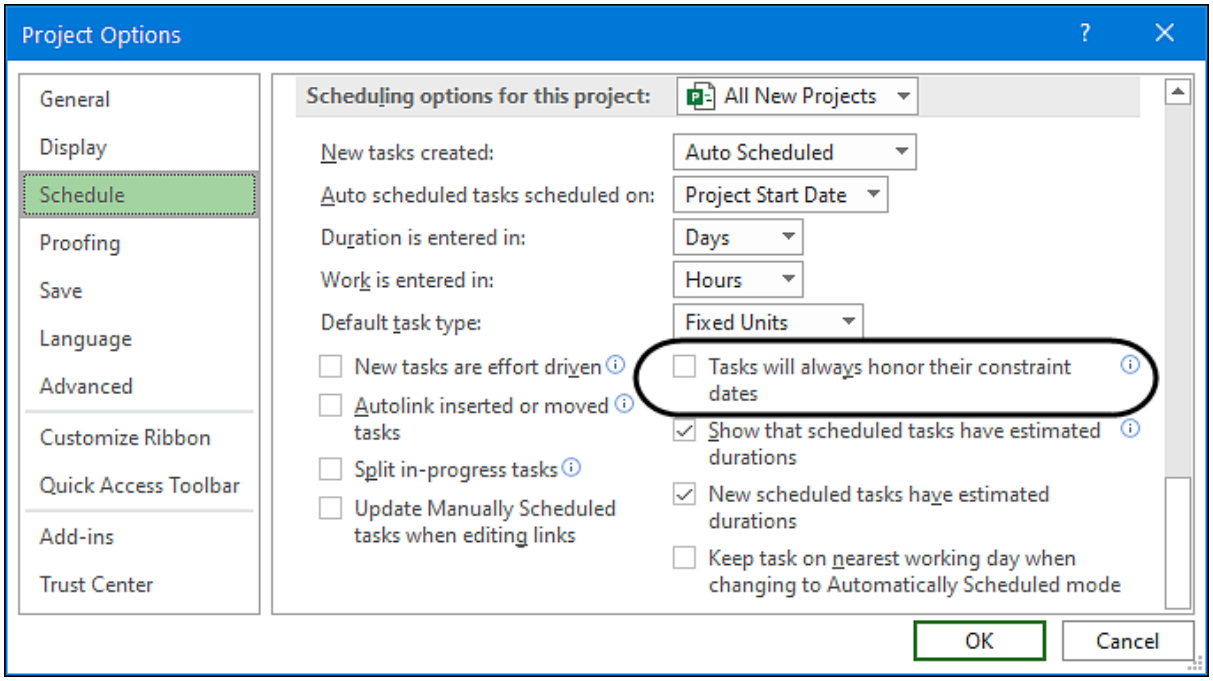
Eastwood Harris Pty Ltd, P.O. Box 4032, Doncaster Heights, 3109, Victoria, Australia
AUSTRALIA: Tel: 04 1118 7701 **INTERNATIONAL**: + 61 4 1118 7701
Skype & Email: harrispe@eh.com.au **Web:** http://www.eh.com.au

MICROSOFT PROJECT TASKS WILL ALWAYS HONOR THEIR CONSTRAINT DATES

1 Issues with the "Tasks will always honor their constraint dates" option

There is an option in the **FILE**, **Options**, **Schedule** form titled **Tasks will always honor their constraint dates:**



This option forces a task to be scheduled before the predecessors when the successor has a **Finish no later than** or **Start no later than constraint** earlier that their calculated early dates. In effect, this option will make all constraints override relationships.

This option is by default switched on a schedule will not calculate correctly:

- It will no calculate in the way a Critical Path schedule should calculate,
- You will have Tasks and Milestones with constraints finishing earlier that they may be finished giving you an inaccurate program, and
- The Total Float (Slack) will not calculate correctly,

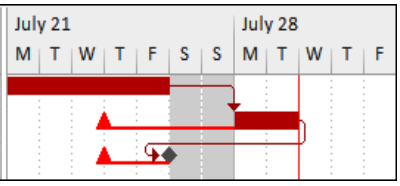
2 How it works

With this option set, a task with a constraint set prior to the calculated early dates will display the Start or Finish date on the constraint date and not on the calculated dates. The Total Slack does not calculate as the difference between Late Start and Early Start.

Examine the following two examples with the option box checked and unchecked:

Tasks will always honor their constraint dates: option box checked:

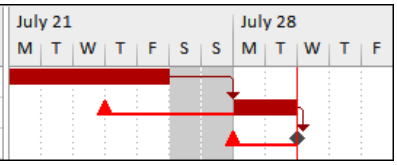
	Start	Finish	Late Finish	Total Slack	Constraint Date	Constraint Type
1	Jul 21	Jul 25	Jul 23	-2d	NA	As Soon As Possible
2	Jul 28	Jul 29	Jul 25	-2d	NA	As Soon As Possible
3	Jul 25	Jul 25	Jul 25	-2d	Jul 25	Finish No Later Than



- Task 3 starts before the predecessor finishes and the Total Slack of the second task is calculated as minus 2 days, which is not the difference between the Early Finish and the Late Finish dates.
- Thus, this constraint does not adhere to commonly accepted Total Float calculations.

Tasks will always honor their constraint dates: option box **NOT** checked:

		Start	Finish	Late Finish	Total Slack	Constraint Date	Constraint Type
1		Jul 21	Jul 25	Jul 23	-2d	NA	As Soon As Possible
2		Jul 28	Jul 29	Jul 25	-2d	NA	As Soon As Possible
3		Jul 29	Jul 29	Jul 25	-2d	Jul 25	Finish No Later Than



- The Total Float is calculated correctly, and
- You have a proper Critical Path schedule with tasks displayed on their early dates and not the constraint date.

3 Recommendations

It is suggested that this option is **NEVER** switched on, as you will not have a schedule that calculates as a Critical Path schedule and you may not be complying to the terms and conditions of a contract and the schedule may appear to be achievable when it is not.

You should ensure that your project templates and Global.mpt have this option switched off.

4 Footnote

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