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IMMEDIATE  
ATTENTION

EBAP/82/447

December 30, 1982

To: Members of the Executive Board  
From: The Acting Secretary  
Subject: Shift Work in the Cable Room

It is not proposed to bring the attached memorandum on shift work in the Cable Room to the agenda of the Executive Board for discussion unless an Executive Director so requests by the close of business on Friday, January 7, 1983. In the absence of such a request, the draft decision will be deemed approved by the Executive Board and it will be so recorded in the minutes of the next meeting thereafter.

Att: (1)

Other Distribution:  
Department Heads



December 30, 1982

To: Members of the Executive Board

From: Acting Managing Director

Subject: Shift Work in the Cable Room

Since September 1, 1982, the Cable Room has resorted to shift work on an informal and experimental basis. Shift work has been initiated in an attempt to handle the work flow in the Cable Room in a manner which provides the high level of service which is required even late at night, without putting unrealistic pressure on the staff, in the form of substantial amounts of overtime and unscheduled work at late hours.

The majority of outgoing messages from the Fund are delivered to the Cable Room for transmittal during the late afternoon and early evening. As all messages must normally be transmitted the same day they are delivered to the Cable Room, the staff frequently must work until late at night. Until recently, the required level of service was maintained through a combination of staggered working hours and substantial amounts of overtime, the latter often on an unscheduled basis. The Secretary's Department concluded that the strains on the staff in the Cable Room were becoming increasingly severe and that steps were necessary to alleviate the pressure. Because it was felt that it would be feasible to reduce staffing during the morning hours, shift work was considered as a possible solution to the problem and it was introduced on an experimental basis. During the experimental period, the Cable Room staff has been working the two shifts 7:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.-11:30 p.m. on a rotation basis.

The shift work experiment, which has now been in effect for four months, has proved successful, and the Secretary's Department now recommends that shift work be formally introduced, effective immediately. The schedules would remain unchanged. Administrative regulations governing shift work have never been required in the Fund and, therefore, need to be established at this time.

It is an established practice in both public and private sector organizations to provide a premium over base salary as a recognition of both the general hardship and the additional expenses for the staff, which may be associated with shift work. Information has been collected from other international organizations in the Washington D.C. area, the U.S. Civil Service, and private sector organizations. Most of these employers pay a shift differential amounting to about 8 to 10 per cent over and above base salary for hours which fall outside of a predetermined period of "normal hours." The Inter-American Development Bank provides a 15 per cent differential and the World Bank is in the process of phasing in a reduction from 15 to 10 per cent.

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It is proposed to introduce a 10 per cent shift differential for Cable Room staff at this time. It should be recognized, however, that the shift arrangements in the Fund will be introduced for current incumbents in existing positions, who, due to their specialized training, would have little flexibility in transferring to other positions on the staff not involving shift work. Consequently, special consideration is being given to the additional expenses incurred by staff working on the late shift, arising out of the fact that the Fund's Cafeteria, where staff members on normal working hours can enjoy a warm meal at a subsidized price, is closed during the late shift. A separate flat meal subsidy of \$2.50 per late shift is being proposed as a supplement to the 10 per cent shift differential. The shift differential would only apply to hours worked outside the period 7:00 a.m.- 6:00 p.m. and would amount to approximately \$5.00 per evening at the current average salary rate for Cable Room staff (\$19,000).

The annual cost of the shift differential would not be expected to exceed \$6,000 and the total meal subsidy would add somewhat less than \$3,000 to these expenses. The shift compensation would not be pensionable or affect any other benefits, with the exception of the tax allowance for the U.S. nationals which could be expected to increase by approximately \$1,000 in total. The total annual cost would, therefore, be on the order of \$10,000. It should be noted, however, that the introduction of shift work could be expected to result in a reduction of overtime in the Cable Room, which would partly offset the cost of the shift work compensation.

It is not anticipated that any other work unit in the Fund would need to resort to shift work in the near future. The policy outlined above will apply specifically to shift work in the Cable Room and it will be reviewed after one year's time.