

Can AFP comply with the law? Mission impossible?

The Olympic Games, World Cup and Euro: the work and pay conditions of the AFP teams which cover special events that last several weeks was on the menu of the negotiations on the Grand Accord on December 1.

Currently, workers and cadre technicians that are sent on missions do not receive additional rest days but a lump-sum compensation for overtime hours (articles 40 and 40 special). And those can be substantial, as they are for journalists. It is not unusual for those on these missions to work several weeks without a day of rest and without respect of the limits on the maximum number of work hours per day.

This practice is illegal and poses serious health risks. A technician told us that while covering one special event lack of sleep led him to fall asleep at the while driving AFP journalists – which fortunately did not result in an accident.

AFP's management wants to reform the handling of special events, with three objectives in mind:

- **Legal security**, reducing legal risks for AFP from illegal practices
- **Increase** financial compensation **for journalists** covering special events
- **Reduce costs**

The discussion, rich but confused, showed these objectives will be difficult to achieve, as they are contradictory without **management dedicating sufficient resources**.

Concerning working hours during these "exceptional circumstances", management's project proposes the following:

- **The number of working hours per week may be up to 60 hours maximum**, provided that over two consecutive weeks it averages **48 hours**,
- **The number of working hours per day may be 12 hours maximum**,
- **Daily rest time of 9 hours**.

These limits are not currently respected, nor will they in the future if AFP's management does not dedicate sufficient staff to cover special events. Management acknowledged this, saying that in practice it will be nearly impossible to respect the labor code. Thus their goal is not to eliminate legal risks, but instead to **reduce** them, if possible with the aid of trade unions, by the signature of agreements allowing the derogation from legal work limits.

What does management's project say about rest days during missions? – *"Weekly rest days that cannot be taken during these periods shall be replaced with an equal number of days that must be taken at the end of the mission."*

- ✓ SUD wants staff on such long missions to have at least one rest day per week **guaranteed**.
- ✓ SUD wants that for each week a person is on such a mission that an **additional rest day** be awarded in case of overtime work. These days should be allowed to be taken at the convenience of employees (for example, within 3 months).

Management's project foresees the following lump-sum compensations for overtime hours:

- **€50 per day** for technical missions abroad for **cadre technicians** (except 4th group) and **workers**.
- **€75 per day** for **cadre technicians** (except 4th group), **workers** and **journalists** covering the Olympic Games (summer and winter), the World Cup and the Euro.

That the payments are extended to journalists is an advance. However, the amount proposed is half what technicians now receive.

A working group including management and trade union members from different categories plans to study different options in more detail as well as expanding the list of events concerned (Tour de France, Dakar Rally, Africa Cup of Nations... ?).

AFP needs sufficient funds to carry out its mission!