



Extract from the report to the
Public Accounts Committee on
staff scheduling in government
institutions

January
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1. Introduction and conclusion

1.1. Purpose and conclusion

1. This report concerns staff scheduling in government institutions where employees are required to work irregular hours.

The report is focused on economy and flows from problems identified by Rigsrevisionen in connection with audits of payroll. Rigsrevisionen initiated the study in August 2014.

2. The purpose of the report is to examine and assess whether staff scheduling in institutions where employees are required to work irregular hours – within the framework of the working hour and working environment regulations – underpin efficient deployment of human resources.

The audit approach and quality requirements to **narrow reports** are identical with those applying to Rigsrevisionen's other reports, but the scope of narrow reports is more limited.

CONCLUSION

Payroll expenditure is a large item on the government budget and it is therefore essential that government institutions consider economy when rostering.

The Danish National Police, the Danish Prison and Probation Service, the Meat Control (meat inspection division under the Danish Veterinary and Food Administration), Banedanmark (enterprise under the Danish Ministry of Transport responsible for maintaining and expanding the Danish railway system), and the Danish Defence have in recent years all, to some extent or other, optimized staff scheduling, which has contributed to reducing payroll costs. In particular the Police and the Meat Control division have made a centralised effort to optimise staff scheduling. However, the management of all the institutions included in this study need to focus on efficient rostering and deployment of staff resources.

Rigsrevisionen's study shows that when adjustments of announced duty rosters are required, the management of the institutions do not fully utilise their opportunities to rearrange staff's working hours without additional expense. As an example, staff at the Danish Prison and Probation Service called in to take extra shifts is paid an hourly rate of time and a half – also when the working hour regulations prescribe that the management may change the working hours without compensation. Rigsrevisionen also found that some employees at the meat control unit at Danish Crown in Horsens had accumulated overtime at a rate of time and a half, whereas other employees had worked fewer hours than they are paid for.

*In the report **staff scheduling** is defined as planning of working hours in institutions where employees are working irregular hours that are entirely or partly outside normal daytime working hours.*

Government-owned enterprises and institutions
*In the report, superior authorities such as, for instance, the Danish Prison and Probation Service, are referred to as **government-owned enterprises** whereas subordinate authorities like, for instance, prisons, are referred to as **institutions**.*

The study comprises five government-owned enterprises:

- The Danish National Police
- The Danish Prison and Probation Service
- The Danish Veterinary and Food Administration (Meat Control)
- Banedanmark (Centralized Traffic Control)
- The Danish Defence (Defence Command Denmark).

Meat Control is a division of the Danish Veterinary and Food Administration under the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries. Staff in the Meat Control division are responsible for checking all food animals at the local slaughterhouses - before and after slaughtering – regarding food safety, animal welfare and contagious livestock diseases. The Meat Control is also checking cleaning and hygiene at the slaughterhouses and their observation of the foodstuff export regulations. Place of duty for staff in the Meat Control division is the slaughterhouses where the checks are made.

Copenhagen Prisons include four prisons, which together constitute the largest county jail under the Danish Prison and Probation Service.

The Copenhagen Prisons is charged with the task of transporting prisoners and bringing them before court on behalf of the police and the courts of law in the Greater Copenhagen Area.

Compensation is the total amount of the monetary and non-monetary pay provided to employees for overtime, call-in and planned time off revoked.

13 centralised traffic control units monitor and control train switches and signals in Denmark. Staff at the centralized traffic control units are also responsible for loudspeaker announcements and digital signage.

The Danish Defence and Meat Control unit at Danish Crown in Horsens are not recording the working hours of their employees regularly and therefore they do not have access to the updated information on actual working hours that is necessary to minimize overtime and undertime. The Meat Control has informed Rigsrevisionen that the working hours of their employees will be recorded regularly in the future, and the Danish Defence is currently procuring a new system, which will facilitate ongoing recording of working time.

Beyond that, staffing levels in several of the examined institutions are not optimised which means that the institutions get less working hours for their payroll funds. Paid overtime at an hourly rate of time and a half is extensive. At the Copenhagen-based centralised traffic control unit under Banedanmark and *Task Force Øst* (police task force operating east of the Belt) under the Sealand-based police districts, the use of overtime at an hourly rate of time and a half is extensive. The management of Copenhagen Prisons has not yet conducted an analysis of staffing levels, despite the fact that the Danish Prison and Probation Service – one year ago – concluded that there was considerable potential for savings in this area. However, the Danish Prison and Probation Service has informed Rigsrevisionen that such an analysis will be conducted in 2015.

Rigsrevisionen's study also shows that the institutions do not always follow up on past duty rosters to determine where and when overtime compensation is triggered, which would provide them with a basis for systematic assessment of staffing levels. Rigsrevisionen's audit shows that instead of adjusting staffing levels, Copenhagen Prisons called in an average of ten additional employees at overtime pay every day for two years. It should be noted though, that the institutions monitor the development in total compensation.

Lastly, the staff scheduling process is unreasonably resource intensive and not adequately supported by IT-systems in the institutions under the Danish Prison and Probation Service. As an example, staff works out a complete roster every month based on their individual wishes. Quite frequently, however, this roster does not ensure the level of staffing required in the institutions, and the people in charge of staff scheduling will subsequently spend time adjusting the duty roster. It should be noted, that the people in charge of staff scheduling in Copenhagen Prisons negotiate the duty roster with each individual member of staff. The Danish Prison and Probation Service has informed Rigsrevisionen that it is developing a staff scheduling system that will more effectively support rostering and make it less resource intensive.

Following the study, Rigsrevisionen worked out a list of best practice examples (appendix 2), which all government institutions that rely on staff scheduling can consult for guidance on efficient staff scheduling.