

# Suns Gain More Cap Relief Through Official Release of Michael Beasley

by Anthony Caruso on September 6, 2013

The Phoenix Suns will see cap relief with the official release of Michael Beasley, the 2008 No. 2 draft pick, from his contract, ending an era of spotty performance on the court, open disputes with coaches and legal issues.

Following Beasley's arrest on suspicion of marijuana possession in August, the player agreed to a buyout of the last two years of his contract for \$2 million less than his guaranteed \$9 million. In his one year playing with the Phoenix Suns, Beasley averaged 10.1 points and 3.8 rebounds per game in his first and only season. The move to release him will allow the Suns to receive a bump in salary cap room for the next two seasons.

As a result of the expected release, the Suns' 2013-14 cap number on Beasley was reduced from \$6 million to \$4.67 million and the final \$3 million that will be stretched out over the next three years was lowered to \$2.33 million. The Suns utilized the waive-and-spread provision of the collective bargaining agreement to spread the \$2.33 million in payment and cap hits over the years to \$778,000 annually.

The move puts the team roughly \$6.57 million below the salary cap, which gives them significantly more flexibility when it comes to making changes to their roster, despite little indication of how the team plans to use the remaining cap. The team may opt to make a critical trade or add a free agent to their lineup in the coming weeks.

"Obviously, we're disappointed he didn't have more success here," said Suns President of Basketball Operations Lon Babby. "We went into the relationship with our eyes open and understood the calculated risks we were taking. Those risks turned out to work against us. There comes a point that the maintenance of our highest standards was paramount."

This decision is a stark reminder as to how volatile the sports and entertainment industry can be in terms of an individual's performance and efficiency.