

Essential reading for today's transport worker

RMT *news*

GREEN LIGHT FOR RAIL PENSIONS FORUM

Overwhelming strike vote brings employers to the table



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HOW TO JOIN THE CREDIT UNION

EDITORIAL

WINNING ON HOURS AND PAY



There has been some significant victories for the union this month.

RMT has won a pay deal at infrastructure company Metronet which will give staff parity to Tubelines colleagues within three years and the removal of strings which included the introduction of fingerprint identification. Travel allowances will also be increased.

RMT bus members at Wilts and Dorset also won an above-inflation deal after taking strike action in May.

Make no mistake, these victories would not have been possible without the steadfastness and unity of the membership and the determination of this union to defend transport workers whatever their grade.

We have seen increasing attacks on workers pensions and it has been no different in the transport sector. I have written to all rail workers about the threat to the Railways Pension Scheme (RPS) and to bus workers in the Stagecoach pension to outline the threat to their pension fund.

In a strike ballot over the issue, members in the RPS voted by a huge majority vote for strike action. Unfortunately, ASLEF dropped out of the ballot but TSSA stood firm and I would like to pay tribute to the TSSA leadership and general secretary Gerry Doherty for doing so.

This mandate for a national rail strike forced the employers to think again. Throughout this campaign, the employers had refused to speak to us collectively because there was no industry-wide forum through which to do so.

However, they now have a much healthier attitude and agreed to participate in a three-member forum, to comprise one representative of the 100-plus employers involved, one representative of the unions and an independent chair.

Our four areas of concern -

affordable contributions, maintaining benefit levels, keeping the scheme open and streamlining it in a sensible industry-wide structure - remain and let's hope the need for strike action will not be required.

Pensions are deferred wages and it is clear that there is pressure from the employers on both. These attacks are often explained by employers as the effects of 'globalisation'. However, this is simply another word for bringing down the cost of labour to the financial benefit of the employer. Instead of lifting people out of poverty they want to drag us down to the lowest levels possible to protect profits for the few.

I recently met representatives of the World Bank in London as part of an international ITF delegation and some of the figures discussed were staggering. Over 50 per cent of the world population exists on \$2 a day while 20 per cent exist on just \$1 a day.

Instead of wanting to end such a terrible situation, shipowners are using it as an excuse to push down rates of pay and not employing UK ratings.

This union will shortly be opening our new education centre in Doncaster in order to educate the representatives you elect at work on issues from health and safety to negotiating with employers.

RMT is determined to use all its resources to defend you the member and win you the pay and conditions you deserve.

We have also just opened a new annex in Maritime House in South London, Slater Mews, to house members who have to come to Unity House for whatever reason and stay overnight. Any member can book a single room at a reasonable £24 a night, see inside for details.

Best wishes

Bob Crow

WIN AT WILTS AND DORSET

'Magnificent' day of strike action brings Go-Ahead subsidiary back to the negotiating table

Industrial action by 700 RMT members at Wilts and Dorset bus company has won an improved pay offer.

Drivers, engineers and office staff at Wilts and Dorset depots in Salisbury, Poole, Bournemouth, Ringwood, Swanage, Blandford, Pewsey and Lymington took one-day strike action in May and suspended further action following the offer.

Staff had voted by 479 to 21 to reject an inflation-only offer linked to unacceptable attacks on conditions, including sick-pay.

The fresh offer, an increase for drivers to £8.21 from February 26 and £8.30 from

June 1 and corresponding increases of 2.6 per cent and 1.1 per cent on all other rates, also saw a loosening of the 'strings' attached to the deal, including the attack on sick-pay.

Action scheduled for May 25 and May 26 was deferred after the company signalled that it was prepared to re-open talks, and the action re-scheduled for June 5 and 6 was also suspended to allow consultation with members.

"Our members made it quite clear that Wilts and Dorset's inflation-only pay offer, and the attack on sick-pay and other working conditions, were unacceptable," said regional organiser Phil Bialyk.



He said that the strike action on May 18 was a magnificent display of solidarity that clearly made the company think again.

"An overwhelming vote, backed up by an absolutely solid day's strike, has ensured that Go-Ahead's attempt to break RMT at Wilts and Dorset has not only failed miserably but has strengthened our members' resolve," he said.

RMT Poole and District branch secretary Pete Gale reported that all RMT members

took part in the protest and no company buses were seen on the roads during the strike.

He said that are members were united in their determination to secure a fair deal.

"We will fight to protect our sick pay scheme, defend the right to have a full meal break and resist all attempts by the Go-Ahead Group to reduce us to a third rate workforce on low pay and worse conditions," he said. ■

LYNX EXPRESS/UPS PAY DEAL

Following a derisory initial offer, a one-year pay deal was reached with Lynx which gave an increase of 3.5 per cent on basic rates from January, a 3.5 per cent increase in London allowances and a minimum of four days' compassionate leave on the death of a parent.

Since the buyout of Lynx Express by UPS, RMT has also been pursuing various issues arising from the integration of operations.

Although this was the second successive above-inflation deal, a number of issues remain to be resolved, including on outstanding back-pay and the promised consolidation of £40 of C&D drivers' bonus as an extra £1 on the hourly basic rate.

Lynx/UPS have also sought to impose an existing UPS policy that all employed drivers involved in a road traffic accident deemed to be avoidable

are to attend a disciplinary hearing.

The union believes that such changes of policy should be the subject of discussions with the union and not imposed without negotiation and has sought urgent meeting to discuss this and the other outstanding issues.

RMT has received written assurances that the union will remain recognised at all relevant depots, and the union

is fully involved in discussions on integration, including on the trial now under way at Dartford.

The closure of the Euroexpress operation at Dartford saw 20 of the 24 staff accept alternative posts secured within the organisation, with four opting for redundancy.

RMT AGS Mick Cash said that union will continue to monitor developments and a national meeting of all local reps is planned to discuss the integration process. ■

CUBA PARTY HONOURS TONY BENN



Tony Benn picks up some moves from a young dancer

This year's annual June garden party for Cuba at Maritime House, South London was also an opportunity to present veteran socialist campaigner Tony with the union's first ever RMT honorary membership.

Tony, who is a garden party regular, was "absolutely delighted and honoured" to receive his honorary membership which was presented in recognition of his huge contribution to the labour movement.

The sun once again shone on the fourth annual event and revellers enjoyed a sultry evening of solidarity, live music and dancing.

Cuban Ambassador Rene J Mujica Cantelar thanked the union for the unstinting solidarity with the people of Cuba.

"Despite the vicious US blockade of my country we are rich to have friends like the

RMT," she said.

John McDonnell MP reported that, despite the blockade, the UN had recently announced that Cuba is the only country in Latin America that has no malnutrition.

"The World Health Organisation has commended Cuba for outstanding literacy levels and rates of infant mortality and life expectancy that outstrip Washington DC," he said.

He said that Cuba's international work also deserves recognition.

"It is operating humanitarian missions in 68 countries and, in 2005 alone, 1,800 doctors from 47 developing countries graduated in Cuba under a free scholarship scheme," he said.

TUC General Secretary Brendan Barber also brought greetings from the TUC and paid tribute to the Cuban struggle for dignity and its right to self-determination. ■

EAST LONDON DOES NOT NEED PRIVATISATION

RMT has told Transport for London that it is moving in the wrong direction by proceeding with plans to privatise the Tube's East London Line and re-privatise the North London Line.

As TfL announced the preferred bidders to run the two lines, RMT general secretary Bob Crow called for the private-sector plan to be abandoned and said the union would defend members' jobs and conditions.

"All our experience, report after report and the vast majority of public opinion agree that rail privatisation has been a

complete and total failure, for passengers, for rail workers and for the environment.

"It is scandalous that TfL should even contemplate taking the East London Line out of London Underground and handing it to the privateers when there is no earthly reason for them to do so," he said.

He slammed the fact that the Mayor's office should take control of the North London Line only to put National Express back on the approved list to run it again.

"National Express have been handed well over £300 million in subsidy for Silverlink

and taken nearly £40 million in profits out of it, but anyone who uses or works on the North London Line will tell you that it is still an overcrowded nightmare with too few trains, too few staff and too little investment," he said.

The union argued that the private sector's only contribution to the Tube so far is to siphon £2 million a week out of it while failing to deliver improvements, and it has been extracting up to £1 billion a year from the railways for a decade. ■



STRIKE VOTE FORCES RAIL PENSIONS TALKS

Following an overwhelming yes vote for strike action, rail employers agree to industry-wide commission over the future of the Railways Pensions Scheme



All train operating companies and most infrastructure companies have agreed to a pensions commission after nearly 80 per cent of RMT members backed the vote for action.

The RMT executive has agreed to participate in a three-member forum, to comprise one representative of the 100-plus employers involved, one representative of the unions and an independent chair.

"Our members have backed the call for strike action with a massive three-to one majority, reflecting the depth of feeling that exists throughout the industry," RMT general secretary Bob Crow said.

"This was a magnificent result, especially when taking into account the amount of misinformation put out by management to try and influence the outcome.

"Members should be very pleased and extremely proud that they have defended what is in effect deferred wages," he said.

Throughout the campaign, the employers had refused to speak to the unions collectively on the basis that there was no industry-wide forum through which to do so.

"The commission should now give the industry an opportunity to discuss and try to resolve the problems that threaten to overwhelm the Railways Pension Scheme," Bob said.

The union's main four areas of concern are affordable contributions, maintaining benefit levels, keeping the scheme open and streamlining it in a sensible industry-wide structure.

The union called for the speedy appointment of tribunal members to secure the future of the fund.

So far, the campaign has prevented any immediate pension benefit cuts, and ensured that most members will, for the time being, be paying contributions of 10.56 per cent or less - the cap the union has been seeking.

However, RMT is insisting that short-term fixes will not solve the long-term problems, and has demanded a long-term industry-wide solution.

In the meantime, the strike mandate will remain live in order to ensure the employers don't drag their feet on agreeing to a chairperson and a timetable for the commission to meet and report. ■

GRANT RAIL MEMBERS IN RECOGNITION FIGHT

Around 250 RMT members at rail infrastructure firm Grant Rail took 24 strike action earlier this month after the company failed to honour a pledge to recognise the union.

The union already represents a majority of the workforce and GrantRail already recognises those RMT members who transferred to the company from Jarvis contracts.

RMT has demanded that the company now enters into a proper working relationship with the union.

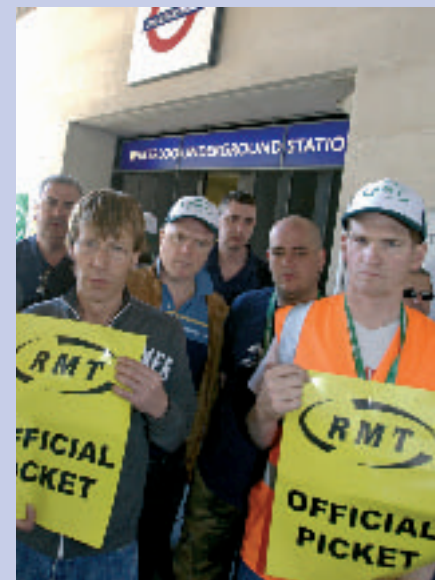
"It is time for GrantRail to do the honourable thing and recognise the union that the majority of its workforce have chosen to represent them," RMT general secretary Bob Crow said.

"Last summer the company said it would recognise RMT if we could show that the majority of the workforce had joined.

"We have done that, but for some reason the company has failed to stand by that pledge," he said.

Only 19 people voted against taking strike action and it should be clear to the company now that its workforce is serious about being represented by a union with more than a century's experience in the industry.

(see page 10)



PAY VICTORY AT METRONET

RMT wins much-improved pay deal at infrastructure company Metronet which will give staff parity to Tubelines colleagues within three years

RMT members at infrastructure company Metronet have overwhelmingly backed a three-year pay deal in a referendum.

The deal, with unacceptable strings removed, comprises a four per cent pay increase, followed by a second year of February 2007 RPI plus one per cent subject to a minimum increase of 3.5 per cent, and a third year of RPI plus one per cent or 3.5 per cent.

Over 1,800 Tube maintenance workers had voted for strike action after Metronet refused to move on the original pay offer or to lift strings including the introduction of fingerprint identification.

A controversial productivity package was also dropped after hard bargaining by RMT negotiators.

RMT regional organiser Bobby Law said that Metronet members' pay was lagging behind that of Tubelines colleagues, and in that respect alone the original offer was unacceptable.

"Metronet is making £1 million a week out of its PPP contract and our members expect their pay and conditions to keep up and not be subject to attack," he said.

He said that full credit should go to the negotiating team for the greatly improved offer.

"Only RMT was present at the final meeting when the company made the concessions which made the offer acceptable," he said.

Under the deal, travel allowances increase from £750 to £1000, with effect from April 3 2006, to £1,100 from April 2007, and further increase to £1,200 from April 2008.

Paternity leave goes up to three weeks paid from the current two weeks and maternity pay will increase from 26 weeks to 30 weeks this year and to 34 weeks next year.

A Working Party will be set up to discuss the disparity arising from the 35-hour week changes for the operational managers. The negotiating team will continue to deal with outstanding issues in the agreement to the members' satisfaction.

The company has also apologised for alleging that RMT negotiators left an ACAS meeting prematurely and this unfounded slur has now been fully retracted. ■



RMT TELLS LUL AND METRONET REINSTATE 'LAMPMEN'

RMT has warned that it will be in dispute with both London Underground and Metronet if safety-critical 'lampmen', unilaterally removed by Metronet from track-inspection work, are not re-introduced.

Lampmen, who provide lighting for inspection of particularly vulnerable stretches of track, were introduced following the Camden Town and Hammersmith

derailments in 2004, but were removed by Metronet without consultation or agreement last month.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow walked the track with Tim O'Toole after the Hammersmith derailment and it was agreed then that lampmen were necessary because there was simply not enough lighting to undertake adequate inspection without them.

RMT regional organiser Bobby Law said that absolutely nothing had changed since then, yet Metronet had seen fit to withdraw them despite protests from our senior health and safety reps.

"That is simply unacceptable and RMT has told Metronet and LUL that unless they are re-introduced we will be in dispute with both companies," he said. ■

RMT JOINS CAMPAIGN TO DEFEND PUBLIC SERVICES

RMT has joined a joint union campaign to defend public services from being hived off to the private sector.

Since 1997, New Labour has continued the Tories' drive to privatise our public services.

Outsourcing, the Private Finance Initiative, contestability and other forms of privatisation are threatened across the public sector.

Transport workers know all about the damaging effects of

privatisation.

RMT members employed on the railways and London Underground know better than anyone that privatisation means disastrous cuts to services and attacks on workers' rights.

Despite overwhelming support from Labour Party Conference and three quarters of the public, the government has refused to reverse one of the greatest policy catastrophes of recent times – the Tories' privatisation of the railways.

This is despite the fact that government subsidies are far higher than under public ownership, services are worse than ever and rail fares have increased by three times the rate of inflation.

Staffing levels have been slashed and wages of many workers have fallen below average earnings.

Meanwhile, rail companies are being allowed to take massive profits out of our railways network.

On London Underground, the PPP has been disastrous and as safety standards decline the private contractors make record profits.

Now there are proposals to privatise the Tube's East London line. If this is allowed to happen, it could be the thin end of the wedge before the privatisation of more tube lines.

Privatisation has also proved a disaster for buses. As well as cutting services across the country, profiteering companies are paying wages to bus drivers that are 13 per cent below average male earnings.

Make your voice heard! Join the rally and lobby your MP.

Public Services Not Private Profit! ■

For further information please contact
info@publicnotprivate.org.uk or call
020 7219 1626

'Public Services Not Private Profit'
Campaign – c/o G10 Norman Shaw
South, House of Commons, London
SW1A 2JF

www.publicnotprivate.org.uk



Public Services NOT Private Profit

A joint union campaign against privatisation

Rally and Mass Lobby of Parliament

Central Hall, Westminster

Tuesday 27 June

12pm – 5pm

Speakers include:

**Tony Benn / Brian Caton (POA) / Katy Clark MP / Michael Connarty MP
Ian Davidson MP / Jeremy Dear (NUJ) / Gerry Doherty (TSSA) / Tony Donaghey (RMT)
Kat Fletcher (NUS) / Neil Gerrard MBE / Bob Gibson (NPC) / Billy Hayes (CWU)
Kelvin Hopkins MP / Steve Kemp (NUM) / Dr. John Lister / Paul Mackney (UCU)
Judy McKnight (NAPO) / Michael Meacher MP / Doug Nicholls (CYWU)
Paul Noon (Prospect) / Prof. Allyson Pollock / Mark Serwotka (PCS) / Alan Simpson MP
Steve Sinnott (NUT) / Alan Walter (DCH) / Matt Wrack (FBU)**

Co-Chairs: John McDonnell MP, Janice Godrich (PCS)

www.publicnotprivate.org.uk

DAMNING RAIL FARES REPORT HIGHLIGHTS NEED FOR ACTION

The private sector must no longer be allowed to stand in the way of a fair rail fares policy, RMT declared after MPs published a damning report on the shambolic state of the industry's complex pricing structures.

The House of Commons Transport Select Committee concluded that the drive for profit had been put before passengers and called on the government to force rail operators to operate a single, affordable fares structure.

The report was widely seen as an indictment of the private sector's inability to operate the railways as a public service.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that the private train operators operated pricing policies aimed simply at maximising revenues and profits.

"As long as the private-sector monopolies remain unchecked, the government will be unable to meet its manifesto commitments on integrated transport or the environment.

"Rail fares policy ought to be harnessed to encourage a shift from car to train and that means making them affordable," Bob said.

RMT's submission to the committee also showed how privatisation had left standard fares and travelcards vastly more expensive than elsewhere in Europe, and that at holiday times it is all-but impossible for families to get a cheap fare deal.

The union pointed out that bringing rail operations back into the public sector would end the siphoning of billions of tax-payers' pounds into shareholders' pockets and urged the government to honour its manifesto commitment to introduce a National Rail Card.

Parliamentary column

THE EU CONSTITUTION HASN'T GONE AWAY



Despite the defeat of the proposed European Union constitution in France and the Netherlands in 2005, the political elites in Europe are desperately trying to find a way to impose it anyway.

Rather than accepting that the peoples of Europe are unwilling to engage in 'ever closer union', elites are trying to find ever more ingenious ways of forcing the people to have what they believe is good for them.

Former French president and constitution architect Giscard D'Estaing has called for the French to continue voting until they get the right result, a bit like examination re-sits.

Meanwhile, the Austrian chancellor, and current holder of the EU Presidency, Wolfgang Schuessel has ruled out making "substantial" changes to the rejected EU Constitution and has called for a Europe-wide referendum. This would mean that individual countries could be outvoted and dragged into a European superstate without their consent.

Other EU leaders have called for parts of the constitution to be 'cherry picked' and to proceed with those parts regardless of the Dutch and French results.

On the other hand, Dutch Europe Minister Atzo Nicolai has said that for the Netherlands 'no' is still 'no'.

Despite this, *The Independent* has reported that the UK government is planning to drop a commitment to hold a referendum over the EU Constitution, if any new proposal contains "less significant" changes to the already rejected Constitution.

It is widely expected that if a referendum were held, the British would still vote no so MPs from all sides have reacted angrily to the suggestion.

Labour MP Gisela Stuart, who helped draw up the constitution, has warned that holding a referendum "is the only way that a government can secure the consent of the people in this matter".

The next big row in Britain will come on the European budget, which will have to be approved by Parliament within the next six months.

But how can this be when there has been no meaningful reduction in agricultural spending and little reduction in the fraud and corruption that riddles the budget. There has been no clear increase in efficiency or accountability so surely British MPs should vote to reject it and force the European Union and the Commission to accept that the EU should seek to do less, better.

Ian Davidson MP, Glasgow South West

VICTORY: Young French people celebrate the rejection of the EU Constitution on May 29 2005 but EU elites have chosen to ignore the results and carry on regardless.



RECOGNITION AT

Engineering grades meeting in Fort William backed the campaign for union recognition at Grant Rail

Conference heard that over 50 per cent of Grant Rail workers were now RMT members yet the company is still refusing to recognise the union.

Delegates called on the union to do everything possible to assist in the campaign to give Grant Rail workers a voice.

Martin Valente, Signal, Electrical and Track delegate said that Grant Rail was refusing recognition in order to prevent workers winning better conditions.

He reported that Grant Rail

workers had to work enforced overtime and weekend working, low sick pay and only 18 days holiday.

"This conference is discussing the need for a 32-hour week while we have a 47-hour week.

"All we want is to be treated with respect and dignity at work and we want to be represented by a union that represents rail workers," he said.

He said that in his depot of 60, 57 are RMT members and there is a majority of RMT members across the company.

AGS Mick Cash said that Grant Rail members were being balloted for strike action to win recognition.

"We have over 50 per cent of membership and the company has reneged on the deal for recognition," he said.

"As a union we get results and the company wants to keep us out.

"However, we are not going away and we will represent all rail workers," he said.

He called on members to press Network Rail where ever

possible to demand that the company recognised RMT.

DEFEND TELECOM STAFF

Conference noted moves by Network Rail to establish a Fixed Telecoms

Network for operational purposes and bring the work in-house within two years.

Conference called on the union to ensure that such moves do not undermine the conditions of members currently carrying out this work.

Pat Collins, Birmingham



GRANT RAIL NOW!

Engineering said that Network Rail, and all other companies concerned, should inform that RMT expects members to be treated with dignity and for TUPE to apply accordingly otherwise a dispute situation will exist.

Jim McAleenan, Wishaw and Motherwell delegate said that if telecoms staff are brought in-house, workers carrying out that work should take up that work.

Pat McCarthy, Birmingham Engineering said that Network Rail should TUPE over all staff and should not be allowed to pick and choose.

AGS Mick Cash warned that Thales telecom staff were under threat while Network Rail wants to bring in new staff.

"We need to look after all workers whatever badge they work under," he said.

ENGINEERING HARMONISATION

AGS Mike Cash reported on progress over the harmonisation of conditions at Network Rail. He said that it was a huge task which covers around 17,000 workers following moves to bring infrastructure maintenance back in-house, where it belonged.

"The union is also looking to bring projects and renewals back in-house at every opportunity," he said.

He said that there are still problems with casual labour and use of sub-contractors.

"There are 93,000 workers with PTS cards on the network.

"At the same time redundancies are taking place as Network Rail redraw the map," he said.

He reported that NR was washing their hands over the fate of some staff while looking after some staff and applying TUPE, when it suited them.

He said that it was important to complete elections of area council and local reps to allow harmonisation to move forward.

Donald Graham of the union's organising unit said that the company was clearly looking to bring in staff on worse conditions.

"The answer to these problems is to organise workers and strengthen the union to represent these workers," he said.

He said that all reps and members could help in that process by getting involved with recruitment and retention.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Conference instructed the union to ensure that all engineering and infrastructure staff enjoyed collective bargaining rights.

John Boyle, Wishaw and Motherwell delegate said that there were a swath of people not covered by collective bargaining in the industry and that had to change.

"Engineering grade members not employed by Network Rail must be afforded the same level of support and representation by this union as our Network Rail members," he said.

Martin Valente pointed out that an RMT promise to gain the best possible pay and conditions regardless of location or employer was the best recruitment tool the union had.

TUBE PRIVATEERS ATTACK STAFF

Conference agreed that moves by Metronet and Tubelines to bring in full performance-related pay were an attempt by the privateers to maximize profits at the expense of staff.

Doug Hammersley said it was also an attack on rights to collective bargaining over pay which undermines the concept of an all-grades union.

"What you have is an annual review and when it comes to taking action in defence of your conditions staff may be too scared to do so," he said.

He said that if it was accepted by the union it will be cascaded down to other staff in



Lift the gag

the industry.

Willie Devlin, SET delegate said that the union should be actively trying to increase members represented by union agreements.

NO BIOMETRIC TESTING

Conference opposed the introduction of biometric identity cards for London Underground infrastructure staff.

Danny Canavan, LUL Fleet maintenance delegate said that the introduction of biometric testing and the use of finger prints was being used to control staff.

"When you combine this with the travel card they know your movements at all times.

"This is clearly part of the introduction of a national identity card system," he said.

Conference heard how the use of such technology would be used to shed staff by introducing electronic clocking on and off.

John Boyle said that 1,200 identities were recently stolen from the Network Rail system over tax credit payments and pointed out that the finger prints of a Scottish detective was found at a murder scene.

"Both instances were system breaches and who is to say that your fingerprints won't fall into the wrong hands and be used against you," he said.

EMPLOYEE STATUS

Conference called for a campaign for 'employee' status for those working for sub-contracting companies within the infrastructure grades.

Pat Collins said that such a campaign would not only boost the level of membership but would also provide better protection for the staff in terms of employment law.

"Under the law, these workers do not receive the same benefits as those classified as 'workers' and that is not fair," he said.

NETWORK RAIL HEALTH AND SAFETY PROPOSALS

Conference agreed that Network Rail Health and Safety proposals were unacceptable in the present form and called for a full meeting of the Company Council and all Health and Safety representatives before any agreement is made.

Steve Metcalfe, Lancaster and District warned that the proposals represented a further dilution of health and safety.

Gerry McGann, Ayr warned that health and safety was being gradually eroded and the union needed to train more health and safety reps.

Steve Bond, Warrington district said that health and safety legislation allowed the union to demand meetings over issues of concern.

SHIPPING

SAVE OUR SHIP



Anger at the continued decline in UK ratings' jobs dominated the docks and shipping conference in Hull last month

Delegates demanded that shipowners be forced to observe minimum employment standards before the chronic decline of the UK's seafaring skills became irreversible.

Employers were taking advantage of legal loopholes to replace UK crews with super-exploited overseas labour, paying them at rates below the minimum wage, even when in UK waters, for dangerously long hours.

Linking tonnage-tax relief to jobs and training, ending the industry's exemption from the Race Relations Act and applying the minimum wage and other minimum employment standards to UK vessels in UK territorial waters were three simple steps that would help stop the rot.

"Shipowners have had £140 million in taxpayers' money just for signing up to the UK fleet, and it is high time they were required to give something in return," general secretary Bob Crow said.

The shipping minister, David Ladyman, had claimed that the tonnage tax had created jobs, but, said Bob, "the cold hard fact is that there has been a year on year decline in UK ratings' jobs and there are now fewer than 9,000 UK ratings left in the

industry".

The union would continue pressing the government to stick to promises made by Labour in opposition but, said national secretary Steve Todd, "it's beginning to feel like banging your head against a brick wall".

Steve noted that Scotland's publicly-owned ferry operator, Caledonian MacBrayne, looked set to emerge as the preferred bidder to retain its lifeline services, but the tendering process imposed by the Scottish Executive had been "a shameful waste of money and entirely unnecessary".

RMT, alongside the Scottish TUC, the Scottish trade union movement and allies inside and outside the Scottish parliament, had won the argument to scrap tendering, but the Scottish Executive had "hidden behind the skirt-tails of Brussels and imposed it anyway".

It had taken a "magnificent" vote for industrial action by RMT members to extract promises to maintain CalMac jobs, pay, conditions and pensions, whoever was to get the contract, but the union should be ready to act to ensure that those promises were kept, Steve said.

A decade after discussions

SHIPPING

SHIPPING INDUSTRY



Chris Fuller

first began on Labour's maritime industry policy, it was time for a serious audit of what the government had actually done to arrest the decline, RMT parliamentary group convener John McDonnell said.

The parliamentary group would continue to press for the changes needed to reverse the decline in UK shipping jobs, John pledged.

Delegates applauded the "magnificent" work done on behalf of the union by the group, and by the RMT groups in the Scottish parliament and Welsh assembly.

'ONE ON-ONE OFF' CHALLENGE

The Shipping Committee should consider a legal challenge to 'one-on/one-off' working rosters, which appear to show no built-in leave entitlement, delegates agreed.

"The regulations say that leave should be additional to compensatory rest periods as part of working arrangements, yet this is being flouted," said



Jim McAuley

Chris Fuller, Dover Shipping.

People were told they were getting 28 week's leave, whereas the reality was they were getting only two.

DEATH IN SERVICE

The union should negotiate acceptable death-in-service payments in companies where members were not covered, conference agreed.

"Even some Flag of Convenience vessels have such agreements, but there are companies where we have members where there is nothing," pointed out Jimmy McAuley, Glasgow Shipping.

National secretary Steve Todd said that death-in-service payments would be a standard part of pay submissions made this year.

EXTEND FED TO UK

The union should campaign with other willing parties to have the Foreign Earnings Deduction (now known as Seafarers' Earnings deduction)



Karlson Lingwood

extended to UK Seafarers engaged in short sea routes and coastal shipping, delegates agreed.

The move had been recommended by Lord Alexander of Weedon QC and the present government's own policy document 'Charting a New Course'.

AGE DISCRIMINATION

The union should investigate the effects pensions and retirement on the shipping industry of the new European Employment Directive, which from October 2006 is supposed to outlaw age discrimination, BGM agreed.

Delegates noted that there were already differing retirement ages and standards in the industry since the closure of the industry's MNRPF

"We don't want to see retirement ages being extended," said Pauline Howe, Dover Shipping.

SAFETY ALL AT SEA

Maritime health and safety legislation should to be brought in line with that applying to shore-based workers, where trade unions had the right to appoint workplace safety reps, delegates agreed.

The union should campaign with the help of the parliamentary group for the necessary changes, said Chris Fuller, Dover Shipping

PORT COMMITTEES

Strengthening existing ports committees and creating a national ferry ports committee would be an important step in

rebuilding a strong shop stewards' movement, delegates agreed.

Strong port committees were essential for ensuring rank and file representation of members, noted Jimmy McAuley.

BGM DELEGATES

Delegates called on the General Grades Committee, in consultation with the Shipping Committee, to review the representation at the BGM, with a view to allowing electoral districts with both docks and general shipping grades members to elect one delegate of each to future conferences.

Sean Hoyle, Portsmouth, said that branches within such electoral districts should be allowed to nominate one docks and one General Shipping Grade member for election as delegate.

"Anything we can do to boost representation of docks reps at the conference would be a good thing," said Neil Keith, Aberdeen.

EXTEND SHIPPING BALLOTS

Ballots of shipping members should be extended to give members at sea a fair chance of participating, the BGM agreed.

It was important that all members were given every opportunity to participate in the democratic life of the union, said Jimmy Meechan, Glasgow Shipping.

BGM TO BECOME AGM?

The Shipping and Docks grade should consider convening their conference yearly rather than biennially in the light of the continued crisis in the industry, delegates agreed.

The Shipping Committee should consult with shipping branches and members to establish whether the necessary rule-change should be tabled, conference agreed. ■

AWARD FOR PAULINE HOWE



Dover RMT stalwart and national women's committee chair Pauline Howe accepted an award from Bob Crow for her "unstinting, outstanding and inspirational" work for women in the union and in the transport industry. After a standing ovation from delegates, Pauline, famed for her terse, no-nonsense approach, was almost – but not quite – lost for words, and expressed her pride at the accolade.

SHIPPING

STENA WARNED OVER WAGES

Ferry operator Stena warned to stick to pay agreement on Holyhead operations or face the prospect of a strike ballot

The union's shipping and docks conference in Hull heard how Stena intended to break its national agreement by paying Polish crew aboard the Stena Seatrader at rates below those paid to UK ratings when the vessel begins operating between Holyhead and Dublin in July.

Delegates unanimously called on the RMT executive to begin an emergency campaign "at all levels" to defend the port agreement, including urgent approaches for assistance to sister unions through the International Transport Workers' Federation.

"We have an agreement with Stena that sets out the rates that

must be paid to ratings working out of Holyhead, and we expect them to stick to it," RMT national secretary Steve Todd said.

The Irish Sea has become the latest battleground in the struggle to stop shipowners replacing organised crews with low-cost labour, and Stena are now breaking their pledge that they will not join the 'race to the bottom' in seafarers' pay.

The introduction of low-cost crew to Holyhead has been seen by the union as the thin end of a massive wedge which threatens to undermine the jobs, pay and conditions of ratings at Holyhead and beyond.

"The nationality the seafarers aboard the vessel is irrelevant, but they must be paid the rate for the job agreed between the company and the union," said Steve.

There is massive anger among the crews of the Explorer and Adventurer, the two Stena vessels already operating out of the port, and RMT has already received calls to start balloting for strike action.

"Stena should understand that we will take the necessary steps to defend our national agreement, and that RMT will back industrial action by our members if it becomes necessary," Steve Todd said. ■

RMT opens Slater Mews

The chair of RMT's parliamentary group John McDonnell MP opened the union's new accommodation annex at Maritime House, south London recently.

The new accommodation block, named after former seafarer's union general secretary Jim Slater, will allow RMT members visiting London to take advantage of affordable rooms.

Mr McDonnell recalled that Jim was one of the most popular and effective leaders of the National Union of Seamen, which he led between 1974/86.

He said the NUS leader was a tower of strength and solidarity for the mineworkers union during their great strike.

Under his leadership, the NUS moved towards a union that was responded to the membership and became increasingly democratic in its development of decision making and policy.

Jim was also an environmentalist before his time. He was at the forefront of the campaign against the dumping of nuclear waste at sea and played a leading part in securing the eventual ban on this activity.

He was also closely involved in the anti-apartheid movement and a campaigner against the fascist Pinochet regime in Chile.

"It is fitting that this building will be known as Slater Mews, in memory of the man and his tireless activities on behalf of his members," he said.

To book a room contact Denise Craig at RMT on 020 7529 8840 or email d.craig@rmt.org.uk For further details see page 28.



MEWS: John McDonnell MP, Jim's widow Moira Slater, Ken Gill and Bob Crow open Slater Mews.



Waterloo drivers strike over taxi tax dispute

RMT drivers at South West Trains' Waterloo depot have taken two days of 24-hour strike action alongside Aslef colleagues over the company's "absurd" attempt to shift the tax burden for taxi provision to staff.

The drivers, who have no other means of getting to early or late shifts other than taking a taxi, delivered solid strike action.

RMT regional organiser Brian Whitehead said that the

company was simply wrong to try to make its own staff foot a tax bill for providing a train service.

"To expect drivers to lose money for the privilege of getting to and from work when there is no transport available other than taxis is frankly absurd, yet this is what the company is trying to do.

"We have an agreement with SWT that they will provide taxis for our members to get to work when there is no alternative

transport available, and we expect them to stick to it.

"Wheeling out managers to work excessively long shifts with only a few hours' refresher course has served only to anger

our members across the company.

"SWT should instead spend their time finding a way to resolve this dispute," Brian said. ■



TRAIN DRIVERS MEET IN DONCASTER

A well-attended meeting of RMT drivers held in Doncaster recently heard contributions from AGS Pat Sikorski and relief organisers Brian Whitehead and John MacDonald.

Train drivers Brian and John are in the forefront of driver recruitment and Pat is the senior officer responsible drivers' negotiations.

John MacDonald reported on activities within various companies. Jarvis Fastline had agreed that RMT would be the only union with whom they would negotiate for train drivers.

At the other end of the

spectrum, Direct Rail Services had made it quite clear they would not talk to the union at this time. In spite of this, membership within the company was growing.

As DRS had refused RMT recruiters' access to the Depot at Kingmoor, a meeting had been set up in a hotel in Carlisle, so staff could come and meet with the union. John also covered the use of the disciplinary procedures on EWS and the question of rest day working on Northern Rail.

Brian Whitehead told the meeting of the tremendous success RMT have had in

recruiting drivers employed by First Great Western in Plymouth, Bristol and Paddington.

RMT would also, in future, be involved in all negotiations on terms and conditions, rates of pay and harmonisation of the new Greater Western franchise.

Progress was also being made regarding negotiations with Arriva Trains Wales, where elections will take place shortly and the union will be fielding candidates for all positions.

RMT will be standing candidates for the Company Council elections on South East Trains and this can also be

repeated on South West Trains.

EWS

Pat Sikorski emphasised the need for all RMT drivers to be recruiters in their own workplace. He emphasised the problems currently being experienced within EWS. "ASLEF's latest deal with the company would, without doubt, cost the jobs of our members, particularly ground staff members.

"This is what sets us apart from other organisations as we are not in the business of negotiating away other people's jobs, in order to obtain pay increases," he said.

He said that RMT was built on mutual cooperation and respect, not sectionalist interests.

"We have proved in the past that we are capable of negotiating decent rates of pay and terms and conditions, without selling jobs," he said.

There were many positive contributions from members and there is no doubt that drivers throughout the country are beginning to realise that RMT is the best option.

A further national meeting is being planned for October. ■



From left to right drivers Vickie Rowbotham, Janet Jallands, Sue Marshall, Kate Smith, Assistant General Secretary Pat Sikorski, drivers Mandy Langdon and Alison Langdon.

LONDON BOMBINGS

RMT member John Boyle received the MBE for his actions after a suicide bomber struck at Aldgate on July 7 last year. This horrific experience has made him furious at government proposals to remove workers rights to receive compensation.



-ONE YEAR ON

Tube train operator John Boyle was going through the barrier at Aldgate station when he heard the blast. The station shook and filled with smoke. He knew immediately that it was a bomb.

The Hammersmith and City and Circle line driver was on his way to have an eye test, one of those routine events ordered by the Occupational Health department.

But although he was off duty, he didn't hesitate in heading straight for the platforms.

He was met with a scene which still gives him terrifying nightmares.

"I didn't think twice about going in to help people.

"I didn't know it was a suicide bomber, and I thought there might be another device. "But I could hear people screaming for help.

"It wasn't just a sense of duty that made me go to them, it was humanity," he says.

John, a station inspector before he became a driver 10 years ago, knew the emergency routine well.

He asked the station staff to call the emergency services before starting to help the injured and terrified off the train. There is no doubt that he saved lives.

"It was horrific. I was stepping over dead bodies that had had their clothes ripped off in the blast.

"But I just kept thinking that I had to get the living off the train in case there was another bomb," he says.

After emptying the Aldgate train, John walked down the track to Aldgate East, where he helped to de-train a second tube.

Adrenaline kept him going. And when he finally emerged from the tunnels it was to a media feeding frenzy that prevented him pausing to think about what he had just seen and done.

John returned to work after two weeks off and a bit of counselling. He was back on

driving duties for a week until, he admits, he "lost the plot".

"I was stopped at a signal outside Aldgate station.

"The memories came flooding in and I saw the bodies lying on the track and in the mangled carriages.

"I panicked and radioed for help to get me out of there.

"I think, after that, LUL realised that letting people go back to work so soon after an experience like that was a bad idea. I was on light duties for a while then," he says.

COMPENSATION

John recently received £1,000 in compensation from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority for the effects of the trauma he experienced.

Not much to write home about, the money has paid for a couple of short breaks for him and his wife.

"Nevertheless it's a gesture, an acknowledgement by society of what I went through, and continue to go through.

"OK, receiving the MBE was a bigger gesture, but not many people get something like that," he said.

John, of course, wasn't the only RMT member, or rail worker to save lives on 7 July. It was luck that John was one of the first on the scene at Aldgate. And he could have fled.

But the on duty station staff and drivers at the stations where the suicide bombers struck had no choice.

RMT's lawyers Thompsons has made many applications to the CICA on behalf of station staff, as well as for hospital staff that saw the injured brought in. Cuts

If Home Office's proposals to remove the lower tariffs in the CICA scheme, and to remove workers injured through criminal actions at work altogether, none of them would be able to claim compensation for the psychological impact of what they witnessed that day.

Ironically, if the scheme is

changed, but John Boyle's injuries were deemed to qualify for whatever the lowest tariff becomes, he would still be able to claim because he was off duty.

He may have been using the same skills as his on-duty colleagues, acted in an identical way, but he would get the CICA's "token", while they would have to rely on whatever the government has in mind for those injured at work.

That might be an employer scheme or a personal injury claim if the employer is insured for criminal acts.

Or perhaps they sue the police for failing to prevent the incident that led to the injury. Or they may just get nothing at all.

"The government's proposals are terrible," says John.

"How can it say that people injured in the course of duty are different to those injured off duty, or on their way to work, or in any other circumstance?.

"We were all victims that day, and I've little doubt that something like 7 July will happen again. Well, it almost did, of course.

"It's appalling that in an attempt to find more money for the most seriously injured victims of terrorism, such as those who lost limbs, the apparently less seriously injured may be penalised.

"It's one rule for one, and one for another," he says.

Until the Home Office responds to the trade unions and the victims groups and all those who submitted evidence to the consultation paper on reforming the scheme, John's message to colleagues is to get their claims in relation to 7 July into the CICA as soon as possible.

"I don't think there's enough awareness of our rights to claim.

"RMT's legal service is there to advise and support members injured at work, including those injured on 7 July. Use it," he says. ■



SAFETY FIRST!



Station and associated grades conference held in London called for end to the erosion of health and safety rules by employers during industrial action

Rail safety is being dangerously compromised during strikes, with train dispatch workers being denied the right to view crucial safety ID of scabbing managers, delegates agreed.

Delegates heard that the problem emerged during recent strikes at Virgin Cross Country.

Nick Quirk described how senior managers had taken the place of striking train managers and guards. Dispatch staff from other train-operating companies found that they had no right to view these bosses' Safety Critical Work Identification (SCWID) cards.

"This is surely a health and safety issue in which we could be dispatching trains with an unqualified and dangerous manager," said Nick.

"Why should station staff be put in a situation of dispatching a train because there's a scab on it?" he said.

RMT assistant general secretary Pat Sikorski told conference: "This is a classic case of when there's a strike on, the rule book is torn up and thrown out the window".

Delegates unanimously condemned the practice, demanding the right for dispatch staff to view SCWID cards in such circumstances.

NO TO DE-STAFFING

Delegates backed a call from Jason Humphrey, Jubilee South and East London Line for a national RMT campaign against the de-staffing of stations. Any future attempt to de-staff any station should be "fully resisted by all means available," he declared.

Nick Quirk, said that RMT should consider a similar campaign on station staffing to last year's high-profile Rail Against Privatisation campaign.

"The media will take our side on this for a change," said Nick – citing the anti-union Evening Standard's own recent campaign against understaffed stations.

Assistant General Secretary Pat Sikorski noted that the Evening Standard investigation revealed 229 totally or partially understaffed stations in London alone.

"It's a question of assaults on our members and the public by antisocial elements fuelled on drugs and alcohol," said Pat.

Increased staffing could be funded by "diverting the money trousered by the companies," he added.

Delegates also condemned the practice of security staff being employed in tradition station jobs such as barrier work and passenger information.

Michelle Rogers said: "We have been fighting this in the Manchester area for at least seven years. It's done to make bigger profits for shareholders."

"This is unacceptable and leads to a further encroachment on station staff work by, in the main, a non-unionised workforce," said Jason Humphreys.

Delegates also backed his call for the RMT to revive its Station Staff Charter – and that conference regularly reviews and updates it as necessary.

"We need to update it year after year after year so that it becomes a living document," said Jason.

NO SECTIONALISM

Delegates backed a call for RMT to mount a campaign to combat divisive grade elitism and snobbery afflicting the industry.

Glen Burrows, Bristol Rail said that terms such as "trolley dollies" aimed at male and female catering staff by other rail workers were an expression of this. Other examples include separate mess room facilities and pay differentials for their own sake.

"Don't the bosses like to exploit these divisions?

"This is a question of ethics and the dignity and respect people deserve at work.

"Some of us earn more than others but

we all make an equal contribution to the railway industry," she said.

Union literature should avoid the term "professionals" when recruiting workers, warned Glen.

"This could be understood that some groups, such as signallers, are professionals while others, such as cleaners, are not," she said.

JUSTICE FOR CLEANERS

Conference called on RMT to launch a Cleaners Charter to fight for fair pay and conditions at the train-operating companies similar to that recently produced for London Underground.

An emergency motion moved by Chris Cuomo, Deptford noted that "cleaners are among the worst paid staff on the railway and some have not had a pay rise for several years".

Delegates urged that RMT be seen as the only union for cleaners within the railway industry and resist efforts by others to recruit them.

Michelle Rogers, Manchester South warned of a high turnover among cleaning staff, making recruitment and retention to RMT difficult.

"One depot has a new team of cleaners every time, but we always ensure that they walk away with a membership application," she said.

Phil Boston, Bristol Rail said cleaners are the lowest of the low in terms of wages and the way they are treated by management.

REINSTATE TRAVEL PRIVS

Conference backed a call for the re-instatement of travel privileges to non-protected staff on retirement.

Tony Jakeman, Bristol Rail said that the lack of priv tickets particularly affected station staff and associated grades, who are among the lowest-paid railway grades, and are, therefore, more likely to suffer retirement poverty.

WE ARE NOT PORTERS

Conference called for a review into procedures for assisting disabled passengers and those with heavy luggage.

Managers usually take the side of the passenger even when their demands exceed practicable limits – for example the sheer weight of baggage.

Linda Wiles, Transport for London No 1 urged colleagues to refuse in such circumstances or alternatively make an entry in the accident book when assisting with very heavy luggage.

"It might feel OK at the time but two or three months later you could find that your back's gone. We are not porters!" ■



Chris Cuomo, Deptford



Denis James, Birmingham



Nick Quirk, Plymouth



Pat Sikorski, AGS



Linda Wiles, TfL

ORGANISING UNIT

ORGANISING TRANSPORT WORKERS

The union's organising weeks continue to be a success, promising to make 2006 RMT's best organised year to date

Over the last two years the union continues to grow and the organising weeks are very much an important part of this successful strategy.

Many more such weeks are planned for the rest of the year as well as 'introduction days' for new and prospective representatives. It's important that the union continues to build proper workplace organisation through a democratic reps structure.

PAID RELEASE

All regional offices have been supplied with a 'pro-forma letter' to make it easier for elected representatives to apply for paid release.

These letters should be submitted to management four weeks prior to the organising week.

Any difficulties should be reported to the regional organiser in order for them to be dealt with. In 2004, the South East Regional Council managed to get about fifty reps some form of paid release. Last year, RMT managed to get 63 RMT reps paid release in the South West. It is vitally important that all reps apply for release.

PLANNING

Regional Councils who felt they had successful weeks were those who had spent the most time planning in advance. At least three planning meetings should be held before each organising week.

Local propaganda is also very important. The union now has a large selection of propaganda and materials produced by the Organising Unit that is sent out free of charge to activists.

However, each Regional Council should produce a leaflet showing local contact details of key officials, reps and activists. Every office is a resource centre with desk top publishing and colour-copying facilities to use and staff have been trained to produce top quality materials.

Alan Pottage of the organising unit said that it was a welcome indication of the growing success of the strategy that Regional Councils are now holding additional weeks.

The South East Regional Council are holding two, the Regional Council in Scotland are holding four and Wessex and South West Regional Council are planning to hold one main organising week and nineteen further organising weeks. ■

REGIONAL COUNCIL ORGANISING WEEKS

19.06.06	South West & Wessex Regional Council (Phil Bialyk/Alan Pottage)
17.07.06	South Wales & South West Regional Council (Brian Curtis/Rob Conlin)
21.08.06	North East Regional Council (Stan Herschel/ John Milligan)
04.09.06	Scotland Regional Council WEEK 3 (Phil McGarry/Ian Macintyre/Donald Graham)
18.09.06	London & Anglia Regional Council (Bob Rayner/Carolyn Siddall)
23.10.06	Midlands Regional Council (Ken Usher/Gerry Hitchen)
6.11.06	Scotland Regional Council WEEK 4 (Phil McGarry/Ian Macintyre/Donald Graham)
20.11.06	Manchester & North West Regional Council (Andy Warnock-Smith/John Milligan)

BUILDING WORKPLACE ORGANISATION

The dates below are for an initial 'introduction' to the role of RMT workplace representative. These days are held in the region shortly after each organising week.

The relevant regional organiser will be responsible for arranging release of the activist to attend. He will also notify the new representative of the course details two weeks prior to the course date.

Then a more in-depth two-day training course will follow that will be held within six weeks of the one day introduction. Dates and venues are to be confirmed.

The aim is to give all new reps three days training within a few months of coming into contact with the union.

New/prospective RMT rep training days

13.06.06	Scotland Regional Council (Donald Graham)
04.07.06	South East Regional Council (Carolyn Siddall)
01.08.06	South West & Wessex Regional Council (Alan Pottage)
22.08.06	South Wales & South West Regional Council (Rob Conlin)
26.09.06	North East Regional Council (John Milligan)
31.10.06	London & Anglia Regional Council (Carolyn Siddall)
28.11.06	Midlands Regional Council (Gerry Hitchen)
19.12.06	Manchester & North West Regional Council (John Milligan)

ORGANISING UNIT

Success in Scotland

The first of four Scottish regional council organising weeks recruits many new members

Planning meetings identified areas where there are non-members in order to strengthen union membership.

Using a list of Scotrail staff that had gone through induction classes and had not yet joined the union, as well as branch lists, the group was able to locate non-members across the Regional Council area.

Select Service Partners workers who staff the station food outlets and bars were also targeted at Glasgow Central and Queen Street.

The company has been sold by the Compass group so it was more important than ever that this group of workers are organised to be effective in negotiations to protect themselves and get full advantage from the recognition agreement that RMT has with the company.

Virgin Staff were approached in Glasgow and Edinburgh with new members joining and, importantly, new reps coming forward.

The Forth Bridge was also identified as a workplace with around 150 workers employed by contractors with few if any RMT members.

Edinburgh Branch Secretary Graham Buchanan and Jim Philp, Fife and District Branch Secretary, were out at 6am to meet the workers as they went onto the Bridge.

Jim Philp pointed out: "if you work on the railway they should all be in RMT" and workers asked to join and follow up visits are planned.

Initial City Link depots were identified as targets with the three Abbott Enterprise Franchise depots visited and there is a potential of 160-200

members in these locations alone.

Many other grades throughout the region to recruit new members and help members with issues or correct any details like change of grade and address which helps maintain accurate membership records.

Organiser Donald Graham said: "it was great to see activists, reps and retired members working together as a

team in this planned way building an even stronger RMT.

Regional Organiser Phil McGarry said that the exercise recruited at least 70 people during the week with more forms to be sent in.

"We have another three Organising weeks in Scotland this year and we will be working hard to make the others as effective and successful," he said. ■



ORGANISE: Jim Philp and Graham Buchanan at the Forth bridge

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WORKING **AGAINST** RACISM

RMT member Frank Murray reports from this year's TUC Black Workers' Conference in Eastbourne

Conference reflected on various activities to deal with the problems ethnic minorities face and delegates highlighted the contradictions that still exist within the trade union movement and at the workplace.

Sofi Taylor introduced the theme of "Working Against Racism" and explained: "It is a theme that reminds us that we will not make progress or achieve change without being prepared to participate, being prepared to take action and being prepared to be involved and nobody here will be under any illusion that we have a lot to do".*

There were also contributions by TUC General Secretary Brendan Barber and TUC President Gloria Mills, the first Black woman to be elected to this position.

Gloria has been active in the trade union movement for over two decades. She became the first black woman to be elected to the TUC's General Council in 1994. Her pioneering work on equal rights and race issues has

helped shape the agendas, structure and culture of the trade union movement. She has worked hard to move equality from the margins to the mainstream of the trade union movement.

COLOMBIA

Colombian Trade Union activist Hernando Hernandez addressed conference, with details of the crimes committed against union leaders and activists by the Colombian authorities.

He informed us that in the past 15 years more than four trade unionists have been murdered on average every week in Colombia – around 3,500 people in total.

Yet nobody has been arrested for these crimes against trade unions and its members. He said that even though everyone thinks of a drug war when they hear of Colombia, there were no drugs in Colombia when the war started.

"The roots of the conflict are extreme social and economic inequalities with over 65 per

cent of the population living in poverty," he said.

The conference business included 20 motions and all were dealt with in an atmosphere of cordiality and camaraderie.

Workshops were also well organised and well-attended, but, just when they heat up it is time to stop. I hope that the planning committee will allow more time for them in future.

CIVIL LIBERTIES

A fringe organised by the Campaign Against Criminalising Communities (CAMPACC) warned that the government is trying to manipulate public fears to justify a perpetual state of war.

This is done by redefining 'terrorism' in a broader way, blurring the distinction between anti-government protest and organised violence against civilians.

This places entire communities under suspicion of terrorism by using intelligence obtained under torture abroad and waging psychological warfare through disinformation and mass-media scares about 'Al Qaeda cells'.

Anti-terror powers used to

detain people (especially refugees) for suspected activities could just as well be handled under other laws.

Damage to property, such as could happen during strike action, could potentially be covered under the prevention of terrorism act legitimate political activities are suppressed by banning of certain organisation including legitimate national liberation movements.

The campaign is demanding the repeal of such laws: the Terrorism Act 2000, the Anti Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001, and the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005 introduced on the pretext of counter-terrorism.

I have got the conference bug and will be looking forward following the progress of future Black Workers' conference.

However, RMT only had one delegate and I believe we are allowed at least four.

RMT is a missing an opportunity to influence and be involved in redressing the racism that affects its members.

**The full content of the speech can be found on the TUC web site at: www.tuc.org.uk/equality/tuc-11743-f0.cfm*



UNITY SIGNALS VICTORY

The determination and unity of signal workers has forced Network Rail to reverse an 'unprecedented and unfair' decision to downgrade RMT member Adrian Yates

Adrian is a local RMT signallers representative at Victoria. Following an alleged minor operational misdemeanor, he was charged with gross misconduct and downgraded from a grade eight to a grade four position.

The minor incident, made under very difficult working conditions, was Adrian's first in over 25 years in the job. However, management increased the charge and suspended him pending a hearing, which was also outside of normal practices.

Adrian's colleagues and fellow workers across Sussex believed that the punishment was far too severe for a first offence of this nature and had more to do with him being an effective health and safety representative.

Over 40 colleagues signed a letter of protest pointing out that that other staff in the area have been involved in similar incidents yet have not been disciplined.

It is also highly unusual for the charge to be "gross misconduct" and it appears that this had been done

to make it easier to have him removed from the box.

As a result, RMT branches, including South London, Three Bridges and Croydon No 1, submitted requests for the union to ballot all signalling and supervisory members on the Sussex route for strike action.

Meetings were also organised for members to discuss the implications for industrial relations in the region if management were allowed to victimise staff in such a way.

After a lot of campaigning, the punishment was finally rescinded at Adrian's appeal hearing.

Adrian thanked local rep Bill Dickson and Jack Jones from the RMT executive committee for doing an excellent job representing him at the hearings and thanked the members that worked hard to see justice was done.

He said that membership had grown since the incident as staff had saw the importance of RMT membership. Adrian has since been elected as an RMT zonal rep. ■



MORE WOMEN ATTEND AGM

Five women will attend this year's Annual General Meeting in Dublin as delegates next month – two more than last year.

Julie Cooney of Birmingham Rail Branch and Michelle Rodgers of Manchester South Branch, who both attended for the first time last year, are returning. Julie says that she enjoyed the experience last year so much that she asked her branch to send her again and she is looking forward to welcoming her fellow female delegates.

Janet Cassidy of North Clyde Branch, representing Region one at the AGM, has twenty years' experience as a union activist and last year she was elected chair of the STUC Women's Committee. However, she has

never before been a delegate to the AGM.

She was nominated last year but was narrowly beaten in the election, so decided to try again this year, with success. Janet is pleased to be one of a comparatively high number of female delegates. "It is encouraging to see that women have turned the tide and are getting more involved" she says.

Also attending the AGM as delegates for the first time are Linda Wiles and Josie Toussaint-Pinnock, both from London and representing Area 26.

Linda joined the union when she started working for London Underground, ten years ago. Three years ago her job was 'TUPE'd' over to Transport for London and she was

instrumental in the formation of the Transport for London Branch, bringing together the TfL employees who found themselves dispersed across different London Underground branches.

As branch secretary and a workplace representative, she was soon leading the first ever strike in Transport for London's history.

Linda is a regular attender at her Regional Council meetings – she was recently elected to the position of Vice-President – and decided to stand for election to the AGM. "I want to be a part of the future of how our union goes forward and also to gain a better insight into its structure. "We need more women to attend these meetings if we want things to change.," she

says. Linda is looking forward to meeting up with old friends and making new ones and having the chance to discuss and debate common issues and, as she says, "of course, Dublin is a lovely city".

Josie Toussaint-Pinnock is a local rep for train drivers at a London Underground depot. She has attended AGMs in the past as a visitor and so knows what she is letting herself in for: "I enjoyed the experience of being a visitor and was very interested in the goings on.

"I decided I would like to play a part in it so decided to put myself forward this year," she says.

RMT News wishes them all the best. ■

LONG SERVICE AWARDS

Wimbledon winners

General secretary Bob Crow presented 40 and 25-year badges to Wimbledon branch members recently.

Wimbledon Branch Secretary Paul McDonnell reports that members also took the opportunity to ask Bob a few questions, during which a member of the club heckled him.

"Bob answered and reformed the heckler, as he was found later singing Bob's praises in the bar," he said.

EC member Paul Burton also gave a report and took questions from the floor.

A raffle was held and raised £87 for the branch welfare account.

Paul said that the branch is planning to hold more social events and would appreciate suggestions at branch meetings which are held at 5pm on the last Thursday of the month upstairs in the Trinity Road Club, off Wimbledon Broadway.



WIMBLEDON: 40-year badges were presented to Pat Enright, Bob Hamilton, Bob Thomas, Norman Evans and a 25-year badge went to Nigel Denyer.

Hants celebrates

A number of 25 and 40-year badges were presented at a recent South Hants branch meeting at Eastleigh Locomotive Engineers Club.

The general secretary gave a rousing speech on railway pensions to a packed branch and received unanimous endorsement for the campaign to save the Railway Pension Scheme.

Members who received badges pictures are: L to R seated – John Pitman (40), Pete Ivey (40), Maurice Scarle (40), John Simpson (40). L to R standing – Dereck Hayes (25), Peter Jackson (40), Alan Mayhew (25), Roger Griffiths (40), Ray Costin (25), Bob Moreland (25), Dave Turner (not presented but snuck in the picture), Michael Turner (25), Robin Stockbridge (40). Also presented but not in the picture was Dave Titheridge (40).



250 years in the union

Over 50 members attended a Plymouth No1 branch presentation evening to celebrate over 250 years of RMT membership earlier this year.

40-years badges were presented to Ollie Wise, a Plymouth Panel Box Signaller who joined in 1962, Brian Fradley, a Plymouth Virgin Train Manager who joined in 1960, David Hughes, a Plymouth FGW Train Manager that joined in 1964,

John Mathias, a Plymouth FGW Restaurant Service Leader who joined in 1964 and Steve Sobey and Tom Best both from FGW Laira Depot that joined in 1964 and 1965 respectively.

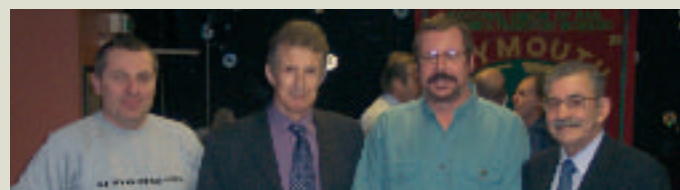
Bob Crow paid tribute to the loyalty of the long standing members and presented the commemorative medallions and badges.

Bob then gave a report and took questions from the floor.



Tom and Steve achieve 40 years service

Tom Best and Steve Sobey collected their awards for 40 years service as RMT members. The award ceremony took place in Plymouth and was carried out by general secretary Bob Crow.



L to R: Ian Harris, Steve Sobey, Mike Burt and Tom Best

Euston presentation



Euston No1 Branch secretary Pat Donahue, Hugh Wallis, receiving his 25-year badge, Arthur Grimwood, receiving his 40-year badge, Bob Crow, Danny Hanlon, receiving his 40-year badge and Daniel Sinha.

Over 350 years of trade union experience at Bristol Rail

RMT General Secretary Bob Crow presented Bristol Rail Branch members with 40-year and 25-year Membership Awards recently on an evening that celebrated over 350 years trade union experience.



left to right: George Clay, John Scattergood, Dave Miles, Mike Radford, Steve Hampton, Bob Crow, Andy Buwe, Geoff Breakey, Tony Jakeman

40 for Jim

Jim Murray started at the Southern Vectis Bus Company in Shanklin 40 years ago.

He worked as a conductor for five years then moved on to be a driver.

Jim then moved to Ventnor depot and stayed there until its closure in 1984.

He then moved to Ryde depot where he is currently a driver.

When Jim is not driving he enjoys a game of golf at Ventnor Golf course and with the Southern Vectis Golf Society.



Travelling without fear

I recently gave evidence to the House of Commons transport select committee on security arrangements following the London bombings in July last year which killed 52 people.

RMT has been appalled at the lack of cooperation from the mainline rail industry to discuss an industry-wide approach to rail safety.

Government ministers rightly praised the professionalism and courage of transport workers in the immediate aftermath of terrorist attacks. Yet, the Association of Train Operating Companies has refused to even discuss a framework for national security standards for an industry which is particularly vulnerable to attack.

It was only following government intervention – almost a year after the attacks – that ATOC finally agreed for discussions to take place.

The union also still has major concerns over government proposals to scrap railway fire safety regulations introduced by following the Transport Secretary authorising the Fennell inquiry into the 1987 Kings Cross Fire.

These regulations lay down minimum statutory protections, including means of escape means of fighting fire, means of detection and giving warning, fire instruction and training and staffing levels.

It is self-evident that the protections will be lessened because nowhere within the Fire Safety Order does it actually specify minimum standards that equate to the current regulations. Moreover, unlike the current regulations, the proposed Guidance to accompany the Fire Safety Order will not have any legal force.

Removing the regulations will change the burden of proof, thereby making it easier for the rail

industry to reduce the current standards below that specified in the existing regulations. At present the fire authority has to be satisfied that a specific requirement at a particular location is inappropriate, unnecessary or not reasonably practical. Under the government's proposals' it will be for the fire authority to show that the rail industry has failed to carry out a sufficient risk assessment.

In light of the July attacks, the decision to remove the Regulations disregards the public's concern for safety and security.

The government should reverse their decision and retain the necessary protections provided by the regulations.

I also believe that the current foreign policy of the British government has helped to increase the potential for terrorist attacks on transport infrastructure.

This is a view supported by Royal Institute of International Affairs briefing of 18 July 2005 which argued that the UK is at particular risk because, as a close ally of the US, it has deployed armed forces in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Issues including social exclusion, poverty and racism all play their part. However, even where social and security measures steps are taken to deter terrorist attacks there is no guarantee, particularly when dealing with suicide bombers, that such attacks will not happen.

Workers and their trade unions have a vital role in determining responses to these attacks.

We need proper training for front-line staff, effective communication systems and even-handed security measures that do not threaten essential civil liberties as a very minimum at home and a foreign policy that promotes peace abroad not perpetual war.

Our man in Pyongyang

Tube driver Paul Bowman recounts a trip to the northern part of the divided Korean peninsula

Most people thought I was mad when I told them I was going on holiday to North Korea. That's debatable, but the fact remains that the time I spent in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) was one of the best weeks of my life.

One thing high on my agenda was to meet some fellow transport workers, and a visit to the Pyongyang Metro gave me

my opportunity.

I didn't think it was possible for a Metro system to be beautiful, but that's the only way to describe it. Stations are named after revolutionary themes, such as Victory and Reunification, and platforms are adorned with beautiful mosaics depicting scenes from the revolution.

The trains (formerly on the



East Berlin U-Bahn) and stations were remarkably clean and refreshingly free from advertising. Despite the language barrier, a lot of gesturing and the photo I'd brought of me driving a train, I

passed on a message of solidarity and friendship with the Metro workers of Pyongyang. The biggest thing I took away from my trip was the infectious warmth and happiness of the people. ■

WHERE THERE'S A WILL THERE'S A PUBLIC RAILWAY

This month my Scottish Socialist Party colleague Tommy Sheridan MSP introduced a Bill to Parliament to take rail passenger services in Scotland back into public hands.

The Provision of Passenger Services [Scotland] Bill is the product of many months of painstaking work between Tommy and Thompsons' Solicitors to find a way such a proposal can be laid in front of the Holyrood Parliament. Many people argued it could not be done, that the powers necessary to take our railways back into public hands in Scotland were reserved at Westminster. But it is not so.

Under powers recently conferred on the Scottish Executive by The Railways Act 2005 Scottish Executive ministers can insist the franchise to run Scottish passenger services is conducted on a 'not for profit' basis.

Tommy's Bill needs to be introduced now however so that it has a chance of being passed before Parliament rises to fight next years Holyrood elections.

Public ownership of the railways is popular in Scotland. A poll conducted for the Scottish Socialist Party found more than 2/3rds of voters keen to see the railways back under public control.

Reliable and efficient rail service provision is particularly important for the 36% of households in Scotland – rising to 42 per cent and 59 per cent in Edinburgh and Glasgow respectively – who do not have a car. The Glasgow to Edinburgh train service runs every 15 minutes and is heavily over subscribed.

RMT official Phil McGarry told a Parliamentary press conference to formally launch the Bill that the amount of money, public money, now being poured into the railways is three times that given to support British Rail. It is reckoned that £15m per day is leaving the industry and ending up in the coffers of companies like First Group.

Since the government's formula for calculating the level of subsidy is based on a 'costs

plus profits minus revenue equals subsidy' approach, then clearly if we delete the profit element then there will be significantly more money going into the service itself. This will result in more efficient railways management, more investment in rolling stock and reduction in fares.

The current franchise to run passengers services in Scotland operated by First Scotrail runs until 2011. Passing the Bill now would allow for the necessary preparations for ending of a privately run service to be in place by then.

Tommy Sheridan, in laying the Bill proposal before Parliament, said: "Everyone knows that rail privatisation is inefficient, uneconomic and incapable of delivering sustainable expanded services, fair fares, safe railways or value for money for the taxpayer.

"These important new powers handed to the Scottish Parliament must now be used to remove the profit motive from the rail service and deliver a not for profit passenger service



provided publicly or by another appropriate not for profit provider," he said.

The Bill has the support of Scottish Socialist Party MSPs, Greens, SNP and many Labour and Liberal Democrats. Together, with RMT and other rail unions, the campaign to bring our railways back into public hands will be taking its message around Scotland this summer in order to rally the considerable support the proposal enjoys. ■

Colin Fox, MSP
Scottish Socialist Party Convenor

A working class hero comes to town

RMT member Ollie New reports on the welcome that London gave Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez when he visited London last month

Supporters of US president George Bush have said that Hugo Chavez should be assassinated, and security was strict at his rally at Camden Centre in London last month.

He is so popular, even in London, that hundreds of people were unable to get into the packed hall. I was lucky enough to be among the audience when President Chavez spoke about his experiences, the brilliant progress in Venezuela and the need for worldwide solidarity of working people against war and oppression.

Hugo Chavez has won election after election with huge support, and continues to receive up to 70 per cent approval in opinion polls.

The reason for this huge popularity is that he is using Venezuela's oil wealth for the benefit of the people and to change the lives of the poor.

DEMOCRATIC CHANGE

He told the story of how, when his government first started to provide free education for all, they had to televise the fact that it was free so that parents could



report the rip-off merchants who were still trying to charge for it.

"Now", he said, "Venezuela has basically become a huge school".

Older people who missed out on education are being given new opportunities and the government has supplied over a million pairs of spectacles, to help people read.

Health care has been improved and basic foodstuffs kept at low prices. As a result, health and life expectancy has gone up in the 10 years he has been in power. Unlike Britain,

where we are steadily losing our democratic rights, Venezuelans are gaining more.

To the huge frustration of the right and big business, the economy has never been stronger, with low interest rates, a huge increase in investments and big infrastructure projects under way – including railways across Venezuela, which they have never had before.

To my amazement, Chavez talked for over three hours without losing the interest of his huge audience. He told the meeting that we needed a new socialism that was not just dogma – and he invited all of us to join in and be creative!

Hugo Chavez made a practical offer as well – to supply cheap heating oil to pensioners and poor in London, if Ken Livingstone was able to arrange it. Venezuela already provides this for the poor of New York and other US cities.

Hugo Chavez didn't just talk politics, he chatted about people he had met and told many stories about ordinary people on the streets of his country.

It is easy to see why Chavez is loved by the poor and hated by the rich and its media machine. ■

Ollie New is chair of RMT London Regional Council



EDUCATION: Pupils in Petare a poor neighbourhood Barrio in East Caracas benefiting from Mission Robinson, a very successful project introduced by President Hugo Chavez to provide primary level education across the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Copyright © Jess Hurd/reportdigital.co.uk

ACTIVISTS' CORNER

ASLEF ACCUSE RMT OF POACHING

Although I usually exercise restraint in the face of ASLEF's crass statements, the latest diatribe against our organisation can not go unchallenged.

Apparently ASLEF's AAD has instructed their general secretary to demand TUC condemnation of our efforts to recruit train drivers following the recent publication of the RMT Train Drivers' Charter.

Apparently, delegates pointed out this could lead to "harmful splits and disunity within the rail industry", best not mention the pensions issue then.

They further state if no progress is made at the TUC they will cease communications with us. As someone who has been on the receiving end of that organisation's lack of communication, particularly regarding industrial disputes, I find that laughable.

We are also accused of being "untrustworthy, deceitful and dishonest". Oh dear, I can't help thinking about pensions again.

One of the delegates then referred to the date of the debate, 06.06.06. Obviously this was one of the more educated individuals present who has

seen The Omen more than once. "Perhaps it is now time to kick the devil out of the cab", opined our hero. What does that mean exactly? Not allow RMT members to drive? Perhaps these "devils" are not worthy to undertake the same job as these undoubted paragons of sectionalism and elitism.

Time to bring back burning at the stake. These heretics are not fit to occupy driving cabs. Perhaps if they ask nicely, management will agree to branding RMT drivers, so they can be instantly recognised and kicked out of the cab.

Saving the best for last, the ASLEF General Secretary then illustrated his refusal to accept reality. According to him, ASLEF are "strong, united and effective in a way that the RMT cannot achieve". This from a man heading an organisation which has no compunction in agreeing three-tier pay deals and made 10 and 11-hour days the accepted norm, I could go on and on.

His best comment concerned "putting our own house in order before making efforts to expand". Obviously, the fact that we are Britain's fastest growing

union has passed him by.

I would like to enlighten ASLEF, Bob Crow did not renege on any agreements. If they take the time to read the Train Drivers' Charter, there is an interesting piece about democracy.

RMT is a membership-led union. Our driver members wanted the "Charter" published, in order to counter the very distortions now coming from ASLEF. Our General Secretary simply followed the wishes of his members. This is called democracy. Although this concept may be alien to our sister union, it's the way we operate.

It should also be noted by those who accuse us of promoting disunity and splits that, they are ignoring their own history. You are the people who broke away over a hundred years ago and was formed by people who believed "splitting" was the best way forward.

No doubt you believe that making fatuous remarks about devils and the number of the beast will promote unity?

It is significant that, it appears no delegate, or the General Secretary, questioned

the accuracy of the "Charter". Perhaps this would have led to a sensible debate, which may have proved embarrassing.

I would like to say to the ASLEF general secretary that your view of our "Charter" is a back-handed compliment.

John MacDonald,
regional organiser and train driver

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WHEN VISITING LONDON, WHY NOT STAY WITH RMT?

RMT members visiting London can now take advantage of affordable accommodation at the union's Maritime House building, Clapham. Single rooms are available for just £24 per night to members and close family. Couples can have a reduced rate of £36 for two rooms.

Maritime House is a few minutes walk from Clapham Common station for quick access to central London.

To book a room, or for further details, contact Denise Craig at RMT on 020 7529 8840 or email d.craig@rmt.org.uk.



Dear editor,

I was very interested to read your article on First Great Western cuts. I am employed by a contractor engaged by Network Rail to carry out track work.

I was recently working at Bedwyn and decided to walk to Hungerford one evening and then get the train back. However, Hungerford has no ticket facilities so I boarded the train without a ticket. No-one came and asked me for a ticket and there are no ticket facilities at Bedwyn either, so I had a free journey.

How much revenue is First Great Western losing through not enough staff being around?

I find this incredible yet FGW want to cut more services. They should ask themselves how many passengers it is carrying on trains for nothing, I think they would be surprised.

Yours sincerely, Michael Smith

PS Keep up the standard of your excellent magazine.

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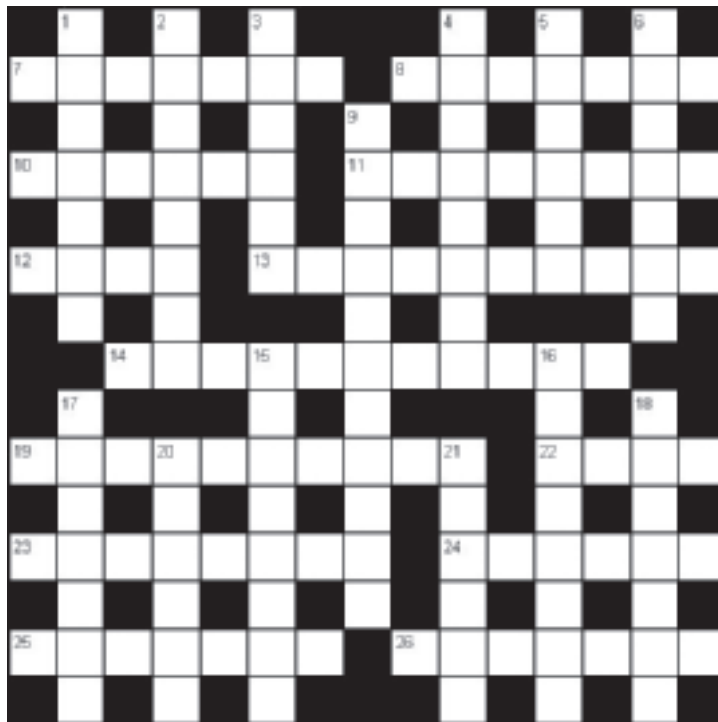
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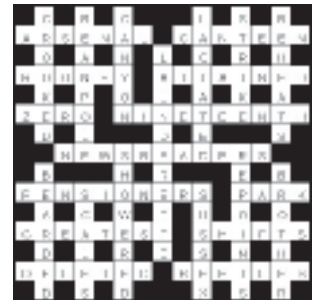


RMT £25 prize crossword

No. 26. Set by Elk



Last month's solution...



The winner of prize crossword no. 25 is
Mr A Barrett of Enfield.

Send entries to Prize Crossword, RMT, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD by July 28th with your name and address.

Winner and solution in next issue.

ACROSS

- 7 Officer (7)
- 8 Convergence; gathering (7)
- 10 Scene of RMT's 2006 20,7,8 (6)
- 11 Buried; walled in (8)
- 12 Farm building (4)
- 13 They protect eyes from sun (10)
- 14 Top-flight football division (11)
- 19 Acts of leaving; deviations from norm; buses, trains and planes! (10)
- 22 Seagoing vessel (4)
- 23 Thrown down in challenge (8)
- 24 Scene of RMT's 2005 20,7,8 (6)
- 25 Gathering of vessels for racing (7)
- 26 Docked (7)

DOWN

- 1 Denial; act of turning down (7)
- 2 Citizen of European capital; doughnut; newspaper size (8)
- 3 Swoons (6)
- 4 Scaly, cold-blooded, egg-laying vertebrates (8)
- 5 Bowlers aim at them (6)
- 6 Went into (door, stage or competition) (7)
- 9 The best thing to do with rail operations and infrastructure (in the public sector) (11)
- 15 Cut up; disfigure (8)
- 16 Looks closely at (8)
- 17 Overdue (7)
- 18 Pick-me-up; hair of the dog (7)20 Yearly (6)
- 21 Appeared (6)

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Our RMT Credit Union is a great new benefit for members. It exists, not to make a profit, but to provide help and support to all our members for their savings and credit needs. By saving together, and lending to each other, we take the profit motive out of savings and loans. All the surpluses created by the Credit Union are recycled as benefits to members through cheap loans, and the ability to pay dividends on savings.

The Right Balance

CHEAP LOANS

Decisions on interest rates are made by our members. This year our AGM decided to offer very cheap loans to members. This means we can now offer loans at **9.9 per cent APR**, equivalent to **0.825 per cent per month** on the declining balance. See our great rates below.

We strike a balance between low interest rates on loans and paying a dividend on savings. We enable members to have ready access to cheap loans while building up a substantial and useful savings account. We can do this because our Credit Union is run on the same principles of mutual support and members' democratic control as our trade union, so you can be sure that it's run in the interests of us all.

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We don't exist to make profits. With the surplus we make from interest on loans we can collectively decide to pay a dividend. We recently paid a dividend of 3% on savings – a very healthy dividend rate compared to banks' interest rates

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1500	131.80	69.15	48.33	37.97	31.80
2000	175.74	92.20	64.44	50.63	42.40
3000	263.61	138.30	96.66	75.94	63.59
4000	351.48	184.40	128.88	101.26	84.79
5000	439.35	230.49	161.10	126.57	105.99
7500	659.02	345.74	241.65	189.86	158.98



Because we're a members' organisation with a democratic structure, we're able to make the decisions that provide a virtuous circle of saving together, providing credit at low interest rates and sharing the benefits by paying a dividend on savings.

Joining Our Credit Union

The Financial Services Authority requires us to comply fully with money laundering regulations. It's a bore but we have to do it. It means that before we can open your account we have to verify your identity and your address.

You need to complete the application form opposite along with the Direct Debit. You'll also need to get your ID verified and send it with the application to us. If you're near a regional office or Unity House you can bring it in and we'll process it there.

ID REQUIREMENTS

Getting your ID verified is quite straight forward. You need two separate forms of ID such as the following:

PROOF OF IDENTITY

- Personal Cheque used for your first month's savings if drawn on an account that includes your name
- Current valid full UK Passport; EU member state ID card
- Current valid full foreign passport
- Current UK full Photo Card Driving Licence
- Current UK provisional, Photo Card Driving Licence (Old styles not accepted)
- ID pass from Network Rail, Trans Pennine Express, Central Trains, Eurostar
- Discharge book (shippers)
- Inland Revenue Tax Notification (current year)

PROOF OF ADDRESS

- Current UK full, signed driving licence (if not used for Proof of Identity)
- Current UK provisional, driving licence Photo Card (if not used for Proof of Identity)
- A current [within last three months] Utility Bill (not mobile phone bill)
- Recent Bank, Building Society or Mortgage statement
- Current Council Tax bill
- Pension or benefits book
- Tenancy or rent book/agreement
- Recent Inland Revenue notice of coding or tax demand

The list above is not exhaustive and other documents will be considered.

You can get your branch secretary or regional office to verify and sign photocopies of the documents. As an alternative, you can also get another person of authority such as your employer, doctor, Solicitor etc to verify the forms of ID. The copies of the documents must have an official stamp and signature on them and a contact name and address. Or, you can send originals to us at the address below. Send completed verified copies of documents or originals to: RMT Credit Union, Unity House, FREEPOST NW3706, London NW1 3YD. If sending valuable documents by post you should send them recorded delivery. For assistance: Tel: 020 7529 8835

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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 ☐

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Date



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9 7 4 2 8 1

Reference Number

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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.



RMT fight back:

Our personal injury lawyers won't let bad employers get away with it.

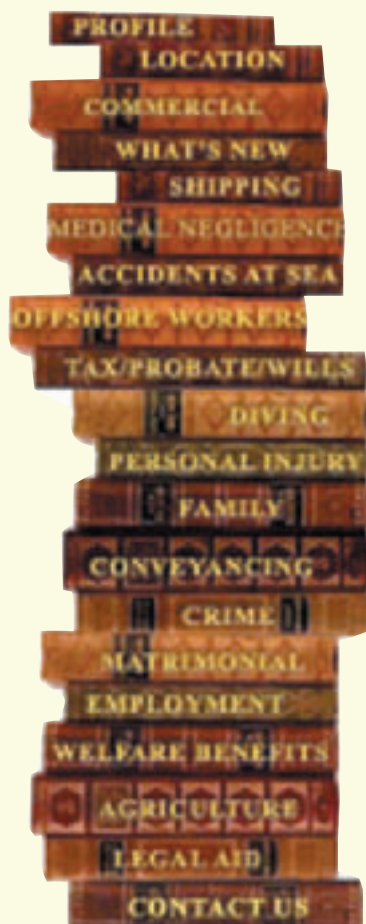
The law says workers have a right to safe conditions – and RMT is here to defend that right. That's why our Personal Injury Service is free – and even covers non-work related accidents for family members. So if you, or a member of your family, have suffered an illness or injury due to someone else's fault, call us now.

FOR FREE LEGAL ASSISTANCE CALL THE HELPLINE

0800 587 7516 in England, Wales and Ireland

0800 328 1014 in Scotland

PROTECTING AND PROMOTING OUR MEMBERS' INTERESTS.



Bridge M^CFarland SOLICITORS

**Have you got a
problem you
need legal
help with?**

As well as offering expertise in a wide range of subjects we have specialists in employment law, personal injury, accidents at sea, diver's claims and clinical negligence claims

Home visits and telephone appointments can be arranged where appropriate

19 South St. Mary's
Gate Grimsby, North East
Lincolnshire DN31 1JE

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