repeatedly overlooked? (Circle all that apply.) n=1,829
- 9.7% Higher employee morale
 - 47.8% Lower employee morale
 - 12.6% Increased productivity in the hours that are worked
 - 45.8% Decreased productivity
 - 8.0% Better working relationships among employees
 - 45.6% Worse working relationships among employees
 - 8.9% Better relations between labor and management
 - 30.3% Worse relations between labor and management
 - 6.6% Other (Please specify.) _____
 - 8.2% Nothing occurs
8. In some organizations, employees are frequently tardy or often take long lunches or long breaks. When this occurs, a number of solutions have been suggested. In your opinion, which of the following would be acceptable solutions? (Circle all that apply.) n=2,852
- 38.6% Flexitime (arriving at different times every day)
 - 29.2% Leave chargeable in smaller increments
 - 42.2% Better supervision
 - 8.5% Extending the scheduled workday to allow longer lunch or coffee breaks
 - 41.2% Reeducate employees as to hours required or performance expected
 - 6.4% Reduce the scheduled workday or workweek
 - 10.4% Sign-in and sign-out system
 - 13.2% Punch a time clock
 - 2.9% None of these
 - 4.6% Other (Please specify.) _____

If you are not a supervisor, or if you supervise less than 3 employees, STOP. You have completed the questionnaire. Please return it in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. Thank you for your cooperation.

If you directly or indirectly supervise 3 or more employees, answer the following questions which apply to you as a supervisor.

9. Indicate below how frequently employees you supervise fall in the listed categories.

Arrive at work after the scheduled starting time

Begin work before the scheduled starting time

Leave work before the scheduled quitting time

Work later than the scheduled quitting time

Take a longer lunch than officially allowed

Take a shorter lunch than officially allowed

Take longer or more frequent coffee or rest breaks than officially allowed

Take shorter or fewer coffee or rest breaks than officially allowed

Frequently
Sometimes
Seldom
Never
Don't know

See Attachment VI

10. Indicate for the categories below the extent to which you observe and try to control the behavior of the employees you supervise.

		Closely	Moderately	Loosely	Not at all
$\frac{n}{539}$	Arrival times	52.5%	36.5%	8.3%	2.6%
533	Quitting times	53.8%	37.1%	6.4%	2.6%
528	Length of lunch break	27.5%	52.3%	15.5%	4.7%
517	Length and number of coffee or rest breaks	25.9%	48.9%	15.5%	9.7%

APPENDIX III

11. To what extent does each of the following influence how you observe and control the starting times, quitting times, lunch breaks and coffee breaks of employees you supervise?

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never
$\frac{n}{532}$ Extent to which employees can be trusted to follow policy without close supervision	33.8%	53.2%	10.5%	2.3%
517 Extent to which deadlines for output are met without close supervision	29.9%	50.7%	14.3%	5.0%
499 Dispersed location of the employees supervised	15.0%	29.1%	27.1%	28.9%
494 Number of employees supervised	19.0%	20.6%	27.1%	33.0%
501 Differing work schedules of employees supervised	11.6%	18.6%	26.1%	43.3%
498 Extent to which other supervisors control the behavior of employees they supervise	8.8%	20.3%	32.3%	38.6%

12. To what extent does each of the following make it difficult to change behavior such as tardiness or long lunches and breaks? (Circle all that apply.)

	Very much	Somewhat	Not at all
$\frac{n}{473}$ Longstanding customs	35.7%	38.5%	26.4%
469 Manager's belief that such practices do not affect output	20.7%	35.6%	43.7%
484 Lack of incentive for the employee to change	29.8%	39.9%	30.2%
487 Type of work done by employees	24.2%	44.8%	31.0%
488 Lack of enforcement methods	29.3%	36.5%	34.0%
470 Union reaction	12.1%	23.8%	64.0%

APPENDIX III

13. If working hours were more strictly controlled in your work unit, how likely to occur is each of the following?

	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Not Likely
$\frac{n}{502}$ Lower morale	30.1%	28.9%	40.8%
435 Higher morale	16.3%	25.2%	58.5%
493 Increased productivity	19.3%	32.9%	47.9%
487 Decreased productivity	13.6%	22.6%	63.9%
480 Decrease in uncompensated time worked by employees	4.2%	25.0%	50.8%
475 Union reaction	14.7%	17.5%	67.8%

14. Do you have a way to measure the work of the employees you supervise? n=530

75.8% Yes
24.2% No (STOP - SEE NOTE BELOW.)

15. Are you actually using this technique to measure the work? n=300

91.7% Yes 8.3% No

16. Are these measures n=308

89.2% a good way to monitor productivity
10.6% a poor way to monitor productivity

17. Are these measures good enough to substitute for controlling hours of work? n=396

60.6% Yes 39.4% No

Thank you for your cooperation. Please return the questionnaire in the enclosed postage-paid envelope.

BACKGROUND

Question 1 (p. 66)

What is the title of your job or position?

There were 2,794 valid responses to this question. Position titles were classified into the following categories.

	<u>Percent of total responses</u>
Technical	24.2
Clerical	19.3
Trade and craft	18.1
Professional	13.7
Supervisor of technical/trade	8.9
Science and medicine	8.7
Administrative	5.9
Managerial	1.2

Question 4 (p. 66)

What is your current grade and step?

There were 2,882 valid responses to this question. Shown on page 78 are respondents' pay grades with a breakdown by pay system.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>General Schedule</u>	<u>Wage System</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percent of total</u>
1	2	10	1	13	0.5
2	27	38	1	66	2.3
3	146	25	5	176	6.1
4	312	21	6	339	11.8
5	336	63	5	404	14.0
6	138	42	6	186	6.5
7	221	44	1	266	9.2
8	49	44	6	99	3.4
9	240	59	28	327	11.3
10	43	146	2	191	6.6
11	247	62	5	314	10.9
12	199	8	2	209	7.3
13	163	7	0	170	5.9
14	61	5	0	66	2.3
All others (note a)	<u>25</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>56</u>	<u>1.7</u>
Total	<u>2,209</u>	<u>538</u>	<u>90</u>	<u>2,882</u>	<u>100.0</u>

a/Includes grades 15 to 24, nurses, nurse interns, apprentices, and officers.

POLICY

Question 3 (p. 67)

How many days are you required to work each week?

For this question there were 2,586 valid responses. The majority, 98.9 percent, or 2,557, stated that they had to work 5 days each week.

Question 4 (p. 67)

What is the maximum amount of time employees in your work unit are officially allowed for a lunchbreak, if other than those listed?

There were 2,930 valid responses to the request for the maximum amount of time officially allowed for a lunchbreak. Of these responses, 4 percent, or 117, indicated that they were allowed some increment of time other than those listed. Some 45.3 percent, or 53, stated that they were allowed a maximum of 40 minutes; 11.1 percent, or 13, said 120 minutes; and 7.7 percent, or 9, said 90 minutes.

Question 8 (p. 67)

On the average, how many coffee/restbreaks are allowed in your work unit in 1 day?

There were 2,408 valid responses to this question. The majority, 91.3 percent, or 2,199, stated that they were allowed 2 breaks per day.

Question 9 (p. 67)

Circle the best estimate of total minutes allowed in 1 day for breaks.

There were 2,442 valid responses to this question. The majority, 55.6 percent, or 1,357, stated that they were allowed 30 minutes in 1 day, while 27.8 percent, or 679, indicated that they were allowed 20 minutes.

Question 12 (p. 67)

What is the minimum amount of annual leave which you can charge at one time, if other than those listed?

There were 2,915 valid responses to the request for the minimum amount of annual leave which may be charged at one time. Of these responses, 2.2 percent, or 63, stated that they charged leave in some increment of time other than those listed. The majority of these respondents, 60.3 percent, or 38, indicated that the minimum amount of leave which they could charge was 6 minutes (one-tenth of an hour).

SCHEDULED WORKING HOURS

Question 2 (p. 68)

Which of the following best describes the way your starting and quitting times are set?

There were 2,866 valid responses to this question. Of these responses, 159, or 5.5 percent, indicated that their starting and quitting times were set by some way other than those listed. Of these, 55 stated that they were on flexitime. These answers were not reassigned to the flexitime category--the first choice in the list. Thus the adjusted frequency for "other" responses may be slightly overstated.

Question 4 (p. 68)

Circle the time which is closest to the time you are scheduled to start work each day.

There were 2,671 valid responses to this question. Of the respondents, 30.6 percent began at 8 a.m., 23.3 percent started at 7:30 a.m., 12.3 percent began at 7 a.m., and the other 33.8 percent gave various other times.

Question 5 (p. 68)

Circle the time which is closest to the time you are scheduled to quit work each day.

There were 2,669 valid responses to this question. Of the respondents, 29.4 percent quit at 4:30 p.m., 18.1 percent quit at 4 p.m., 9 percent quit at 4:15 p.m., and the other 43.5 percent gave various other times.

Question 7 (p. 68)

How many days during a 2-week period would you normally begin work early? How much earlier would you normally begin?

There were 2,570 valid responses to the question of whether actual starting times during the last 2 weeks had been typical. Of these responses, 6.6 percent, or 170, indicated that such times had not been typical. These respondents gave the following answers: 47.1 percent indicated that they normally did not begin early, 17.6 percent began

early on 1 to 2 days, 23.5 percent began early on 3 to 5 days, while the other 11.8 percent gave various other responses. The population of 170 respondents would normally begin an average of 15 minutes early each day. This average includes the "0" hours for the 47.1 percent of the respondents who normally do not begin early.

Question 9 (p. 69)

How many days during a 2-week period would you normally arrive late to work? How much later would you normally arrive at work?

There were 2,567 valid responses to the question of whether actual starting times during the last 2 weeks had been typical. Of these responses, 5.5 percent, or 142, indicated that such times had not been typical. Of these, 73.9 percent normally did not arrive late at any time, 24.6 percent normally arrived late 1 to 2 days, while the other 1.5 percent gave various other responses. The 142 respondents normally arrived an average of 9 minutes later each day. This average includes the "0" hours for the 73.9 percent of the respondents who normally did not arrive late.

Question 10 (p. 69)

The last time you were late arriving to work what was the reason, if other than those listed?

Of 2,700 valid responses, 13.8 percent, or 372, indicated that the last time they had been late it was for a reason other than those listed. The most frequent answers were as follows: 22.6 percent, or 84, stated that they had been late because they had overslept, 21.8 percent, or 81, cited car trouble, 4.8 percent, or 18, indicated problems with their alarm clocks while 3.5 percent indicated that flat tires had delayed them. The remaining 47.3 percent gave various other responses.

Question 13 (p. 69)

How many days during a 2-week period would you normally work late? How much extra time would you normally work?

Of 2,603 valid responses, 8.5 percent, or 221, stated that their actual quitting times during the last 2 weeks had not been typical. Of these responses, 43.4 percent

normally did not work late. An additional 29.9 percent normally worked late on 1 to 2 days, 15.4 percent worked late on 3 to 5 days, while the other 11.3 percent gave various other responses. The 221 respondents normally worked an average of 1 hour and 10 minutes extra each day. This average includes the "0" hours for the 43.4 percent of the respondents who normally did not work late.

Question 15 (p. 69)

How many days during a 2-week period would you normally leave work early? How much earlier would you normally leave?

Of 2,601 valid responses, 8.2 percent, or 213, stated that their quitting times during the last 2 weeks had not been typical. Of these responses, 76.1 percent indicated that they normally did not leave early. An additional 19.2 percent stated that they normally left early on 1 to 2 days. The remaining 4.7 percent gave various other responses. The 213 respondents normally left an average of 20 minutes early. This average includes the "0" hours for the 76.1 percent of the respondents who normally did not leave early.

Question 20 (p. 70)

When you work longer than your normal workday, what is the usual reason?

Of 1,325 valid responses, 27.7 percent stated that they worked longer than their normal workdays for reasons other than those listed. The most frequent answers were as follows: 13.6 percent, or 50, worked late to finish the job; 10.9 percent, or 40, worked late because of emergencies; 9.8 percent, or 36, cited heavy workloads; while 6 percent, or 22, worked to earn extra money. The remaining 59.7 percent gave various other responses.

Question 21 (p. 71)

Which of the following best describes the way starting and quitting times are observed and controlled in your work unit?

Of the 2,889 valid responses, 2.1 percent, or 60, indicated that their starting and quitting times were observed and controlled in some way other than the choices listed. This figure includes 58 respondents who circled more than one listed choice.

LUNCHBREAKS

Question 3 (p. 71)

Which of the following best describes the way your work unit observes and controls lunchbreaks?

Of the 2,880 valid responses, 2.3 percent, or 68, indicated that their work units observed and controlled lunchbreaks in some way other than the choices listed. This figure includes 64 respondents who circled more than one listed choice.

Question 7 (p. 72)

Which of the following best explains why your unofficial lunchbreak is longer?

Of 576 valid responses, 24.6 percent, or 142, stated that their unofficial lunchbreaks were longer for reasons other than those listed. This figure includes 14 respondents who circled more than one choice. The most frequent answers were as follows: 11.3 percent, or 16, cited a lack of adequate eating facilities; 7 percent, or 10, cited delays at lunch facilities; and 4.9 percent, or 7, cited special occasions. The remaining 76.8 percent gave various other responses.

Question 14 (p. 73)

How many days during a 2-week period would you normally take less time than the official lunch? How much less would you normally take?

Of 2,762 valid responses, 5.9 percent, or 163, stated that the lengths of their lunchbreaks during the last 2 weeks had not been typical. Of these responses, 42.9 percent indicated that at no time did they normally take less than the official lunch. An additional 35 percent, or 57 respondents, normally took less time on 1 to 2 days, while 16 percent, or 26, took less time on 3 to 5 days. The remaining 6.1 percent gave various other responses. The 163 respondents took an average of 17 minutes less time for lunch during this period. This average includes the "0" hours for the 42.9 percent of the respondents who normally did not shorten lunch.

Question 16 (p. 73)

How many days during a 2-week period would you normally take longer than the official lunch? How much longer would you normally take?

Of 2,763 valid responses, 6 percent, or 167, stated that the length of their lunchbreaks had not been typical during the last 2 weeks. Of these responses, 46.7 percent indicated that at no time did they normally take longer lunches. An additional 45.5 percent took longer lunches on 1 to 2 days. The remaining 7.8 percent gave various other responses. The 167 respondents in the original population took an average of 9 minutes longer for lunch. This average includes the "O" hours for the 46.7 percent of the respondents who normally did not extend their hours.

Question 17 (p. 73)

How did you make up the time not worked due to exceeding the official lunchbreak?

There were 812 valid responses, of which 20.3 percent, or 165, had made up the time in some way other than the choices listed. This figure includes 88 respondents who circled more than one listed choice.

BREAKS

Question 2 (p. 74)

How many minutes do you take in one average break?

There were 2,463 valid responses. The majority gave the following answers: 50.8 percent took 15 minutes per break, while 35.9 percent took 10 minutes.

SUPERVISION

Question 9 (p. 75)

Indicate below how frequently employees you supervise fall in the listed categories.

		<u>Frequently</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Seldom</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
	<u>n</u>	<u>(percent)</u>				
Arrive at work after the scheduled starting time	529	5.5	28.4	58.4	7.0	0.8
Begin work before the scheduled starting time	534	17.4	38.6	25.1	18.2	0.7
Leave work before the scheduled quitting time	534	1.3	17.2	50.4	30.3	0.7
Work later than the scheduled quitting time	533	11.3	34.0	29.5	24.6	0.8
Take a longer lunch than officially allowed	527	7.8	28.7	47.1	15.7	0.8
Take a shorter lunch than officially allowed	530	6.0	31.3	37.4	24.7	0.6
Take longer or more frequent coffee/restbreaks than officially allowed	525	4.8	21.3	46.3	25.7	1.9
Take shorter or fewer coffee/restbreaks than officially allowed	525	19.0	27.0	31.2	20.0	2.7

ANALYSIS OF WORK HOURS

To develop a typical employee profile, we computed the number of hours employees worked each week. Starting with those who had a 40-hour week, we subtracted time lost through late arrivals, long lunches, and early departures and added time gained through uncompensated overtime. "Uncompensated overtime" was defined as early arrivals, late departures, short lunches, and work done at home or on week-ends for which the employee was not compensated. Thus, each employee was a member of one of three groups of employees-- those who worked under 40 hours, about 40 hours, and over 40 hours. Weighting our data by agency size, we computed the following information on employees in each of the three groups.

<u>Hours in workweek</u>	<u>Number of employees</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Average hours worked</u>
33.5-39.9	577	25.9	39.178
40 -40.9	1,263	56.6	40.025
41 -70	a/ <u>391</u>	<u>17.5</u>	44.752
Total	b/ <u>2,231</u>	<u>100.0</u>	

a/Eight employees whose hours totaled 71 to 98 per week were eliminated as too extreme for the analysis.

b/The total excludes employees whose workdays were not 8 hours and those who did not respond to some variables used in the analysis.

We recognized that the number of employees working less than 40 hours could be (1) overstated if employees in that group charged leave for reported absences or (2) understated if employees working 40 or more hours a week also took longer coffee/restbreaks than allotted. Thus we examined the characteristics of respondents who answered questions related to leave and coffeebreaks. The questionnaire did not ask whether employees charged leave for each unofficial absence but rather for the last time they had arrived late, took long lunches, or left early. Although not comprehensive, this information is somewhat indicative of tendencies to charge or not charge leave for unofficial absences. The table below shows the number of employees who worked less than 40 hours and normally incurred each type of absence with the percentage who charged leave for the last such absence.

Employees Who Worked
Less Than 40 Hours a Week

Days in 2-week period	<u>Late to work</u>		<u>Left early</u>		<u>Long lunch</u>	
	<u>Number of employees</u>	<u>Average minutes per day</u>	<u>Number of employees</u>	<u>Average minutes per day</u>	<u>Number of employees</u>	<u>Average minutes per day</u>
1-2	154	22	156	88	235	14
3-5	22	11	19	34	85	13
6-9	4	12	4	30	30	15
10	<u>3</u>	16	<u>4</u>	17	<u>74</u>	19
Total	<u>183</u>	20	<u>183</u>	80	<u>424</u>	15
Percent who charged leave for last occurrence		24.9		55.3		7.3

Applying the percentages,

- 46 of those who arrived late,
- 101 of those who left early, and
- 31 of those who took long lunches

charged leave the last time. If they all charged leave for each incident, then the number of employees working less than 40 hours a week would drop to 399 instead of 577.

Comparing policy and practice questions related to coffeebreaks, some respondents in all three groups took longer breaks than authorized. The majority took longer breaks one or more times each day.

Employees Taking Longer Breaks
Than Officially Allowed

<u>Hours in workweek</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
33.5- 39.9	106	18.0
40 - 40.9	120	10.0
41 - 70	58	13.2

Thus the number who charged leave appears to be offset by the number who took longer breaks. Depending on the amount of time involved, employees could be reclassified to higher groups if they charged leave for most lost time, but substantial numbers could be reclassified to lower groups if our model accounted for longer breaks. For this reason, we believe the ranges are reasonable approximations of the group compositions.

We also analyzed the different types of unofficial absences to determine whether the same individuals abused all work-hour policies or whether distinctive patterns existed. Of 2,788 respondents, 45 (1.6 percent) were habitual abusers--employees who typically arrived late to work, took long lunches, and also left work early at least 1 day every 2 weeks. Weighted by agency size, this represented 1.5 percent of the employees in the seven agencies.

Long lunches were the most common abuse; 764, or about 27 percent of our sample, violated lunch policies. Late arrivals and early departures had about the same incidence rate, roughly half that of long lunches. Weighted by agency size the percentages were much the same: 26 percent violated lunch policies, 12 percent arrived late, and 12 percent departed early. Thus long lunches were more likely than late arrival and early departure to be paired with another abuse. On the basis of their typical patterns, 172 respondents arrived late and also took long lunches; 125 left work early and also took long lunches; while only 79 both arrived late and left early.

The incidence of double and triple abuse takes on less significance when one considers how infrequently it occurs during a 2-week period. In all types of policies, the largest number that abused the policy did so only 1 to 2 days. Only one respondent arrived late and left early every day; one arrived late and took a long lunch every day; and one took a long lunch and left early every day; none abused all three every day.

A statistical procedure called discriminant analysis was used to determine the predominant characteristics of employees in each of the three groups. In this analysis, group 0 refers to employees who worked less than 40 hours a week, group 1 refers to those who worked about 40 hours, and group 2 refers to those who worked over 40 hours. We entered into the analysis 27 variables--background and similar characteristics, both demographic and attitudinal.

This produced two discriminant functions for each group; both proved significant in their relative ability to separate the groups of employees. The functions were designed to maximize the separation of the groups.

The coefficients below represent the relative contributions of discriminating variables to the respective functions.

	<u>Standardized Discriminant</u>	
	<u>Functions Coefficients</u>	
	<u>(note a)</u>	
	<u>Function 1</u>	<u>Function 2</u>
Clerical job	0.34	-0.15
Technical job	0.22	-0.04
Geographical area	0.07	0.26
Air Force employees	0.04	0.25
HEW employees	-0.00	-0.19
Years worked in		
Federal Government	0.01	0.49
Urban or rural area	-0.02	0.15
Pay grade	-0.15	0.04
Length of official		
lunchbreak	-0.06	0.18
Technical/Wage		
supervisor	-0.26	0.03
Freedom to organize		
work	-0.18	-0.12
Satisfaction with		
work hours	-0.18	-0.08
Professional job	-0.36	0.08
Administrative job	-0.38	-0.05
Manager job	-0.35	0.24
Agriculture employee	-0.23	0.09
Wage System	0.31	0.29

a/Weighted by agency size.

Several statistics are used to determine the importance of the discriminant functions. First, Wilks' lambda is an inverse measure of the discriminating ability of the functions. As the lambda values decrease (from 1 to "0"), the discriminating power of the functions increases. Our final lambda value was 0.74, which indicates a moderate amount of discriminating ability in the functions. Also a measure

of a single function's ability to predict group membership is the canonical correlation. The closer the canonical correlation's value is to 1, the better able the function is to predict group membership. Function 1 had a correlation of 0.47, while function 2 had a correlation of 0.22. This means that the first function by itself is a moderately good indication of group membership, while the second function by itself only slightly aids prediction of group membership. However, both functions are significant in their discriminating ability. Both the Wilks' lambda and the canonical correlation indicate that there is much difference among the groups which cannot be explained by the variables we used.

Further evidence about group differences can be derived from group centroids--mean discriminant scores for each group on the respective functions.

Centroids of Groups in Reduced Space

<u>Group</u>	<u>Hours in workweek</u>	<u>Function 1</u>	<u>Function 2</u>
0	33.5 to 39.9	-0.00	-0.37
1	40 to 40.9	0.35	0.13
2	41 to 70	-0.12	0.13

The group centroids showed considerable overlap among the groups. They were not clearly separated even though the discrimination was statistically significant. The effect of the overlap is evident in that the discriminant analysis was able to correctly identify only 52 percent of cases as members of the groups to which they actually belonged. Therefore, although the functions cannot be used to precisely predict group membership, they can be used to indicate the factors most characteristic of the three groups.

The discriminant coefficients are used to compute discriminant scores for each employee. The score is a sum of the products of the discriminant coefficients and the raw value for each variable. Thus a high positive score would result from high raw values for variables with positive coefficients plus low raw values for variables with negative coefficients. Coefficients with large absolute values contribute more to the final score than those with small absolute values.

The discriminant scores are compared with group centroids to determine group membership. For function 1 in our analysis, employees with high positive scores tended to belong to group 1, the group with the highest centroid. Similarly employees with low negative scores tended to belong to group 2, the group with the lowest centroid. Scores in the middle ranges are more difficult to discuss because of the overlaps among the groups.

We now refer back to the discriminant coefficients to characterize the three groups of employees in our analysis. The coefficients indicate that employees in clerical or technical jobs and Wage System employees are more likely to belong in group 1, which works about 40 hours a week. Similarly employees in professional, managerial, or administrative jobs; Agriculture employees; and technical or Wage System supervisors are more likely to belong to group 2, which works over 40 hours a week.

Using the second function, employees with low discriminant scores tend to belong to group 0. The centroids for the other two groups are close enough to prevent discrimination between them. Therefore, the most we can say is that employees with high discriminant scores tend to work at least 40 hours a week. The discriminant coefficients for the second function indicate that employees with more Federal work experience, those in rural areas or in managerial jobs, and Air Force and Wage System employees tend to work at least 40 hours a week. Employees in urban areas, those with little Federal work experience, and employees at HEW tend to belong to group 0, the group which works less than 40 hours.

In the discussion above, we assumed that the employees who had not answered the question on compensation had been compensated for arriving early, leaving late, and taking short lunches. Therefore, the hours worked per week may be understated. To evaluate the effect of this assumption, we also computed work hours using the assumption that the employees who had not answered the question on compensation had not been compensated for early arrivals, late departures, and short lunches.

Generally, the results of the discriminant analysis under this assumption were the same as before. However, there were some changes.

For function 1, employees dissatisfied with their work hours and employees in the General Schedule pay system were more likely to be in group 2. At the same time, employment in professional jobs and as technical or Wage supervisor dropped in significance.

For function 2, employment in a managerial job and employment with HEW were somewhat less important as discriminating factors. On the other hand, this function indicated that employees with longer official lunchbreaks were more likely to work at least 40 hours than employees with shorter lunchbreaks.

Except for these variations, the results of the discriminant analyses were the same under both sets of assumptions.

PRIOR GAO REPORTS ON RELATED SUBJECTS

In recognition of the interest in productivity, we have made several reviews of Federal work hours and alternative arrangements of workdays. For one such effort, we reported on management's treatment of lunch periods for Federal civilian employees in the Washington, D.C., area (B-179810, Apr. 9, 1976).

At 19 activities contacted during the survey, most personnel officials said that the official lunch periods were not adequate and that employees were unofficially extending the time. Because we did not know the extent of the problem, we recommended that the Civil Service Commission and the Office of Management and Budget study the matter further and insure that Federal employees were complying with the statutory requirement of a 40-hour workweek. Several alternatives were offered:

- Extension of the workday to allow for longer official lunch.
- Flexible work schedules with flexible lunch bands.
- Allowing the charging of leave in smaller increments.

By mutual agreement, CSC took the lead and OMB participated in following up the recommendation. After concluding that it should issue guidance on issues relating to lunch periods, CSC developed Federal Personnel Manual Bulletin 610-30, which was finally issued on May 29, 1978. The bulletin gives some suggestions for accommodating lunch periods, states that each agency should review its practices to see if changes are needed, and advises that any changes should be made in conjunction with employee preferences and labor negotiation if applicable.

In June 1978 we followed up with the activities that had previously reported inadequate lunch periods.

- Three had totally converted to flexible work schedules.
- Eight had flexitime experiments in progress.
- Six had experienced no change in work schedules.

Of those 14 activities that either had some or all of the employees on fixed schedules, none had extended the day to allow for a more adequate lunchbreak although officials still contended that the half-hour lunch was not adequate. Some were familiar with our report and recommendations, while others mentioned having received CSC's bulletin, but none had plans to change the official lunchbreaks because they believed that employees opposed extension of the workday.

Other GAO reports on related subjects are listed on the following page.

Prior GAO Reports on Related Subjects

<u>Title</u>	<u>Report number</u>	<u>Date</u>
"Legal Limitations on Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules for Federal Employees"	B-179810	10-21-74
"Need for a Comparability Policy for Both Pay and Benefits of Federal Civilian Employees"	FPCD-75-62	7-1-75
"Benefits From Flexible Work Schedules--Legal Limitations Remain"	FPCD-77-62	9-26-77
"Federal Employee Performance Rating Systems Need Fundamental Changes"	FPCD-77-80	3-3-78
"Estimates of Federal Employees Available Time for Work Distort Workforce Requirements"	FPCD-78-21	3-6-78
"Benefits General Services Administration Provides by Operating Cafeterias in Washington, D.C., Federal Buildings"	LCD-78-316	5-5-78
"Improving Federal Agency Efficiency Through the Use of Productivity Data in the Budget Process"	FGMSD-78-33	5-10-78
"The Federal Role in Improving Productivity--Is the National Center for Productivity and Quality of Working Life the Proper Mechanism?"	FGMSD-78-26	5-23-78
"A Management Concern: How To Deal With the Nonproductive Federal Employee"	FPCD-78-71	8-10-78
"Federal Agencies Should Use Good Measures of Performance To Hold Managers Accountable"	FPCD-78-26	11-22-78

Prior GAO Reports on Related Subjects (cont.)

<u>Title</u>	<u>Report number</u>	<u>Date</u>
"How the Fair Labor Standards Act Affects Federal Agencies and Employees"	FPCD-76-95	4-18-77
"Federal White-Collar Pay Systems Need Fundamental Changes"	FPCD-76-9	10-30-75
"The Work Measurement System of the Department of Housing and Urban Development Has Potential but Needs Further Work To Increase Its Reliability"	FPCD-77-53	6-15-77

United States of America
**Office of
Personnel Management**

Washington, D C 20415

In Reply, Refer To

Feb 26

Reference

Mr. H.L. Krieger
Director, Federal Personnel
and Compensation Division
United States General Accounting
Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Krieger:

We have reviewed your draft of a proposed GAO report, "Federal Hours of Work: Policy, Practice and Issues." We share your interest and concern with this important aspect of Government management. We generally agree with your recommendation that the Office of Personnel Management become more actively involved in the area of work hours policies. However, it must be recognized that there is invested in each agency a basic responsibility for the establishment of work schedules and related attendance, lunch period, and work break policies, suitable to its needs.

The OPM, and its predecessor the Civil Service Commission, have consistently held the view that agency heads must have broad discretionary authority to control the hours of work of their organizations and employees. Their statutory authority in this regard is restricted only by certain general provisions of law, applicable to the majority of employees, e.g., 8 hours of work a day, 5 consecutive days a week. The head of each agency, however, may make exceptions even to these provisions, when it is determined that the organization would be seriously handicapped in carrying out its functions or that costs would be substantially increased.

The head of the agency must be able to organize the hours of work of the organization in a way which contributes most effectively to the accomplishment of the agency's mission. Our view of OPM program responsibility in relation to agency authority in this area is consistent with the current objectives of the OPM under the Civil Service Reform Act, e.g., to deregulate to the maximum degree possible, to impose minimal controls on the discretion to be exercised by an agency in managing its workforce, and to provide appropriate guidance, advice and assistance where useful. Moreover, we do not believe it is feasible for OPM to manage hours of work for all agencies of the Government in any centralized sense. The

factors identified in your report; i.e., specialized and dynamic agency objectives, the individuality of available facilities, job requirements of diverse positions, and increasing union involvement in negotiating hours of work provisions, dictate against such centralized management in this area.

We do agree that we should further assess our current guidance on hours of work and, if necessary, provide increased and improved guidance. We foresee this additional guidance covering the benefits of better control of an organization's adherence to policies dealing with hours of work, current research and trends on coffee/rest breaks and lunch periods in public and private sectors, potential benefits of charging leave in increments of less than one hour, etc. We have and will continue to stress the benefits of flexible hours of work and variable midday flexible bands. We do not, however, believe the collection and comparison of agency policies and practices suggested is either feasible or desirable.

With respect to Chapter 4 of your draft report, we share your interest in looking for alternative improved methods of dealing with how management can most effectively control hours of work. As a result of our interest, our perception of certain problems in this area, and our awareness of the interest of Congress, the Office of Management and Budget, and GAO in this general subject or corollary subjects, we are considering a comprehensive study of issues concerning the scheduling of work. The study would relate to such problems of work scheduling as pay administration, productivity, effective utilization of resources, negotiability issues, uncompensated overtime work, use of compensatory time, the unique work environment of certain occupations, and the restrictiveness of present law and regulation. The study would also focus on the concept of paying managers and professionals for achievement of program goals instead of the amount of time put in at the workplace. It must be presumed that the ultimate question for any organization is: What has been produced? and not: How many hours have been worked? We find your discussion of this question very useful.

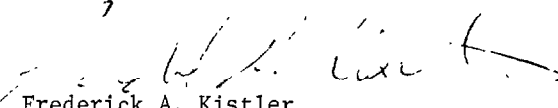
You may be interested to learn we have been studying the feasibility of performing a research project under the authority of title VI of the Civil Service Reform Act similar to your recommendation. There would be general experimentation with the concept of salary based on job performance, without regard to hours worked. One concern, it might be noted, is how to avoid having to waive the provisions of chapter 63 of title 5, United States Code, and corresponding regulations since that is prohibited by the Civil Service Reform Act.

3

We share your interest in the potential benefits of alternative work schedules as established for experimentation under the Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules Act of 1978. However, because some of the material and conclusions in your report touch directly on areas we will be objectively investigating and evaluating in response to specific requirements stated in that legislation, we prefer not to comment on the subject of alternative work schedules.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on your draft report.

Sincerely yours,


Frederick A. Kistler
Deputy Associate Director
for Compensation Operations



Public Employee Department AFL-CIO

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WILLIAM H. McCLENNAN
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Treasurer

March 6, 1979

Mr. H. L. Krieger, Director
Federal Personnel and
Compensation Division
United States General
Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Krieger:

This is in response to your letter dated February 2, 1979, transmitting copies of your draft report entitled "Federal Hours of Work: Policy, Practice, and Issues."

We appreciate the opportunity you have afforded us to review this study which can, of course, have a substantial impact on labor-management relations in the federal sector. We trust it augurs establishment of an effective mutual working relationship in connection with studies by the General Accounting Office on matters of interest to Government agencies and their employees.

Many of the issues presented in the report have been considered and discussed in the past. In general, it is our feeling that in great part, they are best settled through the collective bargaining process.

We understand that changes may be made in the report on the basis of the comments made by government agencies and others whose views you have solicited. We would appreciate receiving a copy of your final draft report at which time we may wish to give it a more detailed review.

Sincerely yours,

John A. McCart

John A. McCart
Executive Director

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NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES



JAMES M. PEIRCE • PRESIDENT

SADIE E. SEELEY • SECRETARY TREASURER

In reply refer to: GAO-JC-04

March 13, 1979

H. L. Krieger
 Director
 Federal Personnel and Compensation Division
 U.S. General Accounting Office
 441 G Street, N.W.
 Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Krieger:

This will respond to your letter dated February 2, 1979 which enclosed three copies of your draft report on Federal hours of work. We appreciate very much the receipt of this draft report and have spent some time in reviewing it. We would appreciate in the future if we were given more time to present our comments. The meeting of our National Executive Council and a snow storm put us quite behind in our work and consequently delayed our response to you in this matter. However, I hope that even at this late date, you will take our ideas into consideration.

I was most interested in one of the findings in the report, that is, that the taxpayers in fact are getting a great deal of free labor from Federal employees who regularly work overtime without compensation. You found that this more than balances the small number of people who take long lunch hours which are not made up. I certainly hope that when this report becomes public, the net gains to the taxpayers of \$700 million will be emphasized by the General Accounting Office in its contacts with the media.

One of the problems that is mentioned throughout the report is that employees frequently do not understand what the agency policy on lunch breaks and hours of work are. We suggest that if these matters were subject to negotiation between the union and management at the local level, employees would become aware of the policies through the negotiated agreement. The union would make efforts to insure that the employees know what the

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GAO-JC-04

-2-

March 13, 1979

policies are and assist in enforcement. To suggest that leadership in this area must come from the Office of Personnel Management' is backward. In fact, the leadership should come from the unions and management at the local level who decide what the policies are and then see to it that they are enforced.

Another idea which is proposed in the report, with which I am totally fascinated, is the idea of control being based upon output from the workers rather than hours spent at the workplace. I applaud your proposal to the Office of Personnel Management to put this into effect as one of the experiments allowed under Title VI of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978. Indeed we at NFFE tossed around the idea of proposing such an experiment to the Office of Personnel Management ourselves. The outcome should be quite fascinating and could have application to the private sector as well as the Federal sector in terms of incentives and productivity. I also applaud your conclusion that a shorter workweek would bring increased output since worker productivity would increase if there were more leisure time. We certainly support such findings. (See GAO note 1.)

Finally, I note throughout the report GAO's support for a total compensation comparability system. The National Federation of Federal Employees opposes that proposal in the form which the Administration is preparing to send to Congress. More items such as the length of the work day, flexibility of work schedules, and setting of lunch and break times should be left to negotiations by the parties at the local level. The move toward total compensation comparability is a move in the other direction. It is a move for the President to unilaterally set all conditions of work. Such a move is contrary to the findings and purpose of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 and its Title VII. Congress found that collective bargaining by Federal employees is in the public interest. That the President is attempting to unilaterally set more and more benefits and pay for Federal employees without regard to union participation runs contrary to the intent of that law. Our review of your report indicates that some of GAO's contentions in this area run contrary to CSRA as well.

Another concern we had in reviewing your report is that while you propose that OPM and the agencies watch the starting and ending times for lunch hours more closely, you make no comparable suggestions to them concerning the violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act which were found by your survey. While the National Federation of Federal Employees realizes that a minute number of people might be abusing lunch hour privileges and should be more strictly controlled, at the same time we are appalled by the findings in your study that many employees are voluntarily working overtime which should be compensated for under the Fair Labor Standards Act and is not. In spite of the fact that GAO made this finding as a part of its study, there is no recommendation to the agencies or the Office of Personnel Management to correct this problem. The law is being violated. There should be action taken so that these employees receive the compensation to which they are entitled. (See GAO note 2.)

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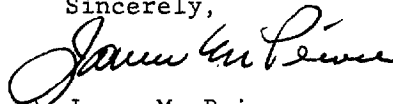
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Another concern from reading your report is that while you are troubled by the long lunch hours, there are no directions given to the agencies to try to correct the problem other than to initiate stricter controls on how long employees stay at lunch. The real problem as revealed by the survey is the lack of adequate cafeteria services. Certainly if that problem were corrected, most of the lunch hour abuses would be cleared up and there would be no need for stricter controls. At a time when the Office of Management and Budget is proposing that Federal employee cafeterias no longer receive low rent space, your findings seem to cry out for continuing the subsidies and in fact increasing them in some respects. Therefore, we would like to see something in your final report specifically directed at the General Services Administration and all the agencies in terms of providing more adequate cafeteria facilities wherever necessary. Certainly this is an area where something tangible can be done. In terms of the reasons for tardiness (such as bad weather and congested traffic) there is really little that can be done except to allow flexible working times which provide for rearranging of schedules. (See GAO note 3.)

Finally, I would like to comment on the proposal for a shorter workweek. NFFE has proposed a 35 hours workweek for many years. We believe that this is one of the changes needed in the current comparability system in order to make Federal and private sector salaries more equal. Of course, we would only support such a shortened workweek if the salaries and wages of employees remain the same. The use of a shorter workweek would allow for more employment and would particularly allow for more flexible schedules for families with children.

In closing, I would like to indicate that I found the draft most readable and of considerable interest in spite of its length. Many of the proposals are quite fascinating, and I look forward to having them become effective in the Federal sector. I note that both your letter and the copy of the draft which we have indicate that the drafts belong to the General Accounting Office and must be returned upon demand. I am assuming that you do not wish us to send back the drafts at this time. We will maintain them in our files and you can be assured that their contents have not been revealed by this organization. I will be quite interested to see the final report and to cooperate as far as possible in some of the experiments which are proposed in the report. When you send a copy of the final version and any comments which you might have on our proposals to us, please refer to GAO-JC-04.

Sincerely,



James M. Peirce
President

- GAO notes:
1. As the report states, this is a potential effect that some studies have suggested--not a proven conclusion.
 2. The report shows that 67 employees, 0.02 percent of our sample, worked uncompensated overtime in apparent violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act. We believe our recommendation for greater OPM guidance, direction, and evaluation of work-hour policies should help reduce such future violations. In addition, employees have the right to file claims for such uncompensated overtime.
 3. Providing more convenient eating facilities, where feasible, is an alternative discussed in chapter 3.

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