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A charter for women



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RMT Credit Union Ltd

2nd Annual General Meeting

Thursday March 23rd 2006 1.00 pm

Board Room, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, Euston, London NW1

Open to all RMT Credit Union Ltd Members

Elections to the Board of Directors

This is the second AGM of the RMT Credit Union, under **Rule 55**, all group 'A' Directors shall retire. Nominations are therefore invited (*signed by the nominee, a proposer and seconder*) for election to the Board Of Directors for the following positions:

1. Vice Chair, Compliant, Succession & Nominating Function
2. Assistant Treasurer
3. Credit Committee (2 x Positions)
4. Assistant Money Laundering Reporting Officer

Nominations must reach the office of the Credit Union *no later than Friday 17 March 2006*. Any new Director and Supervisor will have to achieve approval by the FSA in 'Control Function Status' as set out in CRED 6.1.1.

Nomination papers are available from the RMT Web Site or by contacting the Credit Union office.

All the current Group 'A' Board of Directors are eligible for re-election

Please will all members of the Credit Union who are attending this meeting register their attendance in advance with the Credit Union office at:

RMT Credit Union Ltd, Finance Office, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD. Tel: 02075298835. Email: c.union@rmt.org.uk

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EDITORIAL

FIRE-SAFETY REPRIEVE

Following a high-profile campaign, the government has delayed plans to abolish fire-safety regulations for sub-surface rail stations until April 2007.

This reprieve is excellent news for fire safety on many stations all over Britain. However, more campaigning will be required to defend these crucial safety regulations introduced after the 1987 King's Cross fire.

Successful campaigning by unions across Europe has also defeated the EU port directive, which would have allowed private contractors and crews to load and unload vessels themselves.

This victory means that work in hundreds of ports will continue to be handled by trained dockworkers.

This sort of campaigning will also be required to defeat the EU services directive, which seeks to introduce free-market competition to all economic services operating within the EU, including health and education.

Under the directive's "country of origin" principle, service providers would operate under the laws of their country of origin rather than the host state, setting in train 'social dumping' and wage cuts on a massive scale.

The publication of the government's draft procedures for closures and 'modification' of the rail network has once again raised the spectre of rail closures and bustitution.

The government's stated policy is supposed to increase rail use and protect the environment.

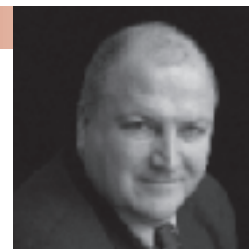
Yet these draft guidelines will fuel fears that rail policy is being determined by financial pressure from the Treasury rather than by strategic economic and environmental considerations.

When the Railways Act was passed last year we warned that it would not solve the basic problems of rail privatisation and the joined-up thinking required is also missing from the draft closure guidelines.

The draft procedures will strip away the statutory responsibility of the Rail Passengers' Council to report on the hardship caused by closures and there will be no requirement to hold public hearings into proposed cuts.

If the government wants to save money, rather than closing lines and attempting to cut criminal injury compensation payments, it could look at how rolling-stock leasing companies make obscene profits renting out formerly publicly-owned trains or the £1 billion being drained out of the industry each year by the private sector.

What is required is expansion of the



railways and staff should be on duty at every railway station. Therefore, we welcome the Greater London Assembly's call for 'stricter standards' for passenger safety at rail stations.

Tube station staff stood firm on this very issue by taking two days of action and by voting seven to one in favour of a deal that safeguards jobs and gives staff 52 days leave a year.

Station staff and guards have been cut for financial reasons by companies more worried about profits than about safety – and that is a direct result of privatisation.

Passengers, who have been hit by another round of price rises, want more visible station staff that have the right to work in safety, particularly in today's climate.

As far as developments at the rail freight company EWS are concerned, RMT has made clear that a proposal document for a new train crew productivity deal is unacceptable.

This proposal document, if accepted by ASLEF, will have serious implications for groundstaff and engineering staff members. Many more jobs will also go in both grades to finance this deal. It will also create an untenable working environment for train drivers at the expense of other jobs.

The intransigence of Virgin Cross Country bosses in the dispute over the erosion of Sunday pay rates for guards is clearly exacerbated by government policy of compensating train-operating companies during strike action.

The company is also attempting to bring in managers from South West Trains. If RMT asked SWT members to become involved in this dispute the union would be dragged through the courts for breaking anti-union laws.

This is one of the reasons May Day in London this year will be a national demonstration in support of the Trade Union Freedom Bill.

This campaign affects all RMT members. If we can win more freedoms we can more effectively represent you – it's as simple as that.

The RMT Parliamentary Group has been promoting the bill and already 114 MPs have signed Early Day Motion 1170 on the subject. Don't forget to ask your MP to sign.

Best wishes

Bob Crow

EU CHANGES RULES ON DRIVERS' HOURS AND DIGITAL TACHOGRAPHS



TUC REVIEWS WORKING TIME REGS

The Road Transport (Working Time) Regulations were introduced in April 2005. RMT members who work under the scope of the EU Drivers' Hours Rules are covered by the Regulations.

As a result of trade union concerns, particularly in relation to the definition and operation of Periods of Availability, the Secretary of State for Transport Alistair Darling made a commitment to review the Regulations between 12-18 months after their implementation.

As the regulations have now been in force for nine months, the TUC is conducting its own internal review. The TUC is seeking reports on the

impact, both negative and positive, that the regulations have had on RMT members.

Therefore, the union is asking for reports on how the 2005 Regulations have affected members in the road transport and bus sectors who work under their provisions. The information which RMT provides to the TUC will then be brought together with the experiences of other affiliates and presented as collective evidence to the Department of Transport review.

The TUC has asked that the union provides it with information by next month. Therefore, all reports should be returned to the National Policy Department at Unity House by February 23 2006. ■

From May 2006 all new vehicles which operate under EU Regulation 3821/85, which controls the fitting of tachographs and recording equipment, must be fitted with a digital tachograph.

As a result, the number of checks carried out will increase from 2008 to at least two per cent of days worked and 2010 to at least 3 per cent of days worked. Also, from January 2008, inspectors will be able to examine tachograph records for the 28 days before the day of the inspection.

Changes to EU drivers' hours rules (EU Regulation 3820/85) are expected to come into force in April 2007.

Drivers who currently work under EU rules have to take 11 hours rest in each 24 hour period. However, it is possible for this to be reduced to nine consecutive hours three times a week or a 12 hour rest taken in two or three periods the last of which must be a minimum of eight hours.

The changes mean that where the rest period is taken in two periods, the first must be for at least an uninterrupted three hours and the second an uninterrupted period of at least nine hours.

Whilst this represents an advance of one hour on the current eight hour minimum

when the rest period is split, the European Transport Workers Federation has raised concerns that the time will not be compensated in future. RMT will ensure that where reduced rest is taken members will continue to have their time compensated.

Also under the changes a 45 hour rest period must be taken every two weeks.

Under existing EU rules a driver has to take a break of at least 45 minutes after 4.5 hours of continuous or cumulative driving. These breaks can be broken down into two or three periods of at least 15 minutes during or immediately after the driving period.

The changes will mean that in the future a 45 minute break can be broken down into one break of 15 minutes followed by a further break of at least 30 minutes.

Current regulations are ambiguously worded which has led to some drivers in the EU being made to drive for up to 74 hours per week. The new agreement sets a maximum driving time across the EU of 56 hours a week.

RMT assistant general secretary Mick Cash pointed out that RMT will continue to collectively negotiate for terms and conditions better than the incoming rules, which represent the bare legal requirements ■



Members Helpline

Freephone 0800 376 3706

Open six days a week

Mon to Fri - 8am until 6pm, Sat - 9.30am to 4pm

e-mail: info@rmt.org.uk

Legal helpline: 0800 587 7516
Seven days a week



WINNING IN THE WEST

Since RMT members in the west of the country launched a local organising committee late last year nearly 200 new members were recruited in just two months.

The committee, which covers FGW, Wessex and FGW Link TOCs, studiously went through lists and worked out where there were weak points in organisation.

Having identified areas where RMT had little organisation, reps set about the task to recruit non-members and find new RMT reps to build long-term structures.

The union's organising unit also ran an introduction day earlier this month at Maritime House in south London to encourage prospective reps to stand for election and to give a boost to any new reps.

National organising co-ordinator Alan Pottage said that the union's recruitment strategy was starting to kick in and strength on the ground was starting to grow.

"We have pumped a lot of resources

into the hands of activists and every assistance is being given to make this a success.

"It's great seeing activists getting stuck in like they have all had a major boost.

"It just goes to show that we have a huge number of committed activists," he said.

In the latest stage of the campaign, over 30 workers attended a special meeting near Paddington station to establish an active RMT organisation to cover all workers at the terminal.

The meeting resolved to elect branch officials and give full support to new reps.

Assistant General Secretary Pat Sikorski said he was delighted to see so many members turn up at the meeting to discuss building a strong RMT presence at Paddington.

"Many activists joined forces with the organising unit and spent a week speaking to workers and recruiting, which is excellent news for the workforce," he said. ■



ORGANISING: (left to right) Maureen Mulligan (2nd Stage rep), Danny Munn (prospective rep), AGS Pat Sikorski and relief regional organiser Brian Whitehead scrutinising membership lists during the week-long campaign.

Organising for the future

RMT is the fastest growing union in Britain. The bigger it gets, the better it can protect and improve pay, pensions and working conditions.

To back up the vital recruitment work done by reps, the union holds regional organising weeks around the country, and all RMT reps and activists are welcome to get involved.

The weeks are followed up with a one-day RMT course open to new and less-experienced reps and to anyone considering becoming a rep.

Week starting...

March 13, Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, contact Gerry Hitchen on 07834 088 305 or g.hitchen@rmt.org.uk

April 17, Northwest and North Wales, contact Rob Conlin, 07917 226 888, or r.conlin@rmt.org.uk

April 24, Scotland, contact Donald Graham, 07753 748 074 or d.graham@rmt.org.uk

May 22, Southeast, contact Carolyn Siddall, 07917 635 818 or c.siddall@rmt.org.uk

June 5, Scotland, contact Donald Graham

June 19, Southwest and Wessex, contact Alan Pottage, 07734 088 305 or a.pottage@rmt.org.uk

July 17, South Wales and Southwest, contact Rob Conlin

August 21, Northeast, contact John Milligan, 07753 748 147 or j.milligan@rmt.org.uk

September 4, Scotland, contact Donald Graham

September 18, London and Anglia, contact Carolyn Siddall.

For more information on RMT's organising strategy see pages 18/19



RMT HOSTS POLITICAL CONFERENCE

Over 300 labour movement activists gathered at an open conference called by RMT last month to discuss the crisis in working-class political representation.

The London meeting, called following a decision at the union's AGM, was opened by general secretary Bob Crow who cited the Labour government's continuing obsession with privatisation and its refusal to scrap draconian anti-union laws as evidence that the party was not acting in the interests of working men and women.

Rather than immediately setting up a new party, Bob said that what was needed now was "a new national shop stewards' movement to strengthen popular demands of the labour movement.

"We've all got to get together to build these trade union workplace structures to put working-class policies in place.

"Then, we can take this process forward for a political party that can represent working men and women," Bob said.

Labour MP John McDonnell urged socialists, both inside and outside of the party, to "work together in a united front against capitalism.

"There is a new generation coming onto the terrain of struggle," he added, predicting: "In future, new organisational forms may emerge, but they will emerge from struggle."

Scottish Socialist Party convener and MSP Colin Fox outlined Bills which his party is proposing at Holyrood to abolish prescription charges and

introduce free school meals for all pupils.

"But the Scottish Labour Party will oppose us," he pointed out, describing the tactic of trying to change the Labour Party as "questionable."

Coventry City councillor Dave Nellist, a former Labour MP but now a member of the Socialist Party in England outlined how working people were faced with three 'mortgages', one on their house, one on university for their children and one for their old age as pensions were under attack.

Other contributors in the debate backed the call for a new party to be created to avoid electoral clashes.

RMT member Greg Tucker introduced himself as a member

of the Respect coalition, but said "the time has come to move forward and build a new party," calling for further discussions and "practical proposals".

Highlighting the dangers posed to workers by the proposed EU services directive, RMT member Alex Gordon pointed out that it would be a key issue for a new national shop stewards movement to begin work on.

"There will be a very sharp demand to do something concrete to force political action against EU diktats," he predicted, adding that it would prove "the need for a broad democratic movement based on workers' rights." ■



PUBLIC PAY FOR VIRGIN INTRANSIGENCE

The growing cost of Virgin Cross Country's refusal to negotiate a settlement to the dispute over the erosion of Sunday pay rates for guards will be paid for by the public, RMT has revealed.

Following a question put by RMT parliamentary group chair John McDonnell MP, the government admitted that it had paid out around £23 million in the last three years in compensation to train-operating companies that lose revenue during industrial disputes.

The government has indicated that it intends to continue indemnifying employers with public money.

"Virgin Cross Country is cynically throwing huge sums of money at keeping services running on Sundays because they know that the public will eventually foot the bill," RMT general secretary Bob Crow said.

The cost of settling the union's claim works out at less than £6 per shift, yet the company is paying managers an extra £100 each to cover our

members' jobs on strike days.

"They were so desperate they have shelled out for a cab fare to bring a manager more than 200 miles from Plymouth to Birmingham to take charge of a train," said RMT regional organiser Ken Usher.

"Anyone in their right mind will wonder why a company is prepared to spend several times more on a dispute than it would cost to settle it.

"However, Virgin XC know that the public – including people who never use their trains – will be given the bill, which explains why Virgin board overruled its own management and vetoed the settlement reached last summer," he said.

More than 300 RMT members voted by a margin of more than two to one to strike and have refused to work on Sundays since January 1 after the company turned its back on an offer by the union to talk about the erosion of Sunday pay premiums. ■



Tube staff back deal on rosters

RMT Tube station staff overwhelmingly backed new proposals, recommended by the RMT executive, in a referendum to settle a safety dispute to allow the introduction of the 35-hour week.

Station staff, which backed the deal by seven to one, took two days of strike action last month over the introduction of new rosters and staffing levels at London Underground stations.

"Tube station staff have overwhelmingly backed a deal that gives us the safety validation we sought and a mechanism for dealing with outstanding disagreements," said RMT general secretary Bob Crow.

"Under the deal, the 35-hour week for station staff, which RMT never sought to re-negotiate, remains in place, with the benefits of 52 days' leave, enhanced opportunities for promotion and the retention of existing staff numbers," he said.

RMT Tube drivers and signallers also voted by two to one for action short of strike over safety breaches during the dispute.

As the dispute has been

settled, no further industrial action will be taken.

"I would like to pay tribute to drivers and signallers for their solidarity by voting to back action over the crucial issue of safety on London Underground," Bob said.

LUL has agreed to undertake a review of all those displaced under the shorter working week. Functional council reps will be in attendance to ensure that the agreed process is applied in terms of increased travelling time and the suitability of the displacement.

LUL agreed to review every appeal submitted by displaced staff and restart the appeals process, to be overseen by functional council.

In order to resolve outstanding disagreements, the union has secured a review of all rosters across all groups.

The union has secured the release of all level one reps to liaise with the functional council and amend rosters accordingly.

LUL has also agreed to a review of all outstanding areas of concern such as lone working and reduced platform staffing. ■

TUBE DISPUTE ESCALATES

Around 5,000 RMT members on London Underground are being balloted for strike action over the company's failure to resolve a wide range of industrial-relations issues.

Over 1,500 Tube driver members, alongside Aslef drivers, have already voted overwhelmingly for strike action

over issues that include policy on signals passed at danger (Spads), health and safety, bargaining arrangements, harassment, discipline, denial of representation rights and imposition of excessive punishments.

"London Underground attempts to impose rather than

negotiate have undermined industrial relations right across the company," RMT general secretary Bob Crow said.

"LUL is ignoring its own procedures and trying to impose changes and bypass its own established negotiating machinery.

"The only path left open to

us is to ballot our entire Tube membership for industrial action, and we have given London Underground notice to that effect," Bob said.

The result of the latest Tube ballot for station and signal staff will be known on February 23. ■

Reprieve for fire-safety regulations

The union welcomed the government's decision to delay plans to abolish essential fire-safety regulations for sub-surface stations which were introduced after the 1987 King's Cross fire that claimed 31 lives.

The government had previously said that it would allow the 'Section 12' regulations to continue in operation for at least six months after the introduction of the new and less specific Fire Safety Order.

However, following protests from unions and MPs, ministers have indicated that the new order will be delayed and the

existing regulations could remain in place until April 2007.

"This reprieve is excellent news for fire safety in sub-surface railway stations all over Britain," RMT general secretary Bob Crow said.

"The Section 12 regulations lay down fire-safety measures that are simply not specified in the new Fire Safety Order, and RMT, alongside the Fire Brigades Union and Aslef, has been campaigning hard to keep them in place.

"We hope the government will now use the delay to think again about the wisdom of abolishing specific fire-safety

measures in favour of what amounts to a discretionary approach," Bob said.

He said relying on employers not cutting corners was simply not good enough, as transport workers and passengers already knew only too well.

The 1989 regulations cover 'sub-surface stations' throughout Britain, including those on underground systems in Glasgow, Tyne and Wear and London, but also national rail stations which are 'sub-surface', including Birmingham New Street, London's Charing Cross and several in Liverpool.

The government's first move

to scrap the regulations – which lay down minimum staffing levels and other safety standards for sub-surface stations – was opposed by the House of Commons' Regulatory Reform Committee in 2004, following an intervention by RMT parliamentary group convenor John McDonnell (right).

The government subsequently said that it would repeal the regulations in April 2006.

However, the RMT parliamentary group put down early day motion 549 defending the fire regs, which has been signed by over 60 MPs. ■



RMT PARLIAMENTARY GROUP MAKES ENVIRONMENTAL CASE FOR RAIL



A delegation of RMT's parliamentary group met rail minister Derek Twigg and environment minister Elliot Morley recently to make the environmental case for rail.

Amid concerns about line closures and substitution, the meeting arose from a parliamentary question by RMT group member Katy Clark MP.

The group explained that protection of the environment was a key part of the RMT's campaign to protect and expand the railway.

The group reminded ministers that the government has set itself a target of reducing carbon emissions by 20 per cent by 2020 and 60 per cent by 2050.

Rail is less polluting than cars, lorries or planes for passenger journeys.

Car travel produces six times as many CO2 emissions as rail on a journey from London to Edinburgh, whilst a plane journey produced eight times as many emissions as rail.

However, road transport accounts for almost a quarter of all carbon emissions and the RAC has estimated that car use will be 50 per cent higher in 2031.

The Department for Transport calculate that civil airline use is also expected to increase substantially, with the highest estimates predicting it will double over the next 20 years.

At the meeting RMT group members argued that the railways are one of the most environmentally friendly forms of transport.

In light of the government's commitment to reduce carbon emissions, the group sought to establish what joint working was taking place between the Department for Transport and the Department for the Environment.

In a constructive meeting, Elliot Morley and Derek Twigg said that the departments worked closely on this issue to ensure that environmental considerations were taken into account when developing transport policy.

Ministers agreed that it would be useful to write to the RMT group setting out how the department made its environmental assessments. Ministers also agreed to hold a joint conference/seminar with the rail unions, TUC and others to discuss the sustainable case for rail. ■

Parliamentary column

MPS FIGHT TO RETAIN FIRE-SAFETY REGULATIONS

As part of the campaign to maintain sub-surface fire-safety regulations, MPs forced a special parliamentary debate on January 25.

The debate was secured by Celia Barlow, Labour MP for Hove, who argued "sub-surface stations are a special case and require an assured minimum standard of protection, which cannot be afforded by risk assessment and guidance alone".

Celia reminded MPs of the greater need for the regulations following the appalling terrorist attacks on London

"The views of rail workers and those in the emergency services, who performed so honourably, professionally and bravely, need to be taken very seriously indeed," she said.

Celia urged the minister responsible Jim Fitzpatrick to update rather than scrap the regulations.

"The regulations should be modified to take into account the need for any changes that has arisen since their introduction, coupled with support for the principle that sub-surface stations are a special case and that that fact needs to be reflected in a statutory approach," she said.

Labour MP for North-West Leicestershire, David Taylor, said that one of the problems with government proposals was that the proposed new guidance would not have any legal force.

In a moving and highly effective contribution, Labour MP for Hendon, Andrew Dismore, recalled how he visited Kings Cross Fire station on the Sunday after the fire and "the sights that I saw then will haunt me forever".

Andrew is currently chair of the FBU Parliamentary group and was previously an FBU solicitor for 17 years who had represented the family of Colin Townsley, the fire officer who was killed at the fire and posthumously awarded the George medal for bravery.

"I never thought that I would see the day when my government would consider watering down fire safety protection.

"The recommendations made by Sir Desmond Fennell in his report are still valid, if not more so given the current situation with London Underground.

"I have nothing particular against safety assessments, but they should go hand in hand with the underpinning of the detailed regulations that we are debating.

"It is not either/or; let us have both. I am concerned that there will be a watering down," he said.

RMT Parliamentary groups convenor John Mc Donnell MP urged the government to take their proposals back to the House of Commons regulatory Reform Committee for further consider the wisdom of the proposals.

John pointed out that the regulations were more necessary than ever with a 20 per cent increase in passenger traffic and fragmentation of the underground and railway system since the Kings Cross Fire.

"The government has delayed again, so it is not too late to think again, to put the matter out to consultation again, to take on board the expert advice or to take into account changes.

"I dread us introducing such measures as a result of what is almost a stubborn belligerence," he said.

He asked why the government making the proposals at this point in time, and what pressures were on the government to make such proposals.

"What reason is there for the haste with which the government tried to introduce the regulations previously, with inadequate consultation? I am at a loss to see why that change in principle needs to take place at this moment," he said.

Replying on behalf of the government, Jim Fitzpatrick, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister said that there was "a fundamental disagreement about the impact of the new orders".

However, he said that the government said it would not remove the 1989 regulations "until and unless it can be clearly shown that all necessary protections are continued under the new regime".

In a welcome move, he said "we are always open to further discussions about safety and we are maintaining an open dialogue on the issue with the RMT and honourable members" and would take away the points made in the debate.

TEBAY GOES TO TRI

Two years after the tragic events at Tebay, when a runaway trailer killed four RMT members and injured nine others, the case has gone to court

February 15 marks the second anniversary of the Tebay disaster in Cumbria in which four members of RMT were killed by a runaway flatbed trailer.

Chris Waters, 53, of Morecambe, Gary Tindall, 46, of Tebay, Colin Buckley, 49, of Carnforth and Darren Burgess, 30, also of Carnforth, suffered fatal injuries in the tragedy, while a further nine workers suffered physical and psychological injuries.

The union instructed solicitors Bridge McFarland to obtain compensation on behalf of eight members who were injured and the families of three of those who lost their lives.

Speaking to *RMT News*, solicitor Kevin Hughes confirmed that agreement had been reached with lawyers acting for Carillion Rail, for the payment of substantial damages to the families of the deceased. Negotiations are still in progress for the members who survived the disaster.

"Carillion were the men's employers at the time," said Kevin.

"The company's lawyers accepted civil liability quickly, because the deaths and injuries were caused by defective equipment.

"This means that Carillion's insurers will pick up the bill for compensation. However, the criminal charges have been



TRIAL

brought, not against Carillion themselves, but against their contractors who supplied and operated the trailer,"he said.

TRIAL

The trial of the contractors is currently in progress. Mark Connolly from Anglesey and Roy Kennett from Maidstone, Kent, face four counts of manslaughter, which they deny. The trial commenced at Newcastle Crown Court on January 17 and is expected to last up to eight weeks.

Robert Smith QC, prosecuting, told the court that Connolly was the boss of MAC Machinery Services.

He had driven a low loader truck with a railway crane and two trailers to Scout Green on the West Coast Main Line to remove old track. Shortly before 0600, Kennet, who worked for Connolly, began lifting steel off the trailers.

He had placed wooden 'chocs' under the wheels but as he began to unload, the trailer rolled away. The three tonne trailer, laden with 16 tonnes of steel, travelled down a one in seven gradient for four miles before hitting the victims at 40 mph.

Mr Smith alleged that Connolly had deliberately disconnected the brakes on the trailers because the hydraulic systems were in such a poor state of repair that they would not work properly with the crane.

"Ray Kennett, say the prosecution, knew what Mark Connolly had done to the brakes because he confessed to another member of staff that ball bearings had been placed in the hydraulics," he said.

The prosecution say that this had been done to give the appearance of pressure in the pipes if the machinery was subjected to an inspection.

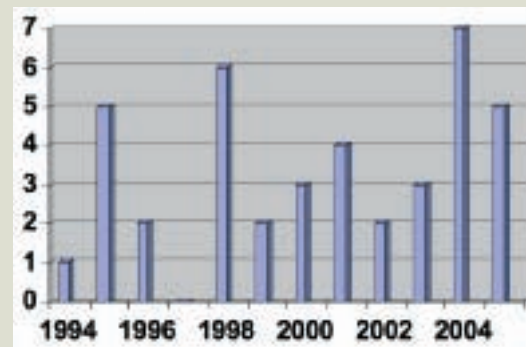
The trial continues. ■

Track worker accidents soar

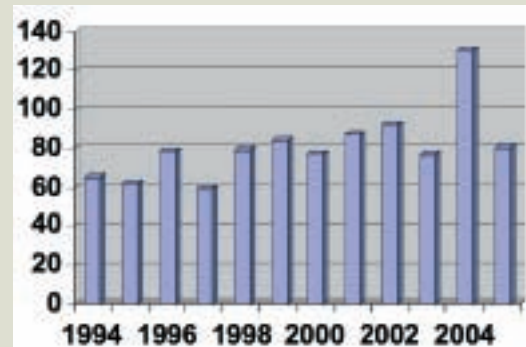
In a submission to the 1876 Royal Commission Inquiry into railway accidents it was stated "railway companies maintain that in about 90 per cent of fatal accidents to their servants the men fall victim to their own misconduct or imprudence, and that the remaining cases are due to the legitimate risks inseparable from their employment".

Unfortunately, recent statements by some employers suggest that companies still seek to blame their employees, whereas a closer examination of the facts shows underlying organisational and management failures had a heavy influence on many of the events.

CURRENT PERFORMANCE



Trackside Fatalities by Year



Trackside Major Injuries by Year

The above chart clearly shows the current safety performance is unacceptable. The number killed in 2004 was the highest since 1991, and last year showed little sign of improvement.

In terms of major injuries, again 2004 was a particularly bad year, but again it can be seen that at best the number of such injuries last year merely saw a return to what was already a higher level of occurrences than the early 1990's. Per 100,000 employed, the current safety performance firmly places track workers into the category of most dangerous occupations in the country.

PLANNING

Many of the accidents in the past few years showed planning failures of one sort or another. Whilst Network Rail have are looking at how the

quality of method statements can be improved, some of the accidents have shown the issues to be much deeper than this, and often go further back into the planning process.

There is also the question as to whether there is now a need for a national competency and assessment standard for those involved in planning activities, in the same way as they apply to other safety critical tasks.

RULES

The current possession rules are based on 20th century working (small worksites, one engineers train). What we often now have are numerous large worksites within possessions stretching for miles, multiple activities within each worksite, and numerous road/railers running around in what is often termed a 'Green Zone'.

RMT demand that there is now an urgent need to stop tinkering with the current rules, which is frequently more about wanting to enhance performance rather than safety.

Instead, there should be a fundamental review that considers the type and method of work needed, the safety risks involved, and the measures needed to control those risks.

ROAD/RAIL VEHICLES

It is now two years since the Tebay accident, but there are still too many uncontrolled dangers arising from the use of road/rail vehicles. Besides inadequate operating rules, there are also outstanding design standard issues. The proposed replacement of the design standard will address some of these, but the changes will take seven years to achieve full effect. What is to be done in the meantime about those risks?

INDUSTRY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

A lot of the problems causing many of the workforce fatal accidents are recognised by various people, and this is reflected in the 50 odd individual initiatives/trials involving new methods of working that are taking place throughout the country. But they are all uncoordinated and lack any central direction.

As a result, past experience has shown such initiatives often disappear and the learning lost as soon as the sponsor moves on.

What is clearly needed is one industry improvement plan that takes in all the above issues, with time based milestones. It is essential that it also has top-level buy-in, and the necessary resources allocated to deliver the required outputs. In the many meetings we have had with Network Rail over the past two years, we have been promised such a plan on many occasions, but so far they have failed to deliver. ■

RMT launches Charter for Women



Equality at work

End low pay

End lone working

Safe transport to and from work

End to sexual harassment

Adequate toilet facilities

Comfortable and appropriate uniform

Menopause support

Health, safety and support during pregnancy

Better maternal pay and leave

The right to flexible, part-time and family-friendly working hours

Childcare facilities



This month RMT launches its Charter for Women – providing the union with a valuable weapon in the struggle to win a fair deal for women at work.

The RMT Charter for Women follows extensive consultation and debate within the union.

Women, who represent ten per cent of RMT membership, continue to face gender discrimination and prejudice at work as well as specific needs relating to childcare, health and personal safety.

If the aims of the Charter are to be realised, the union needs the involvement of women in each workplace – the people best placed to judge what problems need attention and how they can be addressed.

EQUALITY AT WORK -

equal pay, equal terms and conditions

It is unlawful for employers to discriminate on the basis of sex in relation to pay.

However, the Equal Pay Act complements the Sex Discrimination Act in that the latter covers non-contractual issues such as recruitment, training, promotion, dismissal and the allocation of benefits, such as flexible working arrangements or access to a workplace nursery for example.

Performance related pay schemes have been shown to be discriminatory and the union has fought and settled cases on behalf of some women members. Below is a list of how the company you work for could discriminate against women.

END LOW PAY

Of the 1.5 million who benefited from the introduction of the national minimum wage, over two-thirds were women and over two-thirds of these women worked part-time.

The union is campaigning for a minimum wage of two-thirds of male median earnings – up from the current 50 per cent.

END LONE WORKING

RMT demands an immediate end to lone working on stations. The lack of care shown by rail operators and PTEs has led to serious verbal and physical assaults. Statistics show that women rail workers are more likely to be subjected to non-physical assaults than male colleagues.

The open station system poses a continuing threat to security. As well as being a source of major revenue loss, this policy puts lone workers at risk, particularly on late shifts. RMT demands the re-introduction of barrier staff at all stations to deter trespass and fraudulent travel.

SAFE TRANSPORT TO AND FROM WORK

Employers should provide safe and secure transport to workers rostered on late or early shifts. Do you rely on your own transport to get to work and, if so, is there safe and secure parking? If they do provide transport, what sort of transport is it, and can it be improved? Remember, risk assessments are a vital tool in providing evidence to secure better provision.

END SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is no joke – no one should have to endure such behaviour. Whilst many companies have fairly good policies and procedures, problems arise because they are not implemented properly. Find out about your company policy and procedure.

A model bullying and harassment policy and procedures is available on the RMT website, www.rmt.org.uk, along with guidelines of how to deal with cases of harassment.

ACCESS TO ADEQUATE TOILET FACILITIES

Access to sanitary and toilet facilities are regulated under the Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992.

It is important to remember that employers have a general duty under the Health & Safety at Work Act to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all their employees.

Are the facilities OK in your workplace? If not, let your health and safety rep know.

APPROPRIATE UNIFORM – WITH MEANINGFUL CONSULTATION

Differing standards between male and female uniforms is unacceptable. In one instance, men's shirts were made of cotton, whilst women's blouses were made from synthetic fibres, causing skin irritation in some cases. RMT demands that women participate in the consultation process with companies over uniforms.

PROVISION FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH

Sadly, menopause support and menstrual problems have largely been overlooked by the trade union movement. One exception was a TUC report – Working Through the Change – published in 2003.

Physical symptoms include hot flushes, night sweats, palpitations, insomnia, joint aches, tiredness, lack of energy and headaches. Short-term memory loss can also affect some women. RMT demands that all companies introduce menopause policies and that women should not be penalised for absences from work relating to the menopause.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND SUPPORT DURING PREGNANCY

All employers have a statutory duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees.

A good guide in this complicated area, is the Health and Safety Executives' booklet New and Expectant Mothers Who Work.

This is available from the HSE or can be downloaded from their website at www.hse.gov.uk

BETTER MATERNITY LEAVE

The key to whether women take advantage of their legal or contractual entitlements is very often the level of maternity pay.

Many women return to work earlier than they need because of financial pressures.

All pregnant women workers are entitled by law to 26 weeks' ordinary maternity leave, no matter how long they have been employed. Those who have worked for the same employer for at least six months are entitled to an additional 26 weeks.

The ideal would be to achieve full pay equal to contractual pay, and for it to be paid for up to 52 weeks.

THE RIGHT TO FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS

RMT believes that flexible, part-time and family-friendly working hours should be a legal right. Current legislation is dependant upon the goodwill of employers.

However, there should be the regulations on the right to request flexible working beefed up to increase the age limit to 16, include agency workers, extend tribunal application grounds to cover an unreasonable failure to grant flexible working, tribunals to be empowered to impose flexible working, employers should discharge the burden of proof at Tribunal once the facts have been established and provision for the employee to seek a review.

CHILDCARE FACILITIES

Childcare facilities simply do not exist at present within the transport sector. RMT believes that there is a need for a variety of solutions in this field. ■

If you want to be involved in achieving change in your workplace, contact your local rep or branch secretary. For more details of the RMT Women's Charter email Pat Wilkinson at p.wilkinson@rmt.org.uk or telephone 020 7529 8821.

SHIPPING

TUC DEMANDS PROTECTION OF SEAFARERS' JOBS AND MIGRANT WORKERS

Following the recent Irish Ferries dispute, the British TUC has called upon the government to close a loophole in the law which allows employers in the shipping industry to pay migrant seafarers much lower wages than UK crews.

Speaking at the annual TUC/Equal Opportunities Review discrimination law conference at Congress House, TUC deputy general secretary, Frances O'Grady said that under UK law it is completely lawful for ship owners to pay migrant seafarers substantially less per hour than the British crew members they work alongside.

"This allows shipping employers who want to keep their costs down to do so by employing migrant workers on poverty pay, and laying off workers to whom they are legally obliged to pay the

minimum wage.

"This is because the Race Relations Act contains an exemption allowing ship owners to blatantly discriminate on pay rates on the basis of nationality. This practice is widespread in the shipping industry," she said.

She said that it was simply not acceptable that Indian, Polish, Portuguese or other migrant workers can be paid lower rates on British ships than their colleagues who are British nationals.

"It leads ship owners to try and sack their workforces and replace them with workers of different nationalities at lower rates.

"Just before Christmas, at Irish Ferries, we saw all too vividly what this means in practice. When - in scenes reminiscent of a James Bond film - security guards took control of the company's two

ships, with some crew fearing a terrorist attack was taking place.

"All to allow East European workers - reportedly on £2.60 an hour - to replace the existing workforce," she said.

The TUC and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions backed large scale campaigns and staged days of action to highlight the plight of the 543 seafarers deemed too expensive to employ, and to expose the inadequacies of UK law.

Eventually a successful settlement was reached - but all too often the underlying pay practices are hard to eliminate.

The TUC will be pressing ministers to amend the Race Relations Act so that racist pay practices against seafarers can be outlawed for once and for all.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow welcomed the TUC endorsement of the campaign to amend the Race Relations Act.

He said that the union had formally submitted complaints to the International Labour Organisation and the International Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights over the matter. ■

£5000 FOR THE MERCHANT SEAMANS WAR MEMORIAL SOCIETY



DONATION: RMT general secretary Bob Crow and EC member Mark Carden hand over £5,000 to Springbok secretary Trevor Goacher. The donation came from redundancy agreements for P&O staff negotiated by RMT solicitors Bridge Macfarlands.



SHIPPING

EU PORTS DIRECTIVE DUMPED

The European Commission's controversial plans to deregulate port services were soundly rejected by MEPs last month by 532 votes to 120.

The vote came two days after thousands of dockworkers staged militant protests in Strasbourg in opposition to controversial plans that envisaged seafarers undertaking dockers work.

The defeat of the law means that work in hundreds of ports of the 25 countries in the European Union will continue to be handled by trained dockworkers.

The proposed rules would have allowed port operators to employ independent contractors to load and unload vessels and let ship crews do the unloading themselves.

International Transport Workers Federation dockers secretary Frank Leys welcomed

the rejection of the plans on the grounds of safety and security.

"Dockers are no longer hired on street corners, they are trained professionals.

"I have always respected seafarers, but it is crucial that loading and unloading is left to experienced workers.

"We reject self-handling by already fatigued seafarers and unregistered workers ashore," he said.

He also pointed out that security was needed more than ever in ports.

"The use of casual workers hired by companies offering their services to shipping companies does not go hand in hand with maximising security in the port area," he said.

The president of the European Parliament Josep Borrell insisted that the

Commission should have withdrawn the legislation once it became clear that it would be defeated, "they could have saved a lot of time and effort".

This is the second time that the European Commission has brought forward legislation to deregulate port services and the second time that the plans have been forcefully rejected, it is unclear whether the Commission will try again.

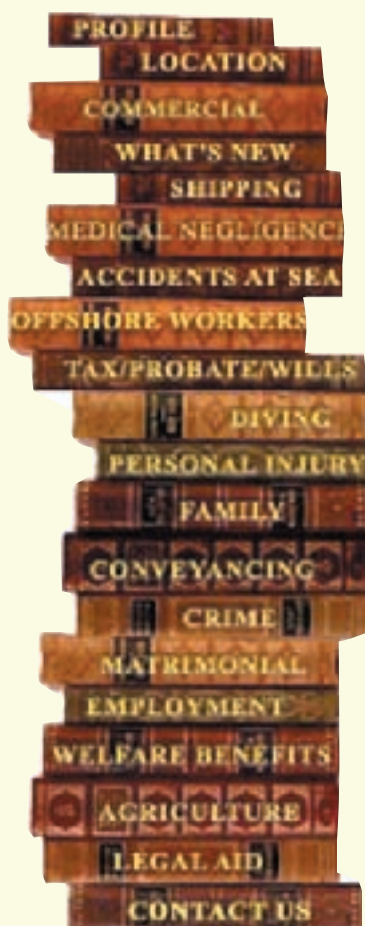
EU transport commissioner Jacques Barrot hinted that Brussels would return to the unpopular plans by claiming the need to create "a genuine European ports policy".

"Opening up port activities would allow for further competitiveness and growth," he said.

Dockworkers staged a number of strikes, ranging from a few hours to a day, to protest against the proposal. ■



Dockers from several European countries protesting against the European Commission's proposed revised port services package in Strasbourg January 16, 2006. The package, aimed at deregulating port services, was rejected by the European Parliament the next day in Strasbourg.



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DEFENDING THE RAIL

RMT has joined with other unions to campaign in defence of the Railways Pension Scheme

RMT has written to Alistair Darling, Secretary of State for Transport, to seek a meeting to discuss the Railways Pension Scheme.

The letter, signed by other unions, draws attention to the high contribution rates faced by many members following the Scheme's recent actuarial valuation.

Following the 2001 valuation, surpluses which had kept contributions artificially low were coming to an end.

Therefore, the Joint Contribution Rate needed to revert to the level required to buy future benefits.

However, the valuation also revealed deficits in the majority of sections and

contributions needed to rise even higher in order to clear the deficit.

Although the member default contribution rate (the rate required to fund future benefits and clear the deficit) for three train operating companies is lower than ten per cent, most are nearer 11 per cent and the highest 18.65 per cent.

For Engineering/Infrastructure Sections the situation is even worse with default rates ranging between 11.02 per cent and 21.12 per cent. Alarmingly, several have rates in excess of 14 per cent.

These deficits have arisen partly through poor financial returns, but also as a result of the actuary allowing for pensioners to live longer.

This is compounded by the actuary also deciding that any deficits must be repaid within nine years rather than over a longer period. Contribution rates for sections where the employer has closed the scheme to new entrants are 3 per cent to 4 per cent higher than for open sections.

ISING CONTRIBUTIONS

Employees recruited since privatisation may not have realised contributions could continue to rise inexorably. Even those protected members who understood the possibility of fluctuating contributions would not have anticipated becoming responsible for deficits attributable to pensioners and deferred members arising from changed actuarial assumptions.

RMT is concerned that members will be unable, or unwilling, to pay ever higher contributions, as there is a finite limit to the increases individuals are able to absorb before deciding that the scheme is unaffordable.

However, each individual opting-out means deficits become the responsibility of fewer members, thus increasing contributions further for those who remain.

If those who opt-out are predominantly younger members, the average scheme age would rise, requiring additional increases to compensate for the section's older age profile.

These events could result in an uncontrolled spiral of increased costs and

reducing membership, a situation that must be avoided at all costs.

PENSION CRISIS?

Recently, the media has been awash with stories of employers closing their final salary schemes, despite having taken contributions holidays during the late 1980s and the 1990s.

All current railway employers have enjoyed surpluses built up during the latter BR years when thousands of railway staff left the industry in preparation for privatisation.

Therefore, the union believes that it is totally unfair to expect existing members to pay higher contributions merely because the actuary's assumptions have changed, or because the employer has taken a business decision to reduce employment costs by closing their section.

Even worse is the fact that some members have been placed in closed sections with higher contribution levels following reorganisation of franchises by the government.

RMT believes that if the railways had been kept in the public sector contributions would be kept to a realistic and affordable level.

The old member contribution rate for the BR Pension Scheme prior to the surplus declared in 1988 was 10.56 per cent. It is unacceptable for rates to exceed that level.

RMT believes that the employer should bear responsibility for any additional contributions and recoup any overpayments from future surpluses.

The actuary has indicated that proposed contribution rates have 70-75 per cent of producing a surplus. Therefore, it is not unrealistic to expect the employer to take up a greater part of any current shortfall. Companies are also able to offset additional contributions against tax.

ONE FUND

The union also believes the RPS should revert to being one fund rather than individual sections. Therefore, as a step towards such a unified fund, RMT is proposing one section for the TOCs, one section for infrastructure/engineering companies and one omnibus section covering the remaining employers.

The 1994 pensioners section – the section for pensioners at privatisation – would continue as at present.

RMT policy of contributions no greater



Our Jobs,
Our Pensions
Our Dignity

Photograph copyright Stefano Cagnoni,
reportdigital

RAILWAY PENSION FUND

than 10.56 per cent has been argued at every employer/TU meeting, but the actuary's default rates will be introduced with effect from July 1 unless alternative arrangements are agreed.

No agreements have yet been reached and RMT knows that behind the scenes many employers are discussing closing the RPS and introducing inferior arrangements.

Private employers want people to work until 65, only have inflation proofing of 2.5 per cent instead of full RPI, have pensions based on the career average earnings instead of being based on the final year's salary and no ill-health benefits.

The level of basic contributions may be towards the higher end of acceptability but represent reasonable value.

However, the problems with the scheme are those sections which are in deficit, the length of time being allowed to clear any deficit and the closed sections.

RMT has made realistic proposals to deal

with this situation and it is essential that the union fights to retain the RPS.

CAMPAIGN

A joint letter from RMT, ASLEF and TSSA was sent to the Association of Train Operating Companies rather than contacting individual Train Operating Companies in order to find a way forward to facilitate affordable pension provision within the rail industry.

However, ATOC has refused to meet with the unions. Similar joint letters were sent to Network Rail and the Engineering companies. Responses received have been disappointing.

It is clear the employers want to continue

raking high profits out of the rail network and anything that reduces those profits is of no interest to them.

However, since that time, Amicus has also agreed to join the campaign. Therefore, RMT and the other unions will be touring the country campaigning and speaking at meetings to generate support in defence of members' pensions.

The RPS offers good benefits and RMT wants to ensure that it remains a viable affordable prospect for railway industry employees now, and in the future. This can only be achieved with the members support so look out for meetings in your area. ■

A BRIEF GUIDE TO RPS BENEFITS

CONTRIBUTIONS

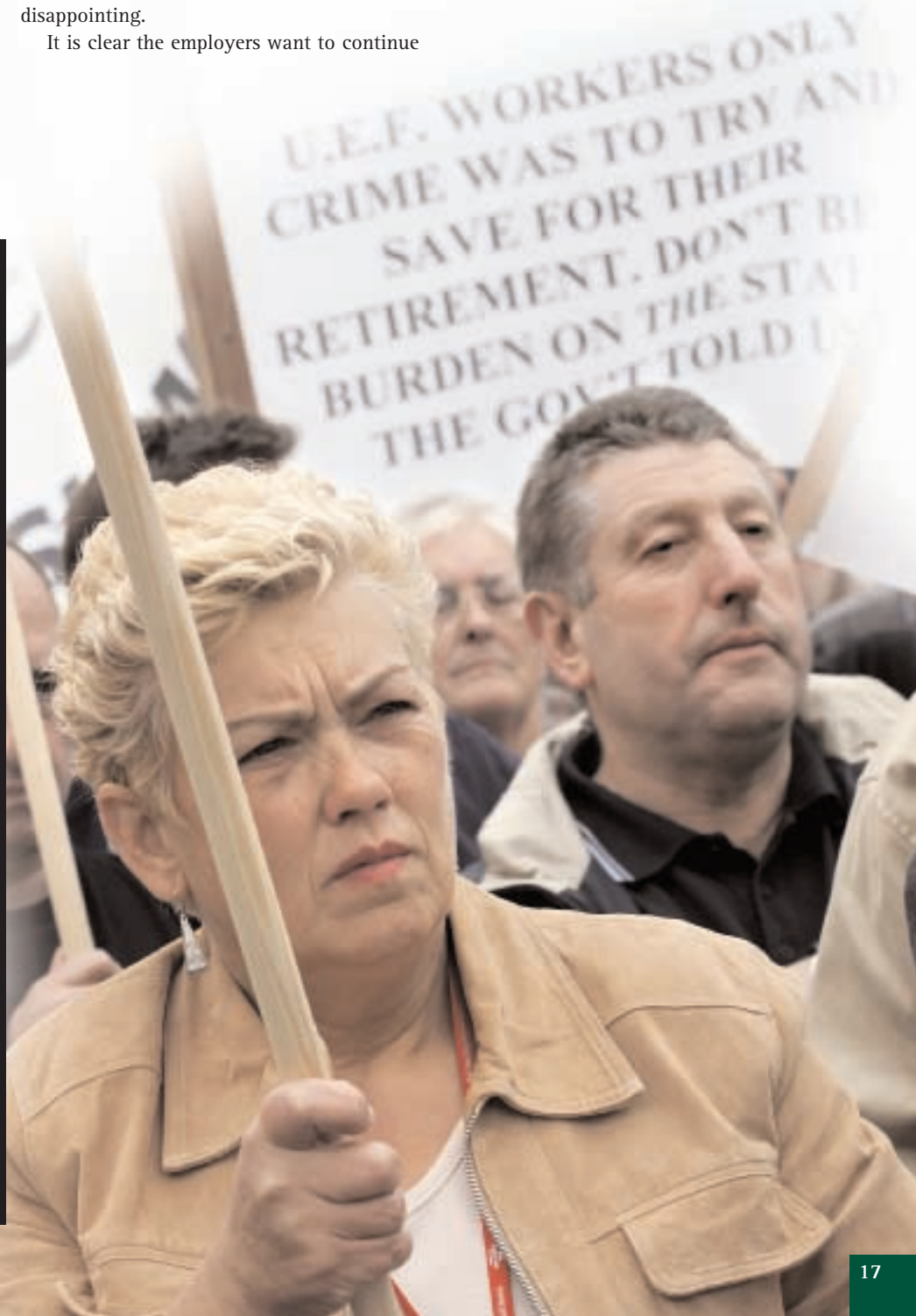
Contributions to the fund are determined by the Actuary based on the future cost of buying benefits. The member and employer rate is known as the Joint Contribution Rate. The employer pays 60 per cent of the costs and members 40 per cent. Contributions are tax free. Also scheme members pay lower National Insurance contributions.

PENSION

Calculating retirement benefits from the RPS is complicated. Pensions are based on 1/60th of final average pay for each year in the scheme. Final average pay is basic pay plus any allowances agreed as pensionable less 1.5 times the Lower Earning Limits. The LEL rises each year and is currently £4,264. So the amount deducted to give scheme pay would be £6,396. For example, a member with final average pay of £18,500 and 30 years in the fund would receive a pension of £6,052. This would be index-linked in line with RPI increases.

LUMP SUM

In addition to the basic pension, RPS members also receive a tax free lump sum of 1/40th of final average pay for each year in the scheme. So that the same person outlined above with final average pay of £18,500 would, after thirty years' scheme membership, receive a tax free lump sum of £13,875.



A STRATEGY FOR

RMT's organising strategy seeks to improve its ability to recruit workers into the union and retain members once they have joined

Every RMT region has been developing and planning recruitment activities to ensure that every transport worker is encouraged to join the union.

The aim is to have active workplace representatives in every workplace and for the union to educate, train and fully support local union reps.

The bigger the union gets, the better it can protect and improve members' jobs, pay, pensions and conditions.

ORGANISE

Organising is about more than just recruitment – it's about building an active RMT organisation in the workplace and making sure that the organisation is self-sufficient

and sustainable.

The union co-ordinates organising campaigns, supporting the vital day-to-day work done by workplace reps, and the RMT organising unit has been created to give maximum support and assistance.

Workplace reps are the best people to explain the benefits of RMT membership to non-members. Therefore, new reps receive training as soon as possible to build sustainable union structures in the workplace. A larger membership gives RMT members a greater influence, thus improving the union's ability to achieve positive results for working people.

INDUCTION COURSES

A part of the strategy is to address staff induction courses and inform new workers of their rights and eligibility to join a trade union. You can assist by informing your regional offices the dates of forthcoming induction courses. If you find out that RMT was represented at an induction course it is important to inform your regional organiser or your branch secretary.

The organising unit has produced a free 52-page guide to help members who address such induction courses on behalf of the union. This includes a handy seven minute DVD, presented by comedian

and activist Mark Thomas, which can be shown during the class itself.

RECRUITING

Regional councils carry out regular recruitment activities at least one day a week.

This involves activists visiting workplaces to recruit members. Site visits also raise the profile of the union and keep the union in touch with issues that matter to staff.

The union has also encouraged branches to draw up plans for local recruitment and organising.

This includes working out the branch's potential membership, ensuring workplaces have reps, giving reps adequate training and ensuring reps have paid release to carry out their duties. The union has a stock of recruitment materials to assist branches in their work.

Legal services helpline for Scottish & North East England members - freephone 0800 328 1014

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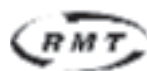
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GROWTH

RMT ORGANISING WEEKS

Every region holds at least one annual organising week to recruit new members and train new reps to represent the interests of members.

Alan Pottage of the organising unit points out that such intensive recruitment activity brings together activists and allows the union to see how well organised various workplaces around the country are.

"Local organisation varies, of course, but we can only find out by getting out and about across entire regions," he said.

RMT has a varied supply of recruitment materials that are available free of charge to members.

You can order direct from the Organising Unit by phoning 0207 819 9843 or emailing: org.unit@rmt.org.uk

ORGANISING UNIT-CONTACT DETAILS

If you would like to speak to someone about organising call:

Organising unit and order line:
020 7819 9843

National Organising Co-ordinator:

Alan Pottage
07734 088 305

Recruitment and Retention Organisers:

Donald Graham
07753 748 074

John Milligan
07753 748 147

Gerry Hitchen
07834 352 834

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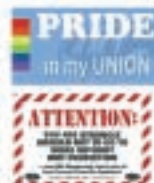
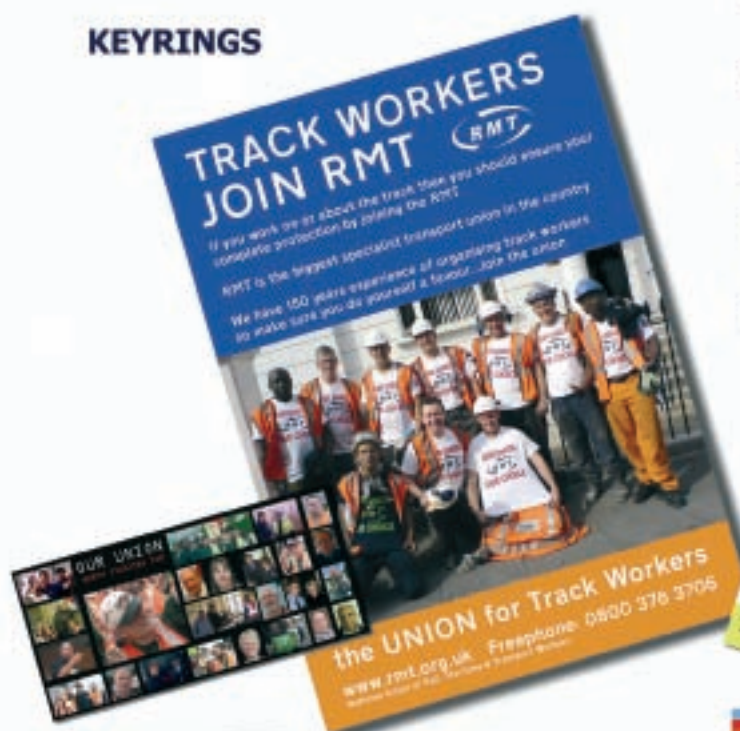
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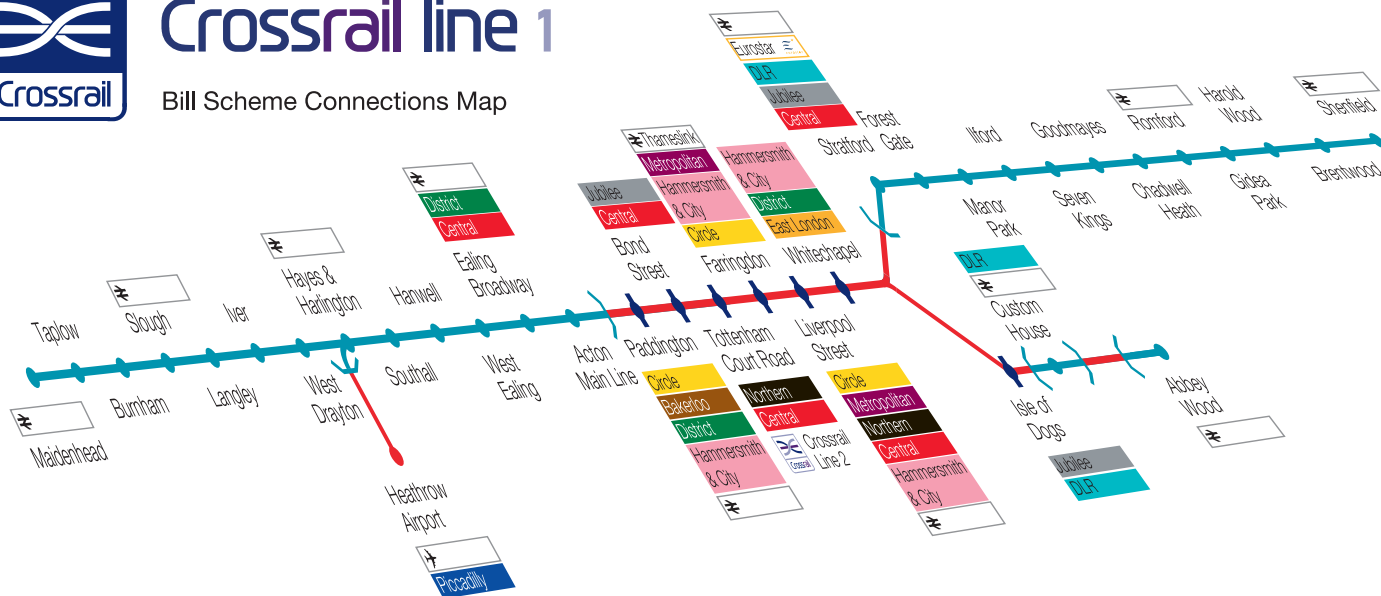
FOR CROSS RAIL

RMT has joined the Campaign for Crossrail coalition to put pressure on MPs, Peers and Ministers to make sure the new rail artery for London actually happens



Crossrail line 1

Bill Scheme Connections Map



Ten Members of Parliament are currently deliberating the future of Crossrail in a special Select Committee of the House of Commons.

They will spend the next few months – maybe a year – scrutinising the detail of the Crossrail Bill and improving it where possible. But what is Crossrail and why does Britain need it?

Crossrail, a joint venture company between Transport for London (TfL) and the Department for Transport (DfT), is a new train line planned to link Paddington in London to Liverpool Street with a tunnel. It will also have a south-eastern branch from Whitechapel to the Isle of Dogs and onward to Abbey Wood east of Woolwich.

Existing train lines from Maidenhead in Berkshire to Paddington and Shenfield in Essex to Liverpool Street will be upgraded and become part of Crossrail. The new line is projected to carry about 200 million passengers each year.

ALL CHANGE

Campaign for Crossrail director Alex Hilton explains that more than carrying millions of passengers, Crossrail changes the way its passengers use public transport in London.

“Today, commuters along the Slough or Shenfield corridors usually have to change onto the underground at Liverpool Street or Paddington and often change again nearer their destination.

“Crossrail cuts through the heart of the West End and the City with stations at Bond Street, Tottenham Court Road and Farringdon, providing far more options for commuters and reducing the passenger bottleneck at the two rail termini,” he says.

If you add to this the benefit of having two spare platforms at each of the current termini, the platforms could be used to increase the regularity of services on other corridors.

However, the benefit of connecting the City, West End, Canary Wharf and the

commuter belt won’t just be felt in London.

The Department for Transport has estimated that Crossrail will add £24 billion to the UK economy.

The scheme itself will cost in the region of £10 to £15 billion. This makes Crossrail an enormous rail project, dwarfing even the Channel Tunnel Rail Link.

But like CTRL, it will stimulate investment and regeneration along the route. Canary Wharf alone plans to build enough office space for 90,000 new jobs on the Isle of Dogs and sites all along the route have been identified for development.

This new line, which will serve Stratford in east London, isn’t scheduled to be ready in time for the 2021 Olympic games, the planned opening instead being planned for 2015/6.

But even so, Crossrail will secure the legacy of the Olympics, ensuring it doesn’t become and expensive white

elephant after the games – just as it will ensure the success of the Thames Gateway regeneration plan.

Alex points out that Crossrail is not just good news for London. The steel, ballast, cement, signalling – everything to make a train line work, including the trains themselves – would all be made outside London in the rest of the country.

And the scheme ensures that London would continue to compete with other world cities, because jobs that are lost in London are more likely to go to Frankfurt, New York or Shanghai than to elsewhere in Britain.

“Securing London’s future is necessary for the whole country as this one city is the dynamo at the heart of the UK economy and any failure to keep London moving will be felt by people all over Britain,” says Alex. ■

For more information on Cross Rail and the campaign visit websites www.campaignforcrossrail.com or www.crossrail.co.uk/

CRIMINAL COMPENSATION SCHEME UNDER ATTACK

RMT resists government plan to scrap financial support for 90 per cent of victims of crime who apply for compensation

In the wake of the London bombing last year, the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme (CICS) was heavily criticised for delays in payment and the small size of compensation to those caught up in the carnage.

In response to this criticism, the government has produced a Green Paper "Rebuilding Lives, supporting victims of crime".

However, the Green Paper is little more than a re-jigging of a consultation paper that was produced two years ago. Moreover, it proposes to scrap financial support for "less serious" crimes, and instead replace it with "practical and emotional support" provided by a new Victim Care Unit.

CRIMINAL CUTBACKS

The Green Paper implies that the 'less serious' crimes are ones which had previously been awarded a compensation payment of less than £5,500 and which account for nearly 90 per cent of awards provided by the CICS.

This reform would remove the vast majority of claims presented to the CICS by the union including almost all assaults on staff.

Through the CICS, thousands of pounds have been secured by RMT on behalf of members to give recognition to the pain and grief that crime has directly caused in their lives. If enacted, these proposals will almost completely remove the right to compensation for the kind of claims put in by members.

One cutback that particularly worries the union is the "removal of awards made to

train drivers who witness suicide in front of a train or who deal with the immediate aftermath". This covers train crew and track staff member that have to deal directly with the physical and mental trauma of a suicide. For RMT, the threat to remove such compensation from the most traumatised of our members is callous and a cut too far.

The Green Paper contains some welcome proposals, such as removing the cap on financial awards, helping secure interim payments and speeding up the whole process. The emphasis on emotional support tailored to the needs of the victim is well-meaning although RMT would ask that counselling is handled sensitively and at the victim's request.

MAKING EMPLOYERS RESPONSIBLE?

Whilst the union argues that employers should be responsible for the health and safety of its employees at work, putting the onus on them for compensation for a criminal act whilst at work would remove the security provided by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA).

It is also likely that employers will deny liability. Therefore, instead of a clearly identifiable table of compensation centrally run by the government, an employer-based scheme would lead to a lottery, creating further bureaucracy and increased uncertainty for the victim.

Ultimately, the CICS was established to give a practical



A CASE IN POINT

RMT member Mark Harding was attacked two years at Whitechapel station while in uniform on his way home from work. He received serious injuries after assailants beat him with a baseball bat.

RMT helped him reach a settlement with the CICA for £2,500. He donated much of the compensation to the union's widows and orphans fund and the RMT dispute fund.

"I would like to thank the union for their assistance and it just goes to show the importance of this compensation scheme," he said.

As Hammersmith and City branch secretary Mark has also assisted other members who were caught up in the London bombings on July 7.

This included a claim settlement for RMT member John Boyle, who received an MBE for services to public transport for his actions following the London bombings.

expression to a communal sense of responsibility and sympathy to innocent victims of crime.

Yet, while the statistics say that the number of people who are the victims of crime has fallen by 40 per cent in the last ten years, the government is clearly more concerned about the costs of the scheme.

The government is justifying a programme of substantial cuts on the basis that the scheme pays out more compensation than all the other schemes in the EU put together (ignoring their more generous benefit systems) instead of being proud that this country supports its victims of crime in a real and

practical way.

The union will be making its representation to the government on these and other causes of concern in the Green Paper, to defend the right of innocent victims of crime to be given compensation for how they suffered. ■



COMPENSATION: Mark Harding benefited from payments following assault

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Ladies Tee Inherit Print	Black	8/10	£11.99	£5.00
Ladies Tee World Print	Black	Size 12/14	£11.99	£5.00
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Ladies Workers of the World Unite	White	16/18	£11.99	£5.00
Ladies Workers of the World Unite	White	8/10	£11.99	£5.00
Ladies Workers of the World Unite	White	Size 12/14	£11.99	£5.00
Ladies Workers of the World Unite	Black	8/10	£11.99	£5.00
Ladies Workers of the World Unite	Black	16/18	£11.99	£5.00
Ladies Workers of the World Unite	Black	Size 12/14	£11.99	£5.00
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Ladies Shirt Ayers Rock	Black	Size 12/14	£16.98	£8.00
Ladies Shirt Ayers Rock	Black	Size 12/14	£16.98	£8.00
Ladies Cravat	Red		£4.50	£1.00
	Blue		£4.50	£1.00
Mens Tee Inherit Print	White	XXL	£11.99	£5.00
Mens Tee Inherit Print	White	XL	£11.99	£5.00
Mens Tee Inherit Print	White	L	£11.99	£5.00
Mens Tee Inherit Print	White	M	£11.99	£5.00
Mens Tee Inherit Print	White	M	£11.99	£5.00
Mens Tee Inherit Print	China	M	£11.99	£5.00
Mens Tee Inherit Print	China	XL	£11.99	£5.00
Mens Tee Inherit Print	China	L	£11.99	£5.00
Mens Tee Inherit Print	China	XXL	£11.99	£5.00
Mens Tee Inherit Print		XXL	£11.99	£5.00
Mens Tee Inherit Print		XL	£11.99	£5.00
Mens Tee Inherit Print		L	£11.99	£5.00
Mens Shirt		15 1/2	£17.98	£8.00
Mens Shirt		16 1/2	£17.98	£8.00
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Mens Workers of the World Unite	White	XL	£9.99	£5.00
Mens Workers of the World Unite	White	M	£9.99	£5.00
Mens Workers of the World Unite	White	XXL	£9.99	£5.00
Mens Workers of the World Unite	China	M	£11.99	£5.00

ITEM	COLOUR	SIZE	PRICE	REDUCED
Mens Workers of the World Unite	China	L	£11.99	£5.00
Mens Workers of the World Unite	China	XL	£11.99	£5.00
Mens Workers of the World Unite	China	XXL	£11.99	£5.00
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Mens Polo RMT & Workers Unite	Green	"L,XL,XXL"	£8.00	£4.00
	Navy Blue	"L,XL,XXL"	£8.00	£4.00
Mens Tee World Print	Black	XL	£11.99	£5.00
Mens Tee World Print	Black	L	£11.99	£5.00
Mens Tee World Print	Black	M	£11.99	£5.00
Mens Tee World Print	Black	XXL	£11.99	£5.00
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		XL	£9.99	£5.00
		XXL	£9.99	£5.00
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	Stone	"SX,S,M,L "	£27.99	£15.00
	Black	"SX,S,M,L,XL"	£27.99	£15.00
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Leather Notecase			£7.99	£3.00
RMT Mugs	Green		£3.00	£1.00
Golf Umbrella			£10.99	£5.00
High Visibility Jackets		"M,XL"	£9.50	£5.00
Woven Blazer Badge			£1.50	FREE
Woollen Scarf			£5.00	£2.50
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ENGINEERING HARMONISATION

A well-attended special engineering grades conference held in Doncaster last month discussed harmonisation of terms and conditions of Network Rail staff



Conference chair Greg Hewitt opened the meeting by telling over 100 delegates that it was a crucial time for their grades. After Network Rail took maintenance work back in house, the opportunity had arisen to finally get rid of the myriad of different pay rates and conditions introduced since privatisation.

RMT general secretary, Bob Crow, told conference that it wasn't going to be an easy task but he hoped delegates would get the ball rolling and produce a paper that gave the General Grades Committee guidance as to how to progress members' wishes.

"Harmonisation would allow members to move from one end of the country to the other they would retain the same rate of pay and conditions.

"At present you needed a degree in accountancy to work out if you would be better or worse off following a move," Bob said.

As there were so many

delegates in attendance the conference split in to two workshops, one being chaired by the general secretary and the other by the senior assistant general secretary Mick Cash, to come up with a number of principles on the major issues of pay, sick pay, annual leave, the working week, and London allowance.

In supporting one set of pay and conditions for track grades, conference requested the union to consult with RMT supervisory members on harmonised pay and conditions. Mick Cash assured supervisory members that meetings would be held with supervisory representatives to come up with proposals.

AGREEMENT

Bob Crow said it would be difficult to set out specifics on each issue involved as the combinations would run into the hundreds and the conference would probably last a year.

Therefore, it was quite a surprise that the two workshops

produced very similar reports. Further discussion took place and a resolution and set of proposals were agreed that would be placed before the union's general grades committee.

One very important demand was that no member would be worse off as a result of harmonisation.

If a member was "ring-fenced" on a personal rate of pay then they must automatically receive the annual pay increase and not stay on their personal rate until the other members in the same grade caught up. This was the case under British Rail.

It was agreed that further details will be consulted on with reps, branches and further special meetings, with an update initially taking place at the Engineering Conference 2006 in Fort William in April.

The new RMT website should give news updates and information on progress of negotiations and provide special

newsletters with regards grades outside Network Rail. This is being discussed at the RMT projects and renewal forum.

Conference agreed that the union must be prepared to use industrial action if Network Rail was intransigent in its response and attempted to enforce unacceptable changes.

The general secretary informed conference that at the end of the negotiating process members would have the final say on whether to accept or reject the new terms.

Conference chair closed by thanking Doncaster branch and Dave Collinson in particular for all the hard work in setting up the meeting. ■

UP FOR NEGOTIATION:

- Working Week
- Annual Leave
- Sick Pay
- London allowance
- Pay
- Grading system
- Job descriptions



EUROPEAN ROUND-UP

German rail workers to strike against privatisation during World Cup



German railway workers may stage strikes during the World Cup this summer if the government moves to sell-off the state-owned rail operator Deutsche Bahn (DB).

"We don't want to but if necessary we will strike during the World Cup," Klaus-Dieter Hommel, the head of one of two unions representing German railway workers said.

Germany's new conservative government has endorsed the outgoing Social Democrat-Green coalition's policy to privatise the country's rail group DB, probably in 2008.

However, workers have serious concerns that the sell-off will slash up to 50,000 jobs – a fifth of DB's 250,000 workforce.

Germany's transport minister Wolfgang Tiefensee said that the government would decide later exactly how to privatise Deutsche Bahn for a stock market listing. He said that one option would be to split Bahn into two firms, one operating tracks and the other operating trains, in line with EU directive 91/440.

However, DB chief executive Hartmut Mehdorn opposes such a split and wants to privatise an integrated rail network. Meanwhile, DB expects its final 2005 profits to double the £160 million reported in 2004 – its first profits for 10 years.

FINLAND DEMANDS DELAY IN EU RAIL AND BUS 'LIBERALISATION' RULES

The Finnish government is demanding longer transition periods than the European Commission envisions in its proposal on EU rail, bus and coach services, according to a letter sent by the Ministry of Transport and Communications to Parliament.

The ministry would like to see the transition periods run until at least 2017 and until 2015 in bus and coach traffic.

The new regulations, which have been under preparation since 2000, would bring public transport contracts under open tender in the name of 'liberalisation'.

UNION ACTION COMPELS SWITCH TO UK FLAG

French unions through their action have compelled LD Lines to switch its new Portsmouth-Le Havre ferry service from the Italian second register to the British flag. The Norman Spirit, the only ferry on the line, is expected to change register flag by September 30.

LD Lines, a subsidiary of France's Louis Dreyfus Armateurs, started the service at the beginning of October when it took over the route from P&O. Most of the crew is Italian, but British, French and Portuguese nationals also serve on board.

Last December about 100 French seafarers prevented the vessel from docking at Le Havre in protest that a cross Channel ferry was flying the Italian flag.

The Norman Spirit, which was carrying 80 lorries and some passengers, was only able to berth after several hours at sea when the action was called off. LD Lines said the Italian flag was legal but despite extra costs it would switch registers to "ensure a secure operation".

SCANDAL IN SPAIN: WHAT REALLY HAPPENED TO "PRESTIGE"?

The massive pollution by the sinking of the Bahamas-registered Prestige off the coast of Galicia, northern Spain in 2002 has caused a major scandal in Spain with the leak of a tape that reveals that the vessel was allowed to remain at sea despite a call for help.

A tape of a conversation between the then director-general of Spain's merchant marine and the head of the national maritime rescue centre was released by Izquierda Unida, the communist coalition.

It revealed a decision to send the damaged Prestige out to sea was taken without technical advice hours after the vessel had issued a MayDay.

During the conversation, the merchant director said the aim was to tow the ship away from the coast until it sank.

The authorities had previously claimed the decision to tow the ship away from the coast was taken after consultation with experts. At the time, most maritime experts said the ship should have been taken to a place of refuge.

Tens of thousands of tonnes of toxic fuel oil which leaked from the Prestige after it sank will continue to pollute the shore for a decade and Greenpeace complains that no change has been made in international legislation to prevent accidents of this sort in the future.

FRENCH UNIONS SLAM NEW MINIMUM SALARIES

France's six main maritime unions have slammed the government's minimum salary rates for skilled seafarers resident outside France but working on board ships registered under the RIF, France's new International Ship register.

The unions said the \$620 (£400) a month minimum monthly salary, based on the ITF's agreement with the Filipino union AMOSUP, is "dishonest" as it does not meet its claim to be based on ITF criteria. The owners' association supports the new rates.

The unions said the conditions laid down are far from ITF agreements that cover 8,300 vessels including several operated by French owners.

They said the government's document does not take into account the ITF's minimum salary scales and leaves such important aspects such as overtime pay, leave and meal allowances to the discretion of the owner. Seafarers' health coverage rights are unclear.

"We rejected the RIF from the outset and will continue to fight it", the unions said. "The government's salary conditions will ensure that the RIF will remain classified as an FoC". ■



SUNK: The Prestige oil tanker floats above water before sinking off the coast of Galicia, northwestern Spain on November 19 2002.

ESTONIA TO RENATIONALISE RAIL

The Estonian government has announced plans to buy 66 per cent of Estonian Railways from the US and Estonian investors who bought the company in 2000.

Economy Minister Edgar Savisaar said that there was "a great probability that the Economy Ministry has come to the position that we support re-purchase".

The 66 per cent stake is owned by Baltic Rail Services, while the Estonian government owns 34 per cent.

The current coalition government consists of the Reformists, the Centre Party and the People's Union and one is against the purchase of the shares, but have said the current three billion kroons (192 million euros) being asked for by Baltic Rail Services is irrational.

BRS paid about 1 billion kroons with the obligation to invest hundreds of millions of kroons.

"I want to know why the price has tripled in the meantime," said Meelis Atonen, former economy minister who also sat on the council of Estonian Railway.

"It is clearly too much. We should not pay for the unbeneficial investments like US locomotives that are not suitable and good enough for Estonian Railway".

Investment obligations set out in the contract have also not been fully met.

Baltic Rail Services CEO Edward Burkhardt claim that investors have lost about 800 million kroons in revenues due to the low infrastructure fees set by the government that BRS can charge competitors.

Some parties, such as the People's Union, want to see the government regain control of infrastructure, while leaving cargo-handling to the private sector. But even if the government is only interested in the infrastructure, it will also have to purchase operating services as well. ■



No to the Services Directive

President's column

The recent Irish Ferries dispute provided a stark example of the kind of onslaught to expect on workers' wages and conditions if the proposed EU services directive is implemented across the bloc.

Irish Ferries announced plans to replace nearly 600 Irish seafarers with sweated labour from Eastern Europe at considerably lower rates of pay.

The company ignored Ireland's minimum wage legislation by registering its ships in Cyprus and the Dublin government claims nothing can be done about it.

This provoked huge protests across Ireland and even Irish premier Bertie Ahern was ringing his hands about the injustice of the situation.

Yet the Irish government is supporting the introduction of the EU Services Directive which would institutionalise the disgraceful antics of Irish Ferries into EU law and accelerate such 'social dumping'.

Exploiters' charter

The aim of the services directive, known as the Frankenstein Directive, is to introduce free-market competition to all economic services operating within the EU, including health and education.

Under the Directive's "country of origin" principle, service providers would be allowed to operate according to the laws of their country of origin rather than those of the host country – setting in train a further race to the bottom in terms of pay and conditions.

This would allow companies registered in EU member states with minimal labour standards to undercut pay and conditions secured by workers in other member states. The directive would also allow a British company to establish itself in a poorer member state and return to Britain to implement lower standards.

This is just the latest example of the EU's neo-liberal agenda following directives demanding the 'liberalisation' of railways, postal services and other essential services.

Brussels is using the free movement of labour, capital and services across the EU,

enshrined in EU rules, to dilute and even destroy labour standards which have been hard-won over many decades by national labour movements.

Tensions have been rising in Ireland since 2004, when Ireland joined Britain and Sweden in accepting workers from Eastern European countries newly admitted to the European Union.

Over 200,000 migrants, chiefly from Poland and Latvia, now work in bars, construction sites and farms, often for cash pay below the minimum wage. The Irish trade union movement is now facing the problems that arise from merging an Irish labour force of two million with an East European labour force of 70 million.

The services directive will only entrench these exploitative developments in Ireland and Britain by increasing 'social dumping', displacing workers with cheap foreign labour and feeding the poison of racism and the far-right.

So what next?

If the European Parliament adopts the services directive this month, it will then go to the European Council of Ministers. If past performance is any guide, the British and Irish governments seem likely to back the "country of origin" principle.

However, the French government is calling for the withdrawal of the "country of origin" principle and "the Directive must not undermine the rules applicable in France in the area of employees' rights".

Former German Chancellor Gerhard Schroder has warned that "the contents of the directive put fear and horror into the hearts of people" while the Austrian Chancellor has stated that he could only support a directive text that would "prevent social dumping".

Therefore, even if EU institutions backed these anti-worker directives, labour and democratic movements across the EU must campaign for their non-implementation.

Tony Donaghey

BACK TO THE FUTURE

One Hundred years ago James Keir Hardie toured Britain with a mission. 'The Liberals' he said – the party working people voted for overwhelmingly at the time – 'don't give a monkeys about us. What we need is a party of our own.' And he went on, with the help of the railway workers union and others, to establish the Labour Party.

A century later the same imperative applies. Only this time we must replace the Liberal references with New Labour.

How ironic then that last year millions of working people across Britain abandoned Labour for being too right wing and voted Liberal Democrat instead.

That experience would have perplexed Keir Hardie completely. It has certainly provoked some understandable self examination on the left.

Last month RMT hosted a conference to discuss the crisis in working class political representation in England and I spoke on behalf of the Scottish Socialist Party.

The crisis reminded me of advice I was given as a young socialist growing up in the central belt of Scotland – 'If you scratch a Liberal you'll usually find a Tory underneath'.

I remember thinking how especially true this was after the Bermondsey by-election of 1983.

I read the shameful leaflets put out by Simon Hughes the Liberal candidate with equal measures of disgust and disbelief. I'd never seen an election campaign like it, not even from the Tories.

That episode came to mind last month and I am sure I wasn't the only one.

I bumped into a Liberal Democrat Member of the Scottish Parliament and, with my tongue firmly in my cheek, asked if she thought their leadership contest was going well.

"No it isn't" she replied.

"Charles Kennedy's resignation was damaging, then one candidate pulled out over allegations about his personal life, and another admitted he lied the week before about his own sexuality.

"So much for the contest being about 'presenting their different visions of Liberalism'".

Bermondsey was a safe Labour seat lost in one of the most reactionary and homophobic elections ever seen.

And to top it all the chief homophobe, Liberal candidate Simon Hughes, was also gay.

That episode represents surely one of the most hideous political campaigns of the post-war period and it set in train a series of events which led to Labour

leader Michael Foot's 1983 general election defeat.

Simon Hughes has since apologised for his conduct but the fact remains he benefited from those lies and here he was lying again.

If he is supposed to be the 'left Liberal' candidate in their leadership election, then all I can say is god help us from 'Ming the Merciless'.

Frankly, I couldn't care less who becomes the next Liberal Democrat leader.

But when they sweep up millions of votes to the left of Labour – as they did at the 2005 General Election – RMT is entirely right to urge a full and conclusive debate on how working people in England get the political voice they need.

There is a real danger that Liberal Democrats and others will lead them up the garden path unless an answer is found quickly.

Colin Fox MSP



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JOE FINNEY OBITUARY

It was with sadness that I learned of the death at 77 of Joe Finney, who was editor of the union's former journal Transport Review until his retirement in 1994.

In the final weeks of his life, after he had been diagnosed with lung cancer, a friend looked after Joe.

At the funeral, along with union members past and present, many of his golfing chums came to pay their last respects.

Joe was a decent boss to work for and he wrote poetry. Journalism is a more prosaic affair than poetry, but Joe's journalism did display glints of his poetic sensibility.

Joe was a lifelong socialist and a humanist. He desired a better world, not for himself but for everyone as he was not materialistic and he didn't accumulate possessions.

Joe served the union to the best of his abilities for most of his working life. He cared about the union and its members, and he cared about the rail industry his father had worked in.

Transport Review, which became RMT News, was an outspoken opponent of rail privatisation. As editor, he tried to ensure that the journal was also a celebration of working life.

In remembering Joe, we too are celebrating a working life, of long, loyal and devoted service to the union and to the vital industries they work in.

Bye Joe, it was a privilege to know and work with you. ■

Mike Gerber
Former editor RMT News

ALL CHANGE AT CARLISLE!

Carlisle branch has a new branch secretary, Mark Eilbeck telephone number 0790 8521392



HANCOCK'S 40 YEARS

RMT executive committee member Dave Collinson presented Terry Hancock with his 40-year badge and medal at the Doncaster Trades and Labour Club recently.

Terry joined the union in 1960 and is currently a signaller in Doncaster power box.

Dave was pleased to present Terry with his badge particularly as Dave started on the railways in 1973 as a telegraph lad in Bridge junction box and Terry was his signaller.



40 MOORE

Roger Moore belatedly received his 40-year medal from the Union in recognition of 45 years of membership.

He joined the union after starting as a Book Boy at Dumfries in May 1959. He was passed out as a Signaller in 1961 and went to work in Ruthwell signalbox for two years.

He moved to Dumfries South until 1985 when he went on to relief work. In 1990 he became a Staff Side LLC Rep and in 1994 he came off relief work for a permanent position in Dumfries box where he had started as a Book Boy.

Roger, an active member in Dumfries and Lockerbie branch, retired shortly after receiving his 40 year badge. The branch would like to thank Roger for the last 45 years and wish him all the best for the future.



40 YEAR MEDAL FOR DAVE

Assistant general secretary Mick Cash presented Dave Chappell and Bob Milner with 40-year medals recently at an event organised by Leeds City branch.

Dave Chappell is a signaller who joined in Nov 1962 and works a signal box in Halifax – the same box that his grandfather and uncle worked.

Bob Milner is a former Tamper operator and has recently retired. He joined the union in February 1964 and now spends much of his time on the golf course.

Both Bob and Dave and their wives were very pleased with the evening and especially commented on the fact that Mick took the time to sit and have a long chat with them.



AN ESSEX FAREWELL

Retiring RMT member Alan Clarke was presented with his 40-year badge by regional organiser Bob Raynor at an event at Wickford railway club organised by London Anglia branch recently.

The branch also presented Alan with a handsome clock on his retirement and wished him all the best.



DAVE HATT PASSES AWAY

It is with regret that the Union informs members of the death of Dave Hatt at the age of 74.

A member of Finsbury Park Branch, Dave joined the NUR in 1975 and was a driver at the Northfields, London Underground depot.

He was a branch trustee and was elected as a delegate to the 1985 AGM and SGM and was

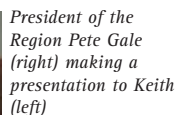
elected as a delegate to the Labour Party Conference in 1989.

Dave was elected to the NUR Executive Committee in 1990 and again for the years 1991, 92, 93 consequently becoming a founder member of the Council of Executives of RMT on the merger of the NUR and the National Union of Seamen in 1990.

London Underground Ltd contributed £500 towards the funeral costs. ■

“ I am now looking forward to helping to fully implement our Regional Council’s organising strategy for 2006. We have already planned for at least one Organising

“For example, the next recruitment planning meeting is being held in Keith’s home - so we hope he has a very large front room,” he said. ■



London regional secretary Bobby Law and branch chairman Bill Laing unfurl Neasdon branch banner.

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Gulf Offshore A Company That Ticks All The Right Boxes

- ✓ Industry leader
- ✓ Exemplary safety standards
- ✓ Modern & diverse fleet
- ✓ Excellent promotion opportunities
- ✓ UK & international work locations
- ✓ Professional & competent crew
- ✓ Trade Union recognition
- ✓ Regular port visits
- ✓ Competitive salary & benefits
- ✓ Equal work/leave rotations
- ✓ Paid study leave
- ✓ All training costs paid
- ✓ High crew retention
- ✓ UK registered fleet
- ✓ New build programme
- ✓ Travel & accommodation paid to/from work

Vacancies - All Ranks

Gulf Offshore owns and manages over 50 offshore support vessels throughout the world including PSV, DP/ROV, AHTS, and Emergency Rescue and Recovery vessels. We welcome applications from well motivated and career minded individuals from all sectors of shipping, who would relish the opportunity to develop their careers with a progressive Company.

Please send your CV with copies of appropriate certification to the Company's recruitment specialists:
S.E.A. Personnel Services Ltd., Ref RMT001, PO BOX 10394, Aberdeen AB11 5ZH.

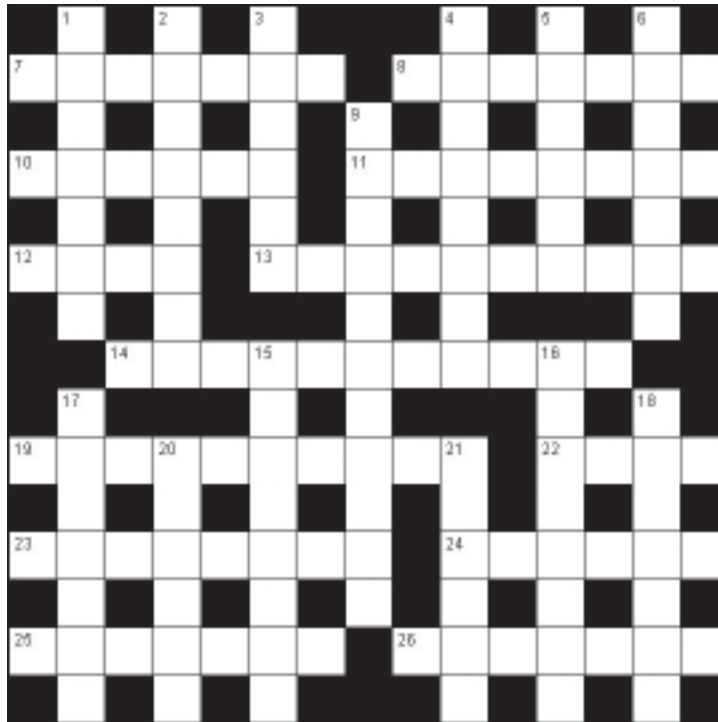
Crossword Apologies

Anyone who attempted last month's crossword may have been puzzled as the wrong grid was published. This was printed in error.

RMT News would like to apologise to readers. We also congratulate the determined crossword enthusiasts who composed their own grids and completed the crossword anyway - all of which will receive a prize. Well done!

RMT £25 prize crossword

No. 22. Set by Elk



ACROSS

- 7 Became gradually thinner (7)
- 8 Reduced in rank (7)
- 10 The result of undue emotional, mental or physical pressure (6)
- 11 A horned, hoofed, ruminant mammal closely related to goat (8)
- 12 It's a long story! (4)
- 13 Lamps on rear of vehicle (10)
- 14 Nicaraguan revolutionary movement (11)
- 19 Cooking pots from which meal can also be served (10)
- 22 One who works when others don't (4)
- 23 Non-believers (8)
- 24 Capital song-writer! (6)
- 25 A hundred years or runs... (7)
- 26 Liza Minelli film set in 24 (7)

DOWN

- 1 You could catch a rodent in it (7)
- 2 Type of sugar (8)
- 3 One-roomed abode (6)
- 4 Cold-blooded class of animals (8)
- 5 Sharp bend - like the limb of a canine (3-3)
- 6 Vessels for dispensing hot drinks (7)
- 9 Bring into public ownership (11)
- 15 Like too many pay offers! (8)
- 16 European national (8)
- 17 Cornish delicacies (7)
- 18 Seafarer (7)
- 20 Detective (6)
- 21 What New Yorkers call their underground system (6)



REPTA 2006

Membership open to: All Rail and Transport Industry Staff, Active or Retired, Including Immediate Family.

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Colin Rolle, 36 Polperro Way, Hucknall, Notts. NG15 6JS. Telephone: 0115 963 5636
See our website: www.repta.co.uk

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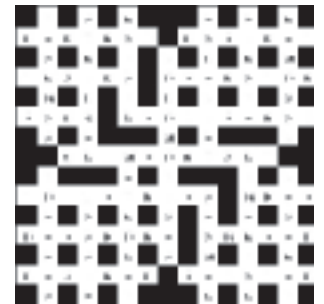
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Last month's solution...



The winners of prize crossword no. 21 are Steve Arnold of Grimsby and Mark Nichols of Rugby.

Send entries to Prize Crossword, RMT, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD by March 7 with your name and address. Winner and solution in next issue.

HOW TO JOIN THE CREDIT UNION

To join the RMT Credit Union you need to fill in an application form and supply us with proof of **your identity** and **address**. Being an existing RMT member, you may wonder why we need proof of who you are and where you live. It is because the Financial Services Authority, in an

attempt to combat Money Laundering, has imposed strict identification rules on anyone wishing to open a Bank or Building Society account. Unfortunately, it has applied the same rules and regulations to Credit Unions.

There are two methods of supplying us with the documentation:-

METHOD 1 Send or take your **original** documents, **1 from List A & 1 from List B**, direct to RMT Credit, Unity House, FREEPOST, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD. If sending valuable documents such as your passport or current full UK Driving Licence we strongly advise sending them by recorded delivery. We will photocopy the originals and return them to you.

METHOD 2 Take one original document from **list A** and one from **list B** to your Branch Secretary or any of the above approved persons listed below:-

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ● Delegated Officer of the Branch | ■ Person with honours / peerage |
| ● Divisional Organiser | ■ Full Time Trade Union Official |
| ● Executive Committee Member | ■ Member of Parliament |
| ● Credit Union Officer | ■ Justice of the Peace |
| ● Post Master / Sub Post Master | ■ Lawyer |
| ● Authorised Financial Intermediary | ■ Teacher |
| ● Councillor (local or county) | ■ Accountant |
| ● Minister of Religion | ■ Dentist |
| ● Commissioner for oaths | |
| ● Banker | |
| ● Doctor | |
| ● Police Officer | |

The Branch Secretary or other approved person will check the original documentation; will take a photocopy, sign, and Branch stamp. All proof of identity / address must bear your name, and not be solely in the name of partner etc; but can be in addition to their name.

Satisfactory proof of **identity** will include, but not be limited to the following:

- LIST (A)
- Current signed Passport.
 - Current Full UK old style Driving Licence (not old style Provisional Licence) [if not used as evidence of address].
 - Original Inland Revenue tax notification e.g. tax assessment, statement of account, notice of coding – valid for current year.
 - Pension Book or Benefits Book or original notification letter from the Benefits Agency confirming your right to benefits (if not used as evidence of address).
 - Shotgun or firearms certificate.
 - ID pass and safety cards for the following companies: Network Rail, Trans Pennine Express, Central Trains
 - Discharge Book (shippers only - current).

Satisfactory proof of **address** will include, but not be limited to the following:

- LIST (B)
- Original Local Authority Council Tax bill valid for the current year.
 - Current UK photo card Driving Licence.
 - Current Full UK old style Driving Licence (not old style Provisional Licence).
 - A Utility Bill e.g. Electricity, Gas, Water or Telephone bills. **These must be originals and less than 3 months old.** Mobile 'phone bills are NOT acceptable.
 - Bank, building society or credit union statement – within last 3 months.
 - Mortgage statement from a recognised lender – within last 12 months.
 - Pension Book or Benefits Book or original notification letter from the Benefits Agency confirming your right to benefits (if not used as evidence of address).
 - Original Inland Revenue tax notification, letter, notice of coding, P60 or P45.
 - Original housing association or letting agency tenancy agreement.
 - Local council rent card or tenancy agreement
 - Original Solicitor's letter confirming recent house purchase or Land Registry confirmation.
 - Household and motor Insurance certificates - current

Credit Union accounts may only be opened and transactions accepted when verification of identity and address has been completed and cross-referenced against RMT membership. We are using the method of Direct Debit only and money will be deducted from your bank account on the 28th of each month. Please return completed forms and ID documentation, as we need to make sure you comply with the money laundering regulations. Failing to complete all forms and ID documentation will delay us from setting up your savings account.

RMT CREDIT UNION LTD.

Finance Department, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD
RMT CREDIT UNION APPLICATION FORM – please complete your
application along with the attached Direct Debit.



MEMBERSHIP NUMBER

Please use **BLOCK CAPITALS** and **black ink**.

1 PERSONAL DETAILS.

Surname		Address	
Forename(s)			
Home phone			
Mobile phone		Postcode	
Email address			
Date of Birth		National Insurance Number	

2 Your Employment.

Employer		RMT Branch	
Job Description			

3 Mr ☐ Mrs ☐ Ms ☐ Miss ☐

4 Membership Status

RMT TU Member ☐ Retired RMT TU Member ☐

5 How much do you wish to save £ This is the amount you wish to save in 'shareholdings' monthly by
Direct Debit (you must complete form below)

6 Normally your payments are made once a month (28th) to RMT Credit Union Ltd.

7 Next of Kin

Address

8 I undertake to abide by the rules now in force or those that are adopted.

Your signature

Date



Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit



Please fill in the whole form including official use box using a ball point pen and
Send to: RMT Credit Union Ltd., 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD

Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society

To: The Manager	Bank/Building Society
Address	
	Postcode

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

Bank/Building Society account number

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Branch Sort Code

--	--	--	--	--	--

Originator's Identification Number

9	7	4	2	8	1
---	---	---	---	---	---

Reference Number

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

FOR RMT CREDIT UNION LTD OFFICIAL USE ONLY
This is not part of the the instruction to your Bank or Building Society.

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society.

Please pay RMT Credit Union Ltd Direct Debits for the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards
assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with RMT Credit Union Ltd, if
so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature(s)

Date

Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit Instructions from some types of account

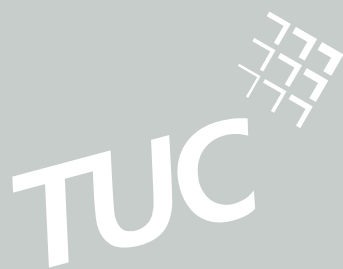
This guarantee should be detached and retained by the Payer.

The Direct Debit Guarantee

- This guarantee is offered by all Banks and Building Societies that take part in the Direct Debit Scheme. The efficiency and security of the scheme is monitored and protected by your own Bank or Building Society.
- If the amounts to be paid or the payment date changes, RMT Credit Union Ltd will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed
- If an error is made by RMT Credit Union Ltd or your Bank or Building Society, you are guaranteed a full and immediate refund from your branch of the amount paid
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by writing to your Bank or Building Society. Please also send a copy of your letter to us.



May Day



March & Rally

Join us in London on
Monday **May 1**

March assembles **12 noon**
Clerkenwell Green

Rally **2.30pm**
Trafalgar Square

Modern rights for modern workplaces

Join London's May Day March, and rallies around the country, to show your support for the TUC's campaign for **modern rights**, a Trade Union Freedom Bill and to lift red tape on unions.

Find out more about this and
other events in your area at
www.tuc.org.uk/mayday

