

Essential reading for today's transport worker

RMT *news*

IS THIS THE FUTURE OF RAIL?

RMT slams the use of 'chain gang' workers

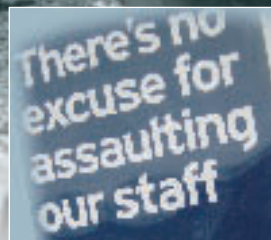
INSIDE THIS ISSUE...



**STATION STAFF
CONFERENCE
PAGE 10**



**RECOGNITION AT
NORFOLKLINE
PAGE 16**



**ASSAULTS QUESTIONNAIRE
PAGE 13**



www.rmt.org.uk

RMT STANDS UP FOR ITS MEMBERS

If you have suffered an avoidable injury or illness, our team of expert lawyers can help you

The law says you're entitled to compensation for illnesses or injuries caused by the negligence of others. And because the RMT only uses expert personal injury lawyers, you can be sure of a service that is second to none.

Contact us now for fast and efficient advice – even for your family members.

FOR THE BEST LEGAL ASSISTANCE FOR RMT MEMBERS CALL FREE ON 0800 587 7516 (0800 328 1014 in Scotland). Lines open 8.00am-8.00pm Mon-Fri (except public holidays) and 9.00am-5.00pm Sat and Sun. For the 24 hour criminal law line call 0800 587 7530 (0800 328 1014 in Scotland)



PROTECTING AND PROMOTING OUR MEMBERS' INTERESTS



contents

Page 4	FOLLOW AGM AS IT HAPPENS!
Page 5	EWS MEMBERS PULL TOGETHER
Page 6	RMT AT SCOTTISH TUC
Page 7	RMT CLEANERS LOBBY TO END POVERTY PAY
Page 8	FIGHTING FOR MEMBERS AT LYNX/UPS
Page 9	PARLIAMENTARY COLUMN
Page 10	STATION STAFF DEMAND RIGHT TO WORK IN SAFETY
Page 12	CATERING GRADES SHAPE UP TO PROTECT JOBS
Page 14	CHALLENGES FOR THE SCOTTISH TUC
Page 16	RMT WINS RECOGNITION DEAL AT NORFOLKLINES
Page 16	DEFENDING THE ROLE OF THE GUARD
Pages 18	UNION OPENS REFURBISHED OFFICES IN DOVER
Page 19	ASSAULTS QUESTIONNAIRE
Page 23	MEMBERS
Page 24	ENGINEERING SAFETY
Page 26	ROAD FREIGHT CONFERENCE
Page 30	THE BATTLE AGAINST SLAVERY
Page 32	TRADE UNIONISM IN ISRAEL
Page 34	ENHANCING RAIL FREIGHT
Page 36	LETTERS
Page 37	CLASSIFIED/CROSSWORD
Page 38	HOW TO JOIN THE CREDIT UNION

EDITORIAL

NO TO CHAIN GANGS



RMT made urgent representation last month to Network Rail after the media revealed that prisoners were being used as cheap chain-gang labour on safety-critical trackwork.

There is nothing wrong with the idea of offenders being rehabilitated through work, but not if it is about cheap labour to line the pockets of contractors, not if it is at the expense of workers in the industry, and certainly not if it involves safety critical work.

Among the questions we need answers to is why RMT was never consulted when our members clearly have a crucial interest.

After a long, hard campaign RMT has won recognition for deck, engine-room and catering ratings on Norfolkline's three vessels operating between Dover and Dunquerque.

This news, coincided with the re-opening of the upgraded and refurbished Dover office it represents – another improvement in services for RMT members.

We are also finalising an agreement with the Maersk subsidiary to represent catering ratings on the Liverpool-Belfast route as well.

We still have a long way to go to stop the 'race to the bottom' and to end some of the shocking conditions in the ferry industry, but every positive step gets us closer to our goal of decent standards.

There is more good news to report on South West Trains where, under pressure from RMT, bosses have dropped plans to introduce driver-only operation.

When SWT unveiled a plan to pass responsibility for opening doors to drivers we warned that we would defend the safety role of the guard, and the company has now completely withdrawn it.

Significant progress has been made to retain the core elements of the crucial Section 12 subsurface station fire regulations.

All the provisions of the current regulations will continue to apply while further detailed talks take place and until agreed alternative legal protection is put in place.

Following a very positive meeting with the bus minister, there will be ongoing discussions about the employment issues in the industry.

Our recent survey of bus members has been used to bring to the attention of ministers and MPs the chronic low pay, poor conditions and recruitment and retention problems the industry faces.

Our goal with the bus industry – as with all public transport – remains to see it back in the public sector where it belongs, and

we must never let up our fight to improve pay and conditions.

We have moved into a dispute with employers covered by the TfL pension fund over attempts to undermine the pension rights of people forced to leave their jobs through ill-health.

When the PPP was unleashed on London Underground we were promised that our members' conditions would not be undermined – and here we are facing an attack that could see most people forced out of their job through ill-health deprived of their pensions.

We have made it clear to TfL, LUL, Tubelines, Metronet and the other companies involved that the move is unacceptable, and it is important that members involved vote for action.

We also now know that TfL intends to hand the East London Line over to privateers MTR Laing when it re-opens after refurbishment in 2010.

Whoever does it, and however it is dressed up, transport privatisation is bad news – and there are major battles ahead to defend ticket offices on LUL and to retain guards on the 'London Overground' franchise.

Overall, there is plenty on the agenda for delegates at our annual general meeting to discuss in Edinburgh – and in the next issue we will include detailed reports of the decisions and debates.

As we go to press the Communication Workers' Union is heading for a major dispute with Royal Mail, in which not just pay and conditions but the very future of another public service is at stake.

I have arranged for details of CWU branches and regions to be circulated with the request that RMT branches will 'adopt' a CWU branch and offer every assistance.

Finally, by the time you read this there will be a new Prime Minister.

In his final days in office Tony Blair was pictured with Margaret Thatcher – a fitting picture to leave us with, as their legacies are essentially the same: privatisation, anti-union laws and war.

The whole labour movement will hope that the new tenant in No 10 will behave more like a Labour prime minister than his predecessor.

However, hope is no substitute for organisation – for when it comes to defending working people's interests, all our experience tells us that we leave it to others at our peril.

Best Wishes

Bob Crow

FOLLOW AGM AS IT HAPPENS!

RMT members can follow proceedings direct from this month's annual general meeting live over the Internet.

For the second year running the union is to webcast the AGM, meaning any member with access to a computer with a dial-up or broadband connection can follow the debates as they happen.

Proceedings kick off on Sunday, June 24 at approximately 5pm with RMT president John Leach's opening address to conference, which this year is being held in Edinburgh.

Monday through to Wednesday (June 25 to 27) will see the main debates, which will formulate union policy on issues as diverse as transport and pensions to health and safety

and international solidarity.

Conference begins at 9.30am on these days, ending at approximately 5.30pm, with a one hour break for lunch.

International speakers from sister unions will also address conference as will John McDonnell MP, chair of RMT's parliamentary group, and general secretary Bob Crow will deliver his annual report.

All proceedings will be archived for six months, meaning any RMT member can watch the conference even if they missed the live webcast. ■

To watch the webcast live, or to view the conference archive at a later date, visit www.rmt.org.uk/webcasts and enter your user name (RMT membership number) and password (surname in capital letters) to log on.



CLERICAL POSITION IN THE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

A vacancy has arisen for a clerical position at Unity House and RMT is inviting applications for this position.

- Salary £29,554 inclusive of shift premium plus five per cent Roster Allowance. London Allowance of £3,350 is also payable. Plus benefits.
- Duties involve the preparation of reports, implementing decisions, preparation and reporting of Ballots, helpline duties and corresponding with branches and members.
- Hours are normally flexible 34-hours between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday subject to agreement with the Manager. Saturday working is also rostered to cover the helpline.

A good knowledge of the trade union and labour movement is essential. Also a requirement to word-process and use other computer-based applications.

RMT is an equal opportunities employer.

Closing date: Friday July 6 2007

For an application pack please contact Ernie Laws, Personnel Manager, RMT, 39, Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD. Telephone 020 7529 8834, Fax 020 7529 8848, Email e.laws@rmt.org.uk

Join the RMT London and Anglia sports challenge

At the Henderson sports and social club
Kenilworth Avenue, Harold Wood, Essex RM3 9NE

Sunday July 8 2007 from 1200 hours

London and Anglia RMT regional council has issued a challenge to the rest of the union to participate in its sports day in sunny Essex. Members are invited to register teams for three sporting events:

- An eleven-a-side cricket match
- A five-a-side football tournament
- A rounders game

There will be bouncy castles laid on for the youngsters and a barbeque outside a club house with a fully licensed, subsidised bar and the opportunity to meet other members of the union not least the general secretary and Council of Executive members.

Have you got what it takes to rise to the challenge or at the very least bring your picnic basket and just support the others?

Come and join in the fun in the sun or sign up for one of the teams. Contact Del Marr on 01702 510133 or 07903322911

EWS MEMBERS PULL TOGETHER

RMT's General Grades Committee met with EWS groundstaff and engineering grades representatives at Unity House recently and pledged to redouble the union's efforts to organise EWS workers.

Earlier this year the union's executive decided to establish a national organising strategy for EWS members to fight "disorganisation across the UK rail freight sector".

A new monthly EWS members' newsletter informing RMT members about industrial relations, health and safety and legal developments is being distributed to RMT Regional Offices, Branches and Regional Councils, alongside workplace visits to major EWS depots and workshops.

RMT Regional Council funds are available to pay loss of earnings and reasonable expenses where appropriate for EWS activists to carry out recruitment and organising activities as part of the national campaign.

A series of special meetings for EWS members will be held in major rail centres to co-ordinate the campaign over coming months.

As a first step RMT reps and activists have commenced a comprehensive mapping exercise of union membership across all EWS work locations based on the successful programme carried out in the last year by RMT's South Wales & West Regional Council. The Regional

Council decided in 2006 to pay loss of earnings to EWS activists who were prepared to carry out such reviews and recruit non-members into the union.

Paul Walker, RMT Health and Safety representative for EWS members across the Midlands, said: "our immediate aim in the short term must be at the very least to have a network with an RMT contact person in every single EWS workplace."

RMT's executive will shortly be discussing how to establish a formal EWS national organising committee.

At the same time the union is involved in ongoing negotiations with EWS for a recognition and procedure agreement for local and company council representation.

This has been delayed by a series of unreasonable demands by EWS for RMT to sign a 'no strike' agreement, which RMT has rejected.

TAKEOVER

The Financial Times reported recently that German rail company Deutsche Bahn (Freight) is considering spending up to 500 million euros to buy EWS and Spain's Transfesa. EWS is currently in talks with Deutsche Bahn.

The message is clear: this is no time to put yourself at risk by being outside of trade union membership. Every RMT member at EWS should ensure that fellow EWS workers join RMT. ■

STRIKE ACTION AT EWS

RMT members in the Dagenham and Ripple Lane areas have taken a number of days of strike action and a week-long overtime ban recently against redundancies and the imposition of rosters.

These actions have received 100 per cent support from the membership and management have been taken aback by the strength of feeling on the ground.

RMT has sought a negotiated settlement for some months yet a number of union proposals to revise the rosters have all been rejected by management.

"Local management are blaming everybody but themselves for this situation they have created by imposing rosters and manufacturing redundancies," said general secretary Bob Crow. ■



RMT AT SCOTTISH TUC

The 110th annual Congress of the STUC was held in the Royal Concert Hall in Glasgow.

Regional organiser Phil McGarry was re-elected onto the Scottish TUC General Council by attaining the highest recorded vote in Section A for the second year running.

Phil served over the past 12 months as the STUC vice-president and was duly elected president of the Congress for the next 12 months.

The general theme of the Conference was "Reaching Out", focussing on organising and recruitment, particularly targeting those workers who daily face exploitation and discrimination.

This is reflected in the fact that the affiliated unions have increased overall membership by some 6,000 members.

During the next 12 months the STUC will be reaching out to a wide range of vulnerable workers such as migrant, agency and part-time workers, and joining with community groups and campaigning organisations

to underline the message that trade union membership at the workplace is vital.

RMT's delegation observed the mandate and the policy guidance issued by the Council of Executives.

Ian Macintyre seconded Motion 27 on Public Services which included an RMT amendment against the tendering of our ferry services on Caledonian MacBrayne.

Phil McGarry also seconded Motion 28 on Cuts in public services which was moved by PCS.

RMT president John Leach moved the amended Motion 95 against any military attack against Iran and the general secretary Bob Crow seconded a composite motion on transport.

RMT delegate George Lonie seconded a motion on Scotland's lifeline ferry services. Andy Gordon of the Council of Executives moved an amended motion on the environment and climate change.

Phil McGarry, on behalf of the STUC General Council

moved the motion to amend the STUC Constitution and Gordon Martin moved a composite motion on peace and disarmament.

President John Leach also spoke at a lunchtime fringe meeting on the Trade Union Freedom Bill and seconded a motion demanding trade union rights.

RMT delegate John McDougall acted as a teller throughout Congress.

There were 354 accredited delegates in attendance, comprising of 237 males with 117 females representing 39 trade unions and 23 Trade Union Councils, together with representatives from all of the equality conferences. ■



STUC DELEGATION, From Left to Right:

Back Row: Stuart Elder, Ian McMahon, Gordon Martin, Bob Crow, John Leach
Middle Row: George Lonie, Andy Gordon, Phil McGarry, Ian Macintyre, Scott Agnew, Denis Connor, Mike Rollo
Front Row: John McDougall, Gerry McCann, Janet Cassidy

CONFERENCE MOURNS CREW OF BOURBON DOLPHIN

RMT delegate Scott Agnew moved an emergency dealing with the sinking of the Bourbon Dolphin in the North Sea and of the tragic loss of crew members.

The Norwegian oil supply ship Bourbon Dolphin capsized as it moved an anchor for a drilling rig, about 86 miles off Shetland.

Among the dead were 14-year-old David Remøy and his father Oddne Arve Remøy, the ship's captain.

Surviving crew members said that it took less than five minutes for the boat to capsize. They managed to jump into the sea before being rescued.

Rig workers observed a two-minute silence for the lost crew members of the Bourbon Dolphin, which was followed by a lone piper (right). ■



RMT CLEANERS LOBBY TO END POVERTY PAY

RMT Tube and rail cleaners rallied outside the Queen Elizabeth II conference centre last month to hammer home their message that the time has come to end poverty pay on the capital's transport network.

Together with families and supporters, cleaners lobbied the Mayor's state of London debate to show Londoners the truth behind "the world's most successful city".

Delegates were shocked to hear about the appalling pay, working conditions and quality of life for Londoners who clean the railways that millions use everyday.

RMT assistant general secretary Pat Sikorski said that many cleaners had to take on two jobs to make ends meet.

"We must end the scandal of poverty pay and ensure that cleaners get paid at least the London minimum wage of £7.20 and at least 28 days' paid holiday," said Pat.

"The cleaning subbies are parasites who make their money by employing people on rock-bottom rates and awful conditions, and the time has come to give them their marching orders and bring all

cleaning services back in-house," he said.

The unity of RMT members across the capital has already prevented more than 200 ISS cleaners being made compulsorily redundant, and the union has said it will hold Metronet to a commitment squeezed out of them to bring their cleaning back in-house.

The lobby ensured that the scandal of cleaners pay featured prominently at the conference with the Mayor making a number of references to the lobby and the issue.

The Londoners' statement in support of the cleaners is available to sign.

It calls on the Mayor and MPs to use all their powers and influence to ensure that cleaners are paid £7.20 per hour as a minimum and other benefits such as improved holidays and help with travel.

For copies of the statement ring or email the South East regional office – 0207 529 8860/53 or g.wilkinson@rmt.org.uk or s.cameron@rmt.org.uk ■

Low paid? Get a discount on your RMT membership fee

Last year's annual general meeting decided that members earning less than £15,000 gross per year, subject to producing proof of earnings, will be given a refund equivalent to paying £1 a week.

To claim this benefit, members must fill in an application form for Reduced Rate Contributions, available from branch secretaries. This form, along proof of earnings, must reach the general secretary by August 1 each year.

CONDITIONS FOR ELIGIBILITY OF REDUCED CONTRIBUTIONS:

- Members must earn less than (gross) £15,000 per financial year
- Proof of earnings must be provided with this completed form by member to the General Secretary no later than 1st August each year
- Acceptable forms of evidence can include a photocopy of P60 or written confirmation from employer of annual earnings

Copies have been supplied to all branches and are in a format that allows for duplicates to be reproduced easily.

Please contact the membership department at head office for any queries on this matter.

The AGM also decided that the Council of Executives may, from time to time, bring in an introductory or discount contribution rate when campaigning in areas of low density of membership. ■



RMT BALLOTING OVER 'BONUS SCAPEGOATING'

Network Rail workers being scapegoated over the Grayrigg accident in Cumbria and Scottish signallers denied bonus for striking to defend an agreement on working hours are being balloted for strike action.

Ballot papers have been sent to Network Rail staff employed in the area that includes the site of the Grayrigg crash who have had their £400 bonus withheld.

Papers are also going out to more than 400 signallers and supervisors in Scotland who were docked £300 bonus after striking over the company's failure to honour a 35-hour week deal.

"Network Rail have only their own blatant double standards to blame for creating this situation," RMT general secretary Bob Crow said.

"The company has effectively pointed a scapegoating finger at 119 of our members in Cumbria while the the Grayrigg investigation is still under way, and that is unfair, unjustifiable and unacceptable.

The strike threat has already shamed company's executives into suspending the smaller part of their own large bonuses, but they have still walked away with payments many times the size of the £400 withheld from RMT members.

In Scotland signalling members have been docked £300 for taking lawful action they were forced into by the company's own failure to honour the 35-hour week.

"If Network Rail want to avoid this dispute escalating across the network they should simply pay all our members the bonus due to them," Bob said. ■

FIGHTING FOR MEMBERS AT LYNX/UPS

Road freight members have remained resilient at UPS despite the company's failure to uphold assurances to recognise RMT.

Despite this setback, the union continues to serve members within the former Lynx sector of the business and will fight to retain the right to serve members as their voice within Lynx/UPS.

This is predominantly down to the steadfast manner in which our reps have refused to allow the company to throw away the historical representation the union has held since the days of the British Rail parcel sector prior to being sold off to the private sector.

RMT recognition agreements remained throughout this period, until UPS acquired Lynx in August 2006.

Solicitors acting on RMT's behalf have been preparing for a

legal challenge to UPS's conduct throughout the transfer of Lynx, which takes place in September this year.

If the legal challenge is successful it would mean that the Tribunal could order the company to compensate each and every RMT member up to a maximum of 13 weeks' pay.

RMT reps have maintained their loyalty along with that of the entire RMT membership by challenging proposed changes through the use of the grievance procedure.

Many of these determined reps attended a weekend school in March to look at devising a strategy for maintaining and improving the membership levels.

Key reps attended in their own time to discuss matters with the two relief organisers for the North along with AGS Mick Cash, Gerry Hitchen and tutor Paul Goodier.

The weekend proved to be a success enabling the reps to identify what training and support was needed to assist them in keeping RMT's profile high within Lynx/UPS as the largest union.

Measures are underway to provide members with constant updates on the legal and industrial position, along with propaganda for the recruitment and retention of members.

Training for reps is vital and options are being explored to deliver this during the current difficult period.

Support of the regional councils is also required by attention to including Lynx depots into any future organising campaigns.

In the meantime, UPS should recognise the determination of local reps and the union to continue to defend and improve member's terms and conditions against attacks by Lynx/UPS. ■

WELDERS TO ESCALATE ACTION

Welder members from Liverpool, Crewe and North Wales in dispute with Network Rail over its refusal to implement an agreed pay increase are discussing ways to force the company to pay up.

Problems began when the ex-Jarvis maintenance workers were TUPE'd over to Network Rail four years ago.

While fellow workers received a pay increase, Network Rail reneged on a verbal

agreement for the welders to receive the same award.

The workers have been carrying out an overtime ban, yet Network Rail is still refusing to discuss the matter. ■



UNION WINS JOB BACK FOR CATERING MEMBER

RMT has won the re-instatement of a retail service manager working for Virgin Trains.

The company re-instated the member on appeal following a request for a ballot for industrial action from fellow workers over the sacking.

The member had been dismissed after he was not informed of changes to his work pattern leading to the absence of a retail manager on a train.

Despite a clean work record the member was sacked, arousing a lot of anger among work colleagues.

Following his re-instatement, the local branch secretary said that it once more showed the importance of being in the union.

"This is a very satisfactory outcome following an unfortunate course of action by management," he said. ■

DEMAND A REFERENDUM

RMT's Parliamentary group Chair John McDonnell MP has put down early day motion (EDM) 1584 to demand that the government does not sign up to the EU constitution without a referendum.

It calls upon the Prime Minister and the Chancellor not to sign any treaty or agreement that affects the constitutional relationship between Great Britain and the EU without consulting the British people.

Departing PM Tony Blair has blocked such a referendum despite a previous commitment to have one.

The EDM has already gained signatories from all the three main parties including many Labour MPs. Get your MP to sign. You can contact your MP on the web by going to www.writetothem.com ■

Parliamentary column

BUILDING A MOVEMENT

I would like to start by thanking RMT and its membership for the hard work and sheer dedication displayed over the last 11 months in our campaign for the Labour leadership.

Thanks to the commitment of activists, the campaign lifted the hearts of experienced activists and inspired a new generation of enthusiastic, skilled and innovative campaigners.

Although the Parliamentary Labour Party blocked an election, the campaign significantly enhanced the profile of socialist ideas in the movement and wider public despite a historically low level the organisation and consciousness of the left in the Labour Party and the unions. This undoubtedly increased recruitment, re-engagement, organisation and activity.

The fear was always that a campaign which failed to secure nomination or significant electoral support would disillusion many existing and new supporters, leaving the Left in no better condition than if a challenge for the leadership had never been mounted. So far, this fear does not seem to have been proved the case, but unless we seize the moment the enthusiasm and activist base, status and momentum created by the campaign could rapidly be dissipated.

One of the strengths of our campaign was its open, non-sectarian approach. We never turned anyone away and we worked in solidarity on a principled basis with so many other campaigns and on such a range of issues from asylum rights to individual industrial disputes.

It is clear that the Brown premiership will mean little change on a number of fronts with the result that confrontations will occur and continue at every level.

Already, major industrial disputes are looming and large scale campaigns are developing on the environment, civil liberties, Iraq, Trident, and public service cuts and privatisation.



The left in the labour and trade union movement needs to position itself as a key ally and resource for these campaigns and for those participating in these struggles, building wider solidarity by linking together campaigns, trade unions, community organisations and activists wherever possible.

A key element of future campaigning must be the facilitating of the political debate leading to a shared understanding and analysis of this real world, also stimulating a ferment of detailed policy debate, research, and development.

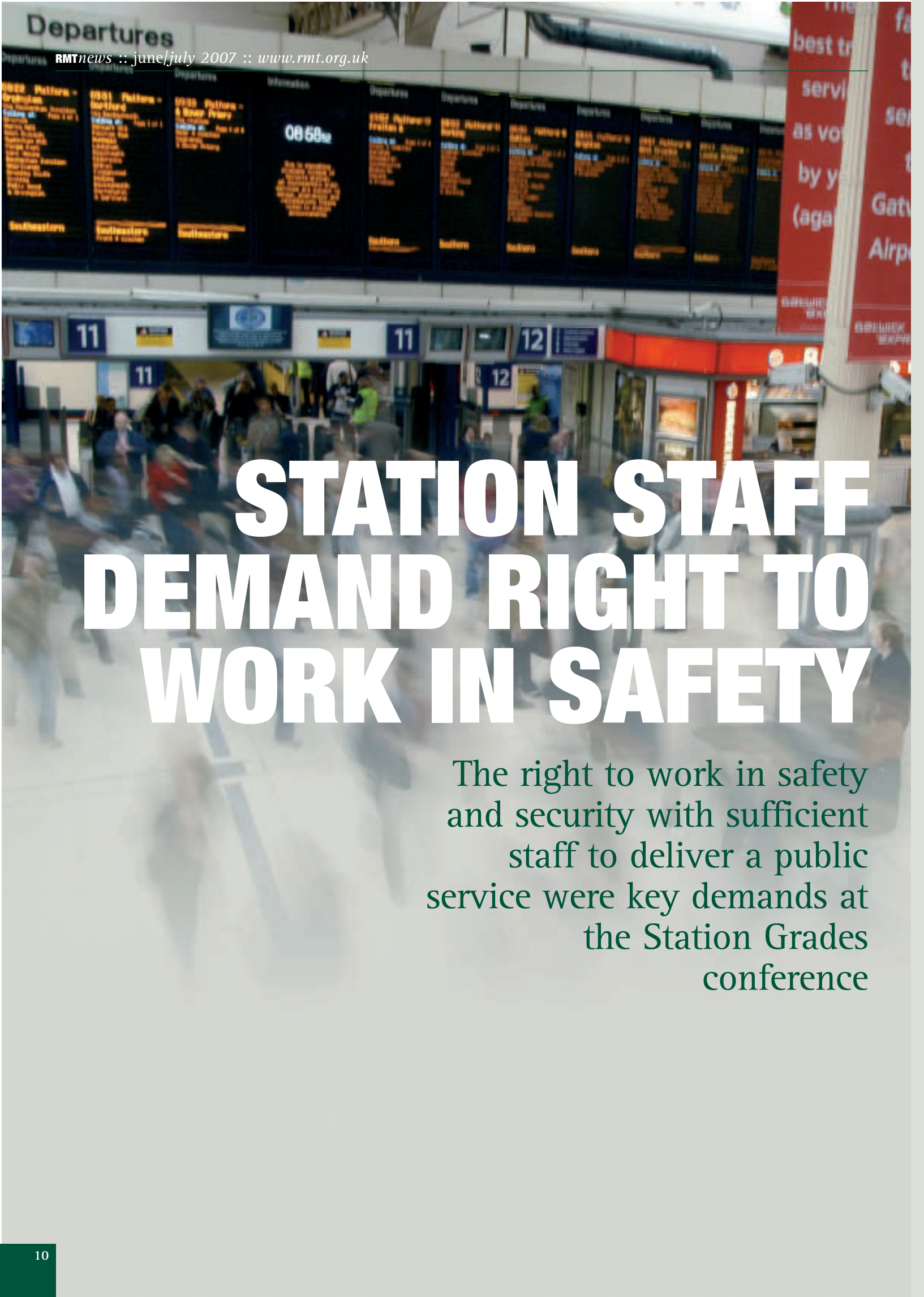
To kick off a debate on political analysis, we are organising a speaking tour based upon the 'Another World is Possible' booklet which I have written. This will bring together a much wider range of people interested in developing a shared understanding of the world and the potential way forward.

The Labour Representation Committee will be organising fringe events at the TUC and Labour Party conferences to engage with the movement and to make clear its proposals in the run up to the LRC's annual conference in October from which we must go forward with a detailed programme of work.

I very much hope that RMT activists will play a central role in building a vibrant and campaigning labour movement that can unite around campaigns to achieve our aims on trade union rights, the renationalisation of the railways, pulling the troops out of Iraq – and ultimately of putting socialism back on the political map.

Another World is Possible is available online at www.l-r-c.org.uk or send a cheque for £2.50 (inc p&tp) to 'Labour Representation Committee', PO Box 2378, London, E5 9QU

John McDonnell
MP for Hayes and Harlington



STATION STAFF DEMAND RIGHT TO WORK IN SAFETY

The right to work in safety and security with sufficient staff to deliver a public service were key demands at the Station Grades conference

A campaign to ensure that every railway station has sufficient trained staff to deliver a proper public service was at the heart of debate by RMT station grades members at their conference in Sutton Coldfield.

Delegates from across the country painted a picture of station grades under siege by employers concerned more about curbing costs than providing a public service or protecting staff.

The call for a campaign for adequate staff on all stations was a recurring theme – and would always strike a cord with commuters, noted **Jason Humphreys, Jubilee South and East London Line**.

Delegates welcomed the publication of the Station Staff Charter as a platform for campaigning across the rail and Tube networks.

“Across the networks, station staff face the same problems, the same pressures,” said **Michelle Rodgers, Manchester South**.

WITH ‘FRIENDS’ LIKE THESE...

Delegates condemned the continued use by train-operating companies of ‘station friends’ – a “hypocritical” device to obtain free labour.

While the union struggled to defend station staff jobs and conditions, TOCs persisted in advertising, without consultation, schemes like First Great Western’s ‘station adoption’.

Glossy advertising offered volunteers opportunities to “get involved with their local station”, through gardening, cleaning, painting, fault reporting and distributing information to the public.

“By seeking volunteers the TOCs are simply confirming that there is a business case for more staff on stations,” said **Linda Wiles, Transport for London**.

“This hypocrisy is disgusting. The profiteers want something for nothing and dress it up as community involvement,” delegates agreed.

It was irresponsible to place untrained volunteers in potentially hazardous jobs that should be done by trained and paid station staff.

Such schemes would also further undermine station staff jobs, and the union should mount a campaign against them, which would include appealing to members of the public not to undermine jobs by volunteering.

The union should also seek legal advice about the health and safety risks of encouraging volunteers to work without supervision in a potentially hazardous environment.

THIN END OF THE WEDGE

The campaign against the privatisation of the East London Line and to keep its

operations within the London Underground system was given full support.

Conference also reaffirmed the aim that all station staff currently working in the private sector should be returned to the nationalised industry.

Jason Humphreys reminded delegates that Transport for London had decided that the line would be farmed out to private-sector franchise after refurbishment and extension, and that existing staff would be compulsorily transferred to other lines.

“This is the thin end of wedge, and if they get away with the East London Line they’ll come for the others,” said Jason.

“People don’t want more rail privatisation, and this is one campaign where it is easy to win public support,” said **Jane Gwynn, Jubilee South and East London Line**.

SUPPORT FOR CLEANERS

Delegates applauded the union’s campaign to organise contract cleaners and bring cleaning back in-house.

Contract cleaners received ever worse pay and conditions and were difficult to represent, as many were too scared to join the union, and it was important that all grades should help, noted **Nick Quirk, Plymouth No 1**.

Many cleaners were migrant workers, and it was important that recruitment materials were provided in relevant languages, said Janine Booth, Stratford.

Practical support for migrant workers, including legal support for those concerned about their status, would also help, Janine said.

The battle to bring or keep cleaning in-house was a continual one, noted **Phil Boston, Exeter**, as the employers will always come back for more.

Low-paid workers joining the union should be able to sign up on lower initial rate, and not just be able to claim back a proportion later, added **Dennis James, Birmingham**.

STANDARD TRAINING STANDARDS

The union should seek to negotiate a common training programme for station staff across the industry, delegates agreed.

The profusion of different standards that had emerged since privatisation was a recipe for confusion, highlighted when staff trained in different ways worked alongside each other.

All should all be trained to the same standard, and if there was specific local training required it could be added on, said Jason Humphreys.

Linda Wiles, a trainer, said that despite problems of different job titles and jargon, it should be possible to create standard

modules.

Carol Green, Exeter Rail, believed she had had insufficient training from the former Wessex Trains and believed a modular approach would help.

It was important that NVQs should not be used by employers as an excuse to withhold the rate for the job by bringing new starters in on lower rates, warned **assistant general secretary Pat Sikorski**.

INFORMATION CRITICAL

Station staff should always be given up-to-date information on service delays and cancellations to help protect staff from angry passengers, delegates agreed.

Failing to provide front-line staff with proper information mean that employers were failing in their duty of care towards their staff, said Linda Wiles.

“You don’t see managers out there when there is disruption, yet they’re the ones who tell us not to talk to the passengers,” said **Chris Cuomo, Deptford**.

OTHER DECISIONS

- All gateline staff should have access to lockable and vandal-proof places of safety fitted with telephones and anti-assault alarms.
- Gateline and barrier staff should not have to deal with penalty fares, which should be issued either from ticket-office windows or by inspectors working in teams.
- The union should aim to achieve free or subsidised travel on all public transport.
- The union should work to find a solution to the way that Network Rail had effectively developed a three- and four-stage system under their rolled-up contracts.
- Members were being reviewed twice a year, and new starters put on lower rates could take anything up to five or six years, or even longer to catch up – or maybe never at all.
- Future editions of the Station Staff Charter should be addressed more clearly to those still working for the public sector. While welcoming its publication, conference noted that future editions should carry more reference to public-sector PTEs and London Underground.
- Station staff with safety-critical duties should be efficiently trained and certificated in personal track safety.
- Next year’s conference will take place in Plymouth, with Glasgow hosting in 2009 and Weston-super-Mare in 2010. ■

CATERING GRADES SHAPE UP TO PROTECT JOBS

Organising to defend jobs and improve conditions was the key theme at the catering grades conference



A united fight-back against the erosion of catering jobs was called for by delegates at the catering grades conference.

Delegates on the Isle of Wight called for a union-wide campaign to resist open and covert attacks on jobs and against employers' incessant attempts to downgrade conditions and safety.

Strong union membership was always the key to success, said **general secretary Bob Crow** in his keynote address.

Organised workers were always better-paid workers, and RMT catering members on trains were among the best-paid catering workers in Britain.

"But there are still thousands of workers across the transport industries not organised, and we have to get them into the union," said Bob

Delegates agreed to put a call for a campaign to protect catering jobs to the union's annual general meeting.

"We need to act now on issues that otherwise will cost us our jobs," said **Mandy Evans, Swansea No 1**.

Privatisation was relegating on-board catering staff to an "added extra" that was now under constant threat, Mandy said.

Fighting was the union's best recruitment tool, noted **Derek England, Leeds**.

The need to fight was constant, and it had to be done across the grades, each supporting the other, said Derek.

All grades could play their role in recruiting on-board contract-catering workers, said **assistant general secretary Mick Cash**.

There was already a substantial membership at Rail Gourmet, but the union should be able to trigger automatic recognition because existing members worked alongside its on-board staff every day.

A catering grades' charter might also be a useful tool to help drag reluctant employers towards best practice, said Mick.

REINSTATE BUFFET CARS

Conference demanded that catering facilities be reinstated

on all trains from Paddington.

First Great Western's removal of catering from late-night trains threatened jobs, endangered the safety of crew left working alone, and was another blow to rail services, delegates agreed.

The removal of catering from the last two trains from Paddington since last December was the thin end of the wedge said new FGW rep **Tim May, Bristol Rail**.

Cardiff had a link of 24 which was now down to 18 – something the company called natural wastage, but was an attack on jobs, added **Karen Burnett, Cardiff Rail**.

"This is the thin end of the wedge," said **Andrew Jeffries, Bristol Rail**.

"They'll start with the evenings, then it will be Sundays and it won't stop," he said.

THE HEAT IS STILL ON

Train operators and contractors should be forced to ensure that catering staff are allowed to work in comfortable temperatures, delegates demanded.

Excessively high temperatures remained a constant source of complaints from members said health and safety rep **Diane Holt, Exeter Rail**.

It was bad enough that on-board catering staff were expected to work in high temperatures, but unacceptable that many were not allowed to drink water in front of passengers, Diane said.

"It is ridiculous that the law has no upper limit on safe working temperatures," said **Candy Kefford, Euston No 1**.

"With record high temperatures the problem is clearly going to get worse, and we need to tackle it now," Candy said.

There was frustration that the issue remained to be solved, and delegates agreed to refer the issue to the union's AGM.

GIVE US A BREAK

Adequate rest breaks must be built into rosters, delegates

agreed.

It was unacceptable that members were being forced to endure ten-and-a-half hour turns with no natural breaks, said **Karen Burnett, Cardiff Rail**.

The problems were similar in the shipping industry, said **Mark Carden, Southampton Shipping** and it made sense for workers in the two sectors to compare best practice.

The problem was becoming worse on First Great Western which was cutting turn-around times, particularly at weekends, when loading was heavier, noted **Owen Herbert, Swansea No 1** – but it was also clearly a national problem that required a national response.

"Rosters are a negotiating item, and we should refuse to work them until they are acceptable – and if that causes a dispute, then so be it," said **Derek England, Leeds**.

"A minimum of 30 minutes away from the working environment – and don't let them book you off, because they'll be after split shifts next," he said.

HEALTH MONITORING

The union should ensure that train-operating companies continue to monitor the health of members, despite the smoking ban, delegates agreed.

Most TOCs had already banned smoking, but many staff had had to work in other people's smoke, and it was important that the long-term effects were monitored, said **Candy Kefford**.

There should be a register, the same as for workers who had worked with asbestos, said **Keith Bernard, Plymouth No 1**.

There were also problems for workers who were smokers, noted Owen Herbert.

"Nicotine is an addiction, same as other drugs, yet on FGW no-one is asking smokers what help we need to help beat that addiction," he said.

That was a massive contrast to GNER, where staff were offered help, including counselling, noted **Derek England**.

- Conference also called on the union to ensure that TOCs and contract companies observed their legal obligation to protect workers' welfare at work.

ACTION NEEDED OVER 'VOIDS'

The union should ensure that TOCs allowed an acceptable number of 'void' sales, and that they should not be used as an excuse to dismiss members, delegates agreed.

People were being dismissed for it – three recently from Virgin West Coast, said **Pat Donahue, Euston No 1**.

People with more than five voids were being picked on by Virgin and told they were fiddling – but any number was arbitrary, and five was far too low, said **Dave Patterson, Kings Cross No 1**.

There had been 31 suspensions over 'discrepancies' at FGW, yet it had become quite clear that there had been no case to answer, said **Mandy Evans, Swansea No 1**.

Management were renowned for pulling people in, but after the threat of industrial action all had been re-instated with an apology, added Owen Herbert.

"This needs to be stamped out quickly, because if they get away with it they will do it everywhere," said **Candy Kefford**.

- The union should ensure that train operating companies support staff who refuse to serve customers abusing the complimentary first-class refreshments facility, conference agreed.
- The union should ensure that First Great Western was held to its agreement to end the practice downgrading from management to operational grades and thereby blocking the line of promotion.
- Next year's president will be Karen Burnett, conference agreed, with Chris Kefford continuing as conference secretary. Next year's Catering grades conference venue will be Dublin.

CHALLENGES FOR THE SCOTTISH TUC

New STUC president and RMT regional organiser Phil McGarry sets out the challenges facing the trade union movement in Scotland



Firstly, I wish to thank the union for nominating me on an annual basis over the last 15 years for the General Council of the Scottish Trade Union Congress.

During this period I have tried to promote the union's policies in line with AGM decisions amongst trade union colleagues in order to establish STUC policy.

The last 12 months have been pretty hectic for me whilst acting as the vice-president and I look forward to the next 12 months with enthusiasm.

I consider it an honour and privilege to be elected as STUC president for the next 12 months and I shall endeavour to articulate and promote the policies as laid down by Congress.

When I chair the Congress in April 2008 in Inverness it will be exactly 25 years since the union had an STUC President. Members may recall that Andy Barr, the Divisional Officer of the former NUR from the East of

Scotland District Council presided over Congress in 1983 in Rothesay.

Coincidentally, this was my first STUC Congress as a delegate. The delegation, from memory, consisted of Charlie Gordon, Bob Green, Andy Ritchie, Andy Barr, Jock Bell, George Brechin, Bill Little and the newly elected General Secretary, Jimmy Knapp. Sadly some of those delegates are no longer with us.

The NUR affiliation at that time was 14,920 members, and the Congress was represented by 76 unions and 47 Trade Councils. The total affiliated union membership then was 1,010,577. Currently the RMT-affiliated membership stands at 7,513 members.

2007 ELECTIONS

The turnout at the election on May 3 was 51.8 per cent. In the Parliamentary Elections 2,016,978 Constituency votes were cast and 2,042,109 Regional votes cast.

One of the main features of the election was the huge number of rejected ballot papers (almost 142,000).

This was made up of 85,644 rejected Parliamentary Constituency votes and 56,247 regional votes, overall some seven per cent of the total votes cast. It was also reported that some 120,000 registered postal voters did not receive their postal ballots in sufficient time to cast their vote. Much of the confusion was caused because voters were asked for the first time to enter their choice for the regional list and for their constituency on a single ballot paper.

The STUC raised these problems with the Scottish Office and we are supporting a detailed investigation into the election shambles. Following the election, the SNP won 47 seats, Labour 46, Conservatives 17, the Liberal Democrats 16 and the Greens two and there is one Independent.

Scottish National Party leader

Alex Salmond was voted in as First Minister and has formed a minority government.

It is difficult to predict what the policy priorities of a minority SNP Executive will be, as all legislation in line with the SNP manifesto commitment will require the co-operation of other parties if it is to go into the statute books.

Of course, there is a range of non-legislative measures that can be applied without seeking the consent of the parliament, but these measures could well be thwarted if the opposition parties engineer a parliamentary vote against them.

Alex Salmond, through the media, keeps talking about co-operation and consensus and he emphasised that he will seek support on a policy-by-policy basis across the parliamentary chamber. This, therefore, implies we are now in uncharted waters.

CHALLENGES AHEAD

As a result, this represents a

formidable challenge for the STUC and for individual trade unions from a Scottish perspective.

Since devolution the General Council has developed and implemented a comprehensive strategy of engagement with the Scottish Executive, formalised in the Memorandum of Understanding agreed in 2002.

Positive engagement takes place through formal and informal meetings with the First Minister and members of the Ministerial Team, along with the Permanent Secretary and Management Group Officials at all levels.

Formal arrangements exist, including bilateral meetings with the First Minister, the Scottish Public Services Forum and the Trade Union Working Party on Lifelong Learning, for example.

This engagement with the Executive has produced a number of specific initiatives that have generated Executive funding, including the Scottish Union Learning Fund and the STUC Skills and Lifelong Learning project together with others like One Workplace Equal Rights, Close the Gap, Violence Against Workers who Serve the Public and Sectarianism in the Workplace.

At the last General Council meeting it was agreed that we should continue to have dialogue with the Scottish Executive and with the newly appointed ministers.

Our policy objectives are to promote and articulate the policies agreed at Congress and these will include our continued opposition to Trident, PFI and PPP, support for the Corporate Manslaughter Bill together with the early introduction of the Trade Union Freedom Bill.

Equally, we have set our vision for the Scottish economy to have a progressive fiscal policy aimed at supporting low-wage workers and to continue to promote public ownership of utilities like Scottish Water, Royal Mail, Network Rail, First ScotRail and Caledonian MacBrayne.

The STUC has continually

argued for a publicly accountable Scottish Investment Bank as part of a strategy steering the economy towards sustainable development including a sound and indigenously-owned manufacturing base.

We shall also be arguing for radical extensions of pension-fund democracy and better coordination of existing powers and ownership. Clearly there are many issues agreed at our Congress and these will be advanced as a consequence of our engagement with the new parliament.

As STUC president, I will strive to ensure that the STUC has a distinctive place in Scottish life and we must recapture its sense of purpose and direction. I believe we must be proactive and take our message into the communities that we serve as well as in the corridors of power.

We must be relevant and support affiliates in re-energising our activist base. The STUC has a long and proud history of supporting workers in struggle and that history must continue. We need to instill confidence, morale and motivation within our affiliates to raise our aspirations for a

better way of life across Scotland.

We must take the message onto the streets of Scotland that the trade union movement is alive and kicking and is the best means of creating a future for our children and grandchildren. It is my belief that the STUC profile in building up respect is a force for political and positive change whereby we need to promote progressive ideas that are too powerful to stop.

INTERNATIONAL

On the international front, it is my belief that we need to re-forged and strengthen our links with the trade-union movement across the globe. We have a duty and a responsibility to provide solidarity and support to trade unions and workers across the world, particularly those facing persecution and attacks upon their human rights and civil liberties.

Positive links need to be enhanced with trade unionists in Ecuador, Zimbabwe and Iran. Recently I had the privilege of meeting the Venezuelan trade union delegation along with representatives from the Cuban TUC.

We must continue to liaise with the Palestinian solidarity organisations, along with the TUC's Iraq Solidarity Committee and the Scotland Group that was set up recently. International work within the framework of the STUC must continue and I shall promote this argument to the best of my ability.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the presidents of the union, past and present, together with the general secretary for his assistance, the Council of Executives and the regional admin staff along with our representatives and activists for the support they have given me throughout the period on the General Council.

The Congress in 2008 in Inverness will be interesting to say the least given the change of government in Scotland. I await to see what develops and, who knows, we may have an early election rather than the SNP-led Executive trying to run a minority government for the next four years. My appreciation is extended to all colleagues who continue to support and encourage me in the challenges ahead. ■



RMT WINS RECOGNITION DEAL AT NORFOLKLINE

RMT notches up a major recognition success as maritime unions launch a major offensive against 'social dumping' by ferry companies



RMT has welcomed the massive step forward gained through recognition of the union by Norfolkline on the Maersk Marine subsidiary's three ferries operating between Dover and Dunkirk.

In the midst of a week of action by RMT and sister maritime unions throughout Europe against rogue shipping employers, Norfolkline conceded recognition to RMT to represent deck, engine-room and catering ratings on the Maersk Delft, Maersk Dover and Maersk Dunquerque.

"Maersk itself has generally good relations with RMT and our sister unions, and it makes sense for its Norfolkline subsidiary to come into line and recognise that RMT represents ratings on these vessels," general secretary Bob Crow said.

"We demonstrated conclusively to Norfolkline through Acas that RMT already had substantial membership on the three vessels operating out of Dover, and I hope that we can now look to a future of sensible negotiation on pay and conditions.

"The company has also agreed in principle to extend recognition to UK catering ratings on the Liverpool-Belfast route, and we will conclude an agreement shortly.

"However, there are still serious problems with other vessels owned or operated by Norfolkline in the Irish Sea, and

we will continue to work alongside our Irish colleagues to win decent employment standards on all vessels in these waters," said Bob.

"We have travelled a long hard road to win recognition by Norfolkline at Dover, and a lot of people have put a lot of hard organising work into ensuring that this happened," said national secretary Steve Todd.

"We now have solid organisation aboard all three vessels and have taken another step towards our goal of ensuring that the ferry industry is fully organised," Steve said.

Norfolkline was one of the four ferry companies targeted by UK and Ireland ITF affiliates' week of action early in June, alongside Celtic Link, Irish Ferries and Seatruck, with demonstrations held in Liverpool, Birkenhead, Heysham and Dublin.

Plans for larger demonstrations in Dover and at ports on the other side of the Channel organised by French unions CGT and CFDT were lifted as news emerged that the lengthy negotiations already long under way with Norfolkline had finally borne fruit in Dover.

The week of action attracted news coverage on both sides of the Irish Sea, highlighting the appallingly low pay and poor working conditions endured by overseas seafarers imported as cheap labour by ferry operators.

"The ITF ferry campaign will

continue to concentrate on companies such as Celtic Link and Irish Ferries' vessel the Normandy, while the French unions have other targets trading between France and the Channel Islands" ITF UK and Ireland co-ordinator Norrie McVicar said.

"In the coming months the campaign committee will also focus on the Channel and North Sea ferry routes where we know from our research Filipino seafarers are being paid as little as \$100 per month.

"That is slave labour at its worst and it is happening on UK and Dutch flagged vessels, under their governments' and peoples' noses," said Norrie.

It was the Irish Ferries dispute in 2005, in which nearly 550 organised seafarers were replaced by 'crews of convenience' from eastern Europe, that spawned the Ferry Campaign Group, with the aim of leading fight-back in the Irish Sea and the Channel.

Irish Ferries had taken the 'race to the bottom' intending to pay the new east European crews two euros an hour and Filipino workers just one euro.

Without resistance that would have left no ferry jobs safe.

In December 2005, RMT members joined more than 100,000 people on the streets of Dublin protesting against Irish Ferries, while French ports were blockaded.

After that dispute the campaign group determined to ensure that seafarers would be paid appropriate wages and conditions, regardless of nationality, and to use the Irish Ferries example to win political backing for decent minimum standards in Europe.

It also determined to take collective and industrial measures to ensure that all seafarers working in the Irish Sea, the Channel and the North Sea are covered by acceptable ITF collective bargaining agreements to reverse 'the race to the bottom' unleashed by the employers.

Adopting a systematic approach, the campaign group identified the companies leading the race to the bottom – such as Norfolkline, paying Polish ratings around £1.90 per hour, with Celtic Link ferries some others were no better.

Norfolkline also had two vessels on charter, the Merchant Brilliant and Merchant Bravery, which were supposed to have an ITF agreement, but which were operating double bookkeeping and cheating their crews out of their wages.

Pointing out that the campaign has highlighted the need for an industrial campaign alongside the political efforts to enforcing minimum employment standards, Norrie adds: "Will you join us on the picket line next time?" ■



UNION OPENS REFURBISHED OFFICES IN DOVER

RMT's offices at Maritime House in Dover reopened for business last month

The union's new upgraded centre in Dover is dedicated to the memory of Dover-based shipping-sector activist and RMT Women's Advisory Committee chair Pauline Howe, who died last year.

Bob Crow told a packed meeting at the official reopening that buildings were usually dedicated to celebrities but that this one was dedicated to Pauline Howe to remember a staunch fighter on behalf of working people.

Despite battling cancer, Pauline continued to organise for the benefit of maritime workers in Dover, leading women's committee meetings and playing a full role in union life, right to the end.

"She would have been delighted that in the very week the Dover office re-opens with new facilities, we have been able to announce that Norfolkline has agreed to recognise RMT as the union representing ratings on its three vessels operating out of the port," Bob said.

Gary Howe, Pauline's husband, who attended the opening along with other family members, told RMT News that "Pauline would have been honoured and moved that the premises has been dedicated to her".

A RESOURCE

The offices are to be used as a resource centre by local activists as well as for meetings. Facilities include a

meeting room and a laptop computer suite with WiFi access.

There are also plans to build a library of useful materials for activists to use.

"The building will give us somewhere for union education and to run training schools. It's a fantastic resource in a deprived area," said Ken Slade, branch secretary for East Kent.

Brian Whitehead, relief regional organiser for the south, added that is was another step in bringing the union closer to the membership so resources can be used for home or work related activities.

HISTORY

The building that houses the new RMT offices in Dover has an important history both for the union and locally.

The P&O dispute in 1988, during which 2000 workers were sacked after striking over terms and conditions, was run from there.

The dispute came less than a year after the ferry Herald of Free Enterprise, bound for Dover, overturned in the Belgian port of Zeebrugge and 191 passengers and crew members lost their lives.

"It's another chapter in an historic office and a tremendous investment in resources for members," said Malcolm Dunning, branch secretary for Dover shipping.



Pauline Howe with Bob Crow at last year's shipping conference in Hull



STAMPING DOWN ON WORK-RELATED VIOLENCE

RMT has drawn up a questionnaire and supplied a freepost envelope to find out the levels of violence members face at the workplace

The incidence of violent attacks on members across all sectors where RMT organises has been a growing concern. Violence includes threats, verbal abuse and both racial and sexual harassment as well as physical attacks and injury to workers. All of these types of incidents are unacceptable.

In response to the continuing high levels of physical and verbal assaults on members, RMT is developing a campaign on work-related violence across all sectors where we are organised.

A typical day on the rail network alone will see at least six assaults on staff being reported in the Safety Management Information System (SMIS).

However, the actual figures may well be much higher as assaults on both staff and passengers are seriously under-reported. Equally, other sectors see unacceptable levels of violent assault on staff.

Whether it is bricks and other missiles thrown at staff driving buses or assaults on seafarers by abusive passengers it is time to stop this blight on our working lives rather than accepting it as "part of the job".

QUESTIONNAIRE

The main reason for the questionnaire is to ensure that the union has concrete evidence of the reality of working with the general public as the union has experienced difficulties in getting assault figures from the employers.

Violence is a social problem and what happens on trains, stations, boats and buses is a reflection of what happens in society at large. Nevertheless, this does not imply that we should be expected to accept aggression as part of our job.

Neither should the travelling public be concerned about using public transport for fear of anti-social behaviour.

CAMPAIGNING

One of the aims of the campaign is to educate passengers, employers and the authorities about the real problems experienced by transport staff and to push

home the message that RMT will not accept violence at work.

The campaign will also seek to address the issue of under-reporting incidents and assaults. Unless every attack, whether physical, threatened or verbal, is reported then the union cannot achieve realistic statistics to present to the TOCs and the authorities.

The union has been made aware that some companies have been removing some of the reporting mechanisms or introducing new methods that are time-consuming, not universally or immediately accessible or that offer no means of reply.

It is vital that all incidents are reported, recorded and investigated to give the real picture of what is happening on a daily basis to our members. The union needs to work towards ensuring that staff are not placed in vulnerable positions or isolated with lone working.

RISK ASSESSMENTS

Risk assessments are a valuable tool in highlighting dangerous work practices and RMT reps ought to be getting involved with carrying them out. Employers should be heeding the advice of reps and members and

consulting them over staffing requirements, especially for high-risk events like sports matches where alcohol and adrenaline can make for a volatile working environment.

Training on how to deal with 'challenging' passengers is a good aid for staff but a secure working environment is far better.

AFTERCARE

The campaign will be looking at the kind of aftercare offered to members. Does your employer provide access to occupational health services such as counselling for stress or trauma?

RMT would expect as a minimum that each case be fully investigated and followed up.

The union expects members to be offered referral services should they desire them and to be offered full support in bringing charges against any perpetrator of aggression.

GET ON BOARD

This campaign will remain a high profile for your union until this threat is finally dealt with satisfactorily. RMT needs all members to get on board if the union is to make this campaign a success that please complete the questionnaire, photocopy or pull out of this magazine and return it to Unity House in the enclosed freepost envelope. ■

There's no
excuse for
assaulting
our staff

RMT WORKPLACE VIOLENCE SURVEY JUNE 2007

In order to gain more information about the risks of violence, the union is issuing this questionnaire to all members so that we can present employers and safety authorities with the most up to date information of violent attacks on RMT members.

It is important that as many members as possible advise the union of their experiences of workplace violence, so please take the time to complete this confidential questionnaire and return it in the enclosed pre-paid envelope. You should answer as many questions as are relevant, even if you have not been assaulted at work.

Please write any further information on a separate piece of paper.

The questionnaire is also available electronically via the RMT website at www.rmt.org.uk



ABOUT YOU AND YOUR JOB:**Q1. Which industry do you work in?**

- Rail ☐
- DLR/LUL/Tyne and Wear ☐
- Bus ☐
- Shipping, off-shore and docks ☐
- Road transport ☐

Q2. What is your job?

Q3. Who is your employer?

Q4. Are you?

- Male ☐
- Female ☐

YOUR EXPERIENCE OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE:**Q5. In the last year have you experienced any of the following in relation to your work? (If more than once please state how many times):**

- Major injury requiring medical assistance ☐
- Minor injury – requiring first aid ☐
- Threatened with a weapon ☐
- Threats or verbal abuse ☐

Q6. Did your worst experience involve?

- Racial harassment ☐
- Sexual harassment ☐

Q7 Were you working alone?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q8. Did you take time off work as a result of the attack?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

If yes, how many days:

- 1 ☐
- 1 – 3 ☐
- More than 3 ☐

Q9. Did you report the incident?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q10. If yes, to who (tick all that apply)

- Your employer ☐
- BTP ☐
- Other Police Force ☐
- Your safety rep ☐
- Other union official ☐

If reported to the Police, did they attend the scene?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q11. If you did not report the assault, state your reason:

YOUR ASSAILANT:**Q12. Was your assailant:**

- Male ☐
- Female ☐
- In a group ☐
- An individual ☐

Q13 Do you believe that any of the following factors where an influence behind your assault? (tick all that apply)

- Fare dispute ☐
- Travel delay ☐
- Alcohol related ☐
- Drug related ☐
- Vandalism ☐
- Theft or robbery ☐
- Sporting or other event ☐
- Other (please state) ☐

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT:**Q14. Do you think your manager takes your concerns about violence seriously?**

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q15. Does your employer have a policy for dealing with workplace violence?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q16. Have you been told to report all incidents whatever their cause or outcome?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q17. Does your employer provide any support to victims of workplace violence such as counselling or trauma support?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

What help were you given

Q18. Were you satisfied with the support offered?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q19. If the incident was reported to the Police how was it dealt with?

- No further action ☐
- Fixed penalty notice ☐
- Simple caution ☐
- Conditional caution ☐
- Conviction ☐

Q20. Where you satisfied with how the Police dealt with your case?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Q21. If your assailant was charged what was the outcome?

- Guilty ☐
- Not guilty ☐
- Suspended sentence ☐
- Fined ☐
- Bound over to keep the peace ☐
- Community sentence ☐
- Custodial sentence ☐

Your ethnic profile:

- White – British ☐
- White – Irish ☐
- Any other White background ☐
- Mixed White and Black Caribbean ☐
- Mixed White and Black African ☐
- Mixed White and Asian ☐
- Any other mixed background ☐
- Asian or Asian British – Indian ☐
- Asian or Asian British – Pakistan ☐
- Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi ☐
- Any other Asian or Asian British background ☐
- Black or Black British – Caribbean ☐
- Black or Black British – African ☐
- Any other Black or Black British background ☐
- Chinese ☐
- Any other ethnic group ☐

Please feel free to add any further useful information on a separate sheet. If you are happy to have your say used in RMT News please let us know and we will contact you.

CRACKING DOWN ON STAFF ASSAULTS

Chief Constable Ian Johnston reports on how the British Transport Police is committed to reducing staff assaults and detecting offenders

We know that as transport staff you can experience a range of behaviours by passengers which can make you feel uneasy or insecure.

Moreover, staff often do not report these incidents as they seem, 'too trivial', fear an unsympathetic response, or do not believe that any good will come of it. BTP encourages all staff if they experience poor behaviour from passengers – whether verbal or physical to report the incident. BTP takes all incidents of staff assaults extremely seriously.

All victims of assaults, once reported to BTP, will be allocated to an officer as a point of contact and any arrest may result in an offender being charged or summonsed to court.

HOW TO REPORT AN ASSAULT

- Report the incident as soon as possible to BTP
- Consider the use of your DNA kit
- You will be required to provide a statement to the police
- You will be kept informed of the progress of the case
- You may be required to attend court
- Be confident we will take your crime seriously

Reporting incidents as soon as possible will enable officers to attend promptly to:

- Preserve the scene for any evidence including forensic evidence
- Collect CCTV
- Gather any independent witness details

People should be able to go to work without the fear of being assaulted, spat at or abused. Staff assaults will continue to be a priority for us in this year's policing plan as it represents a totally unacceptable level of violence.

We have worked hard to have rail staff reclassified as public workers which increases the penalties available for the judicial system. I have written to all Chief Constables in England and Wales to let them know about the new classifications."

Following a recent operation in London, BTP reached an agreement with the Crown Prosecution Service to ensure offenders were not offered a simple caution. Assaults on staff on London's railways, the London Underground, Docklands Light Railway and Croydon Tramlink were put before the Duty Prosecutor for a charging decision.

This operation saw the first use of Conditional Cautions in consultation with the victim. Conditions are placed on the offender which will normally include compensation to be paid to the victim, a letter of apology

and no further offences to be committed during the period of the caution. These were only used for low-level assault cases i.e. verbal and no injury. BTP issued 9 such cautions during this Operation which resulted in a 100 per cent compliance rate.

From April 1 2006 to March 31 2007, BTP achieved its target

across the force with 3,026 assaults recorded against rail staff and a detection rate of 51 per cent, an increase from the previous year, amounting on average to one in two cases being resolved. ■

Find out more about how to protect yourself by visiting our web site at www.btp.police.uk



UNITY AT THE TOP

RMT and ASLEF members from the North East climbed Ben Nevis in Scotland last month to fly the flag against rail privatisation.

Northern Rail conductor rep

Barry Horn organised the trip to Fort William.

"This must be the highest point in Britain where our banners have been displayed," he said. ■



25-YEAR BADGE GOES WEST

Longstanding health and safety campaigner Barry West received his 25-year RMT

badge recently from Bob Crow at the engineering grades conference in York. ■



WATFORD PRESENTS....

Watford branch recently presented members with their 10 and 25-year badges at the local Railway Club.

Receiving 10-year badges were: Stewart Cameron, David

Parr, Christopher Payne, Michael Williams, Christopher Byrne and Robert East.

AGS Mick Cash and John Richardson also received their 25-year badges. ■



BADGE ON THE JOB

RMT member Richard Bradley of Derby Rail and Engineering branch was presented with his 25-year badge round the back of his van recently by fellow members.

Attending the exclusive

ceremony were, from left to right, David Whetton, Richard Bradley, David Fieldhouse and RMT staff rep Graham Bilbie.

Everybody in attendance said it had been worthwhile and there are plans afoot to make it an annual event. ■



PLYMOUTH DIGS DEEP FOR CHILDREN'S UNIT

RMT member Thelma Floyd organised a five-strong group to take part in a sponsored walk to raise funds for the children's intensive care unit at St Mary's hospital in London and raised over £450.

Thelma got involved after her grandson Callum was born ten weeks early. After Callum came out of hospital he stopped breathing and he was taken to St Mary's where the baby spent a week on a

ventilator.

The money raised from the three-mile walk around Hyde Park will help buy a new ventilator for the children's unit.

"I would like to say a big thank you to RMT members in my depot and in the travel shop who gave so freely to help such a worthy cause.

"Without you we wouldn't have raised such a large amount, so thank you all," she said. ■



ENGINEERING

Engineering grades meeting in York demanded a safe working environment

Conference unanimously opposed a Network Rail policy that allows a controller of site safety (COSS) to set up a safe system of work and then to take part in the work itself.

Pat McCarthy, Birmingham Engineering said that such practices can often lead to work activity taking priority over the monitoring of safety practices.

"The current situation is very stressful on the COSS that has to take part in the work and oversee safety," he said.

Greg Hewitt, Brighton and Hove City warned that such dangerous practices could lead to a 'scapegoat culture' where an overworked COSS can be

blamed if anything goes wrong.

John Kennedy, Harlesden Engineering said that the rule book stated 'getting it wrong is not an option' yet the COSS was expected to do two jobs.

Conference called on the union to negotiate with Network Rail for a change in the rule book to make the position of COSS a dedicated position similar to that of lookout and site warden.

Delegates also agreed to reconvene the working party on the role and responsibility of the COSS with a view to producing a report to either next year's conference or a special conference if necessary.

MULTI-SKILLING

Conference also called upon the union to address the problem of Network Rail management placing multiple responsibilities and jobs on members at the work site.

Steve Wallis, Fort William warned that members were being asked to carry out a number of tasks simultaneously including COSS, machine controller and PICOP.

"It is clear that carrying out multiple responsibilities undermines safety at work for simple reason that if you are doing two jobs you can only give half of your time to each responsibility.

"Add to that all the paperwork and you can see how someone can get into trouble," he said.

Gerry McCann, Ayr said that it is clear that the task of machine controllers was a single duty.

He said that using less staff only meant that management were trying to "do the job on the cheap," he said.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Conference agreed that there was a growing trend within railway engineering companies to take a compulsory view to the wearing of personal



NG SAFETY

protective equipment (PPE) such as the wearing of hard hats and goggles.

Steve Wallis said it was not acceptable that staff out on the track were being forced to wear this equipment in unsuitable conditions.

"It is ludicrous to expect staff to wear hard hats when there are clearly no overhead dangers, particularly when it is hot," he said.

Daryl O'Donnell, LUL

Engineering said that the real motivation was not safety but to prevent companies being taken to court and to use members as walking bill boards to advertise their logo.

Jackie Darby, LUL

Engineering said that the imposition of inappropriate PPE was also being used to avoid proper risk assessments.

Conference called on the union to collate a dossier of attempts by employers to enforce the mandatory wearing of PPE instead of applying risk assessments in conjunction with the union and produce guidelines for reps on strategies to fight this trend.

Gerry McCann also pointed out that at the other end of the spectrum staff were not getting PPE due to cut backs.

STRETCHER BARS

Following the derailment at Grayrigg linked to another set of faulty points using adjustable stretcher bars, conference called on the union to challenge Network Rail to restore fixed stretcher bars to ensure safety of the travelling public.

Pat Collins, Birmingham

Engineering said that adjustable stretcher bars were introduced for economical reasons.

"Fixed stretcher bars required marking and drilling before being fixed into position.

"These, of course, took longer to

install resulting in either longer possessions or less work being was achieved within a possession.

"The introduction of this type of bars was a productivity issue, pure and simple," he said.

Steve Smart, March said that group standards had deemed that P-way staff were responsible for drilling and fitting stretcher bars. However, S&T staff were being asked to carry out these duties.

"Network Rail needs to determine who is responsible and issue clear guidelines," he said.

SAFETY SINCE TEBAY

Conference recognised the lack of any safety measures put in place following the deaths of four RMT track workers at Tebay in February 2004 and called on the union to launch a campaign to ensure the safety members.

Tom Angus, Lancs said that no additional safety systems had been introduced to prevent runaways and there had been 12 more since the tragic events at Tebay.

"In fact, in June the group standards covering timber bolts are to be downgraded to a voluntary basis.

"This will make the situation more dangerous," he said.

Barry West, Mid Cornwall

said that the current rules covering 'green zones' – where normal rail traffic is suspended – are designed to increase productivity not necessarily safety.

TRACKWORKS

Conference called on the union to pursue a union recognition agreement with Trackworks Ltd following the union's magnificent recognition victory with its sister company Grant Rail.

Martin Valente, LU

Engineering said that

Trackworks were not new to the industry and had worked on the railways for over 40 years.

"It is also not the only company that does not recognise RMT and that needs to change," he said.

REPRESENTING SUB-CONTRACTORS

Delegates called for a campaign to win employment rights members working for agency and sub-contracting firms.

Doug Hammersley, LU

Engineering said that

companies like Morsons Int and Vital Rail were employing staff on the basis of "business arrangements" which did not include employment rights.

"These staff are self-employed and on zero-hours contracts and if they raise issues such as health and safety they find that their phones stops ringing," he said.

Jackie Darby said that these employment arrangements were designed not to afford workers employment rights.

Conference called on the union to convene a forum in order to provide definitive expert legal advice as to the status and rights of agency workers.

A LIVING WAGE

Conference demanded a living wage for all members employed within the engineering grades.

Gordon Martin, Wishaw and Motherwell deplored the fact that many members survived on a basic rate of less than £16,000 per year.

"It unacceptable that our members are forced to work excessive overtime in an effort to make ends meet due to low wages and the escalating cost of living," he said.

Conference agreed that as a

first step to obtaining a reasonable living wage a base rate comparable with skilled trades outside the rail industry of around £23,000 should be fought for.

John Milligan of the organising unit said that there were thousands of unorganised workers on the railway and a campaign for a living wage would encourage them to join the union.

RAILWAY WORKSHOPS

Conference called for a campaign to demand that new and replacement rail rolling stock is built in the UK and not outsourced abroad.

Nobby Richardson, Willesden said that the government had recently announced that a 1000 new rolling stock units were required to replace existing high-speed trains.

"This could be an opportunity to revitalise the railway workshop sector which has seen job losses and closures in recent years including at Washwood Heath and Eastleigh.

He said that workshops had been lost in York, Derby and Crewe and replace by a 'man in a van' carrying out track-side maintenance.

"This on-the-hoof approach is no substitute for railway workshops," he said.

Mike Burton, Plymouth No1 said that any plans for building new trains should not be outsourced abroad but kept in Britain for this generation to build and the next.

AGS Mick Cash said that the decline in train building and repair was directly due to government policy.

"Taxpayers' money should be used to create UK jobs, not destroy them," he said. ■

ROAD FREIGHT CONFERENCE 2007

Delegates pledged to organise and recruit at last month's road-freight grades' conference in Plymouth

Conference president Pete Daniels pointed out to delegates that the last time the conference met in Plymouth was in 1975 and that the first resolution back then, from Bournemouth branch, called for workers to be paid night enhancement through the holiday period.

A delegate himself at that conference, Pete said that many of the things that the union was fighting for back then were still being fought for now.

The union used to have a

large membership in a small group of companies in road-freight but fragmentation of the industry meant that the membership was now smaller, spread among 30 companies. In spite of this, attendance at the conference was slightly up on last year.

BUILDING THE UNION

Senior assistant **general secretary Mick Cash** asked conference: "Which is the largest specialist transport union

in the UK?" asked. The answer, of course, was RMT.

Mick told conference that the union needed to grow on buses and on the roads as well as on trains and to do that means organising where members currently are and also in new places.

"The strength of the union is that it is member-led, very democratic, and good at doing things in the workplace once it has its foot in the door.

"Part of the problem that

fragmentation has brought has been that some companies who are anti-union use dirty tricks, such as employing staff under a new company name, to throw out recognition agreements," he said.

However, Mick argued that "no employer can undermine you if you have good representation. Good organisation is the best line of defence and attack... We get and keep members through what we do in the workplace".

"Good organisation is the best line of defence and attack"



CHANGES TO EU DRIVERS' HOURS RULES

On April 11 2007 the provisions of EC Regulation 3820/85 on drivers' hours will be replaced by EC Regulation 561/2006. The Regulation

applies to goods vehicles that weigh more than 3.5 tonnes and passenger vehicles on regular services with a route of more than 50 kilometres.

Issue	Existing Regulation	New 561/2006 Regulation effective from 11 April 2007
Daily Driving	Maximum 9 hours (10 hours twice a week)	No changes
Weekly Driving	Although no limit is specified in reality the limit is 56 hours	A weekly limit of 56 hours is specified
Breaks	45 minutes after 4.5 hours continuous or cumulative driving. The 45 minutes can be split up into breaks of at least 15 minutes.	Remains 45 minutes after 4.5 hours continuous or cumulative driving. The 45 minutes can be split into two periods. The first should be no less than 15 minutes and the second no less than 30 minutes.
Daily rest	11 hours in the 24 hour period after last daily or weekly rest period. This can be reduced to a minimum of 9 hours no more than three times per week. Compensation has to be made by the end of the following week.	Remains 11 hours. The reductions can be reduced to a minimum of 9 hours no more than three times between any two weekly rest periods. Reductions do not have to be compensated.
Split daily rest	12 hours in total in a 24 hour period. These can be taken in 2 or 3 periods each at least one hour long with the last period being at least 8 hours.	Remains 12 hours. Rest can be taken in two periods. The first of which must be at least three hours and the last period at least nine hours.
Weekly rest	At least 45 consecutive hours after no more than 6 successive periods of 24 hours following the last weekly rest. This can be reduced to 36 hours at base or 24 hours away from the driver's and vehicles' base. Compensation must be en-bloc before the end of the third week following the week of reduction and attached to another rest period of at least 8 hours.	Remains 45 hours after no more than 6 successive periods after 24 hours following the last weekly rest. This can be reduced to 24 hours at or away from base. Compensation must be en-bloc before the end of the third week following the week of reduction and attached to another rest period of at least nine hours.



Conference president Pete Daniels

LEGAL COVER

Tristram Sterry and Mark Gray from RMT solicitors, Thompsons explained how being in the union gives access to free legal support.

Tristram advised against using high street "no win, no fee" solicitors, as there may be no fee if you lose, but there is often a very hefty one if you win.

"Invariably, union members will have to pay a fee out of their compensation, whereas when the union wins a case any award goes to the member in full," he said.

Mark gave an update on the situation at UPS and explained what was being done to win back recognition.

PAID LEAVE

Delegates called for payment for annual leave to be based on average earnings instead of the current payment of the basic

rate. Some people could not afford to take leave because of the drop in income that occurs, conference heard.

Jimmy Rafferty Exeter Rail said: "I can't believe that we are discussing this in 2007, everyone is entitled to his annual leave".

The abuse of working time and driving regulations by foreign national drivers and the threat to safety it causes was of particular concern.

Conference called upon the union to highlight the problem with the parliamentary group of MPs with a view to seeking better enforcement controls.

Conference also requested that the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) campaigns to organise foreign national drivers into their national unions with a view to improving their living standards and thus reducing the need to work such long hours.

Delegates called on the union to negotiate with Freightliner Ltd.

Maurice Hamilton, Leeds Goods and Cartage, said: "They need to adhere to the pre-privatisation clerical grades structures when recruiting new clerical staff".

UPS STRUGGLE

"Support and respect" for the union's fight with UPS to regain full recognition and negotiations rights for pay and conditions of service was expressed by the conference.

Conference officers elected for 2007-8 were: President – Pete Daniels; Vice President – Jimmy Rafferty; Secretary – Andrew Hill.

Next year's conference will be held on 19 April in Leeds. ■

City Link training

During conference, training was carried out for City Link reps.

The workshops were led by Donald Graham from RMT's organising unit.

While the union has had recognition at City Link since 1977, over the last five years a concerted effort has been made to organise at the firm.

Training was based around the union's organising strategy and also proposed new machinery at City Link for dealing with disciplinaries and grievances.

Workshops also looked at legal issues and the role of building the union in the depots.

THE BATTLE AGAINST SLAVERY

RMT delegate Mohammed Ilyas reports on the TUC Black Workers' Conference

This year the annual TUC black workers conference was significantly held in Bristol, a port town known for the part it played in the trade of slaves to the colonies.

As 2007 is the bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade in Britain, it was appropriate to hold this gathering of British trade unionists of all different ethnic origins in Bristol.

Conference started with a visit to St Mary's Church, Henbury, Bristol to lay a wreath at the grave of Scipio, a freed slave who lived and died in the area.

A visit to the slavery exhibition at the Empire and Commonwealth museum was hosted by Roger King and a warm welcome was given by Bristol council leader Barbra Janice.

Conference was addressed by

Professor Gus John, who gave a vivid explanation of the evil system of slavery. He made delegates aware that it was through struggle that the captured slaves were able to free themselves.

RMT's own Glenroy Watson addressed conference about reparations for the slave trade and why this question had to be addressed.

Paul Stephenson, an outstanding community activist in Bristol, gave a rendition of the trials and tribulation that he has encountered during his life working with the community in Bristol.

There were eight workshops and I took part in one meeting on operation black vote, discussing how to engage black voters in the democratic process.

Fringe meetings also informed delegates of the social

advances being made in Cuba and Venezuela, countries which are bringing health and education to millions of people in Latin America.

Both countries are at the centre of social change and it is important to show solidarity with countries.

Another fringe meeting heard contributions from Gargi Bhattacharyya vice chairman of TUC race relation committee and race equality officer Pav Akhtar who talked about the on-going Israeli blockade of the Palestinian government which is at the heart of the humanitarian crisis and the sharp increase in poverty.

It is clear that a mass solidarity movement needs to be developed to assist in finding a peaceful solution to the Middle East crisis.

DEFEAT THE BNP

I moved a conference motion on the British National Party which was seconded by Amicus and was passed unanimously.

I said that there should be no room for the BNP in today's society as it is a racist party.

I pointed out that the BNP had recently launched a 'union' called solidarity, yet this isn't solidarity but, in fact, a sham union.

"Britain today faces a systematic campaign by sections of the media and some politicians fanned by the BNP to undermine this right by showing hatred against Muslims.

"This campaign constitutes an attack on civil and religious liberties including attempts to suppress the right of persons of all faiths, to dress with in accordance with their religious conviction and it must be strongly opposed," I said.

TUC BLACK WORKERS' CONFERENCE 2007

RMT delegation to the Black Workers' Conference



TIME FOR THE TRUE STORY OF SLAVERY TO BE TOLD

The need for the truth to be told about slavery and black peoples' central role in the long battle to end it were key themes emerging from the union's Black and Ethnic Minority members' conference.

Held in the former slave port of Bristol in the 200th anniversary year of Britain's abolition of human trafficking, the conference called for efforts to mark the anniversary and to help tell the true story of slavery – not least that the 1807 Act did not end it.

Delegates paid tribute to the untold numbers who had died in the horrors of the 'middle passage' and to those who had fought and perished in countless revolts and resistance.

Conference backed the call, by **Mark Walters, Finsbury Park**, for a campaign for reparation to help lay to rest the "profound social and economic inequality, hatred, bigotry, racism and prejudice" that remained as slavery's legacy.

"African people were not bystanders to their own enslavement – they fought it," noted **Glenroy Watson, Finsbury Park**.

Reparation didn't just mean money, it meant repairing the relationship between Africa and the rest of the world, and an end to the economic plunder that continued, said Glenroy.

Frank Murray, LUL engineering, said he had grown up believing William Wilberforce to be the saviour of black people, but had since learned that the reality was very different.

In the late 18th century tens of thousands of British and French troops had tried unsuccessfully to put down a rebellion by slaves led by Toussaint L'Ouverture on the Caribbean island we now know as Haiti, he noted.

A commemorative day known as 'Wilberforce day' would amount to a slap in the face, said Frank.

It was essential that future generations understood the history of slavery if humanity was to move forward, said **Mohammed Younis, Leeds**

It was stunning how black people had even been edited out of their own emancipation, noted **Samuel Addo, Waltham Forest**:

Delegates agreed with **Kwame Sampong, South London Rail**, that August 23, the anniversary of the start of the Haiti uprising led by Toussaint L'Ouverture, was the most appropriate day to establish as a memorial to slavery and resistance to it.

- The unimaginable trauma of trafficking in human beings from the continent that was the cradle of civilisation and the falsification of its history continued to distort relationships and identities, said guest speaker **Dr Kimani Nehusi**.
- The voices of those being discriminated against at work needed to be heard at the highest level in the union, said infrastructure worker **Thandiwe Mabodoko, Feltham** in a discussion on the role of the Black and Ethnic Minority Advisory Committee.
- The demonisation of Muslims and the erosion of civil rights in Britain were condemned by guest speaker and progressive lawyer Imran Khan.

Economic inequality and alienation of black people in Britain were the core issues that had to be addressed, alongside foreign policy issues including the Iraq war, he said. ■



Campaigning lawyer Imran Khan

REOPENING R

The Skipton-East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership (SELRAP) is campaigning to reopen the Skipton to Colne railway

Opened by the Midland Railway in 1848, the line between Skipton and Colne formed part of a trans-Pennine route linking the Manchester and the North West with Leeds, Yorkshire, and beyond.

The line survived Beeching intact, but whilst the rest of the route featured on the list of lines eligible for subsidy under the 1968 Transport Act, the 11.5 mile section between Skipton and Colne did not and was closed in 1970.

CAMPAIGN

Formed in 2001, the volunteer group SELRAP has been campaigning for the re-opening of the Skipton (North Yorkshire) to Colne (East Lancashire) railway line as part of a new trans-Pennine route for passengers and freight.

Reopening the Skipton-Colne

railway will link the economies of Yorkshire and Humberside, Leeds, Bradford and the Aire Valley with those of East Lancashire, Manchester and its international airport, Preston and the Mersey ports beyond.

Regarded as the missing link between the rail networks of the North West and Yorkshire, the map clearly illustrates the need for the line to be rebuilt.

Existing trans-Pennine routes are operating at or near capacity. Reopening the Skipton-Colne line fits in with regional transport strategies.

New railways have a track record of encouraging inward investment and regeneration. Rebuilding the line as a through route will address issues concerning social inclusion and connectivity.

Figures reveal that within and beyond the immediate

corridor of the line car ownership is well below the national average. Reopening the line will also address the government's own policies aimed at developing integrated and sustainable transport, whilst cutting road congestion and delivering accessibility, safer roads and better air quality.

SUPPORT

Support for the campaign comes from local business, the media and the church, local MPs and regional MEPs from all three major political parties. At the time of writing 55 MPs and seven members of the House of Lords, including the chair of the Rail Freight Group, Lord Tony



CAMPAIGN: David Curry, MP for Skipton and Ripon and, on the right, Gordon Prentice, MP for Pendle, shake hands in support of the campaign on trackbed of former Colne - Skipton line at Thornton in Craven where it crosses the county boundary between Lancashire and North Yorkshire.

RAIL

Berkeley, have written letters of support. Local, Parish and County Authorities on both sides of the border also support SELRAP.

TRACK

SELRAP has successfully campaigned against the development of the still complete 11.5 mile trackbed. Local plans for both Pendle Borough and Craven District Councils include support for reopening what will be the most easily graded and near-tunnel free trans Pennine route. And both Lancashire and North Yorkshire county councils include implicit support for the reopening within respective local transport plans.

In 2003 a major report concluded that reinstating the line was technically feasible and that there was a long-term future for the link. SELRAP is to commission a new study which will focus on the Cost/Benefit ratio for the line and has already raised half of the £10,000 required.

TRAIN

On April 1 this year a packed four-car train ran from Colne to Skipton and back in a convoluted 50-mile route via Burnley, Blackburn and Hellifield which involved two reversals of direction.

Carrying a headboard "The Missing Link", it was the first train to run between the two towns for 37 years. All tickets were sold out in advance and more than 120 potential travellers were turned away. The 100-mile return journey took almost five hours and the direct route would offer a journey time of just 15 minutes.

It is SELRAP's belief that delivery of this scheme, as England's first rail reopening scheme since 1998. RMT has indicated formal support for SELRAP's aims and objectives.

For more information about SELRAP and/or to join the campaign to reopen a vital new trans-Pennine rail route see www.selrap.org.uk ■



Former RMT president Phil Boston with John Leach

Addressing members' issues

In April I had the pleasure of addressing the annual RMT bus workers conference, this year in the city of Lincoln.

As usual the conference was well-attended and the motions from branches were constructive. Issues concerning rank-and-file bus workers were progressed for the union to fight for with our members.

As is the case with many of our conferences, it was webcast on the RMT website and is still available. This enables any member of the union to watch the conference for themselves at a time of their convenience.

On a personal note, my grandfather had been a bus driver in the 1930s in Plymouth, a city where RMT continues to maintain a very strong presence amongst bus workers.

Stations and associated grades members also held their conference recently and a follow-up meeting of the conference liaison committee has already taken place with Council of Executives members, the assistant general secretary and myself to progress decisions.

These are not meetings for the sake of it, rather practical meetings of representatives from the platform, booking office and other station areas of work, where the real meat of what matters at work can be fought for by the union.

This meeting gave me the chance to meet up with former RMT national president Phil Boston.

Today he is a company council rep on First Great Western for station grades, working at Bristol parkway station, and a member of the liaison committee.

Phil is a great friend of mine and a great fighter for all

members. In fact, all the members of the liaison committee play a valued role, and it is now up to the CoE reps to take up the torch.

Of course, there are other grades conferences in our union that have taken place recently: road transport, supervisory, engineering, train crew, catering and, later in the year, signaling grades. Additionally, our seafarers have the biennial shipping grades conference.

All of these meetings debate and discuss the issues concerning their grades for the union to take up. To assist in this matter the Council of Executives has decided to review the role and activities of the grades conferences, with one remit only – how can we do it better?. The conferences and all 225 branches of the union are being consulted in this process, and this issue is being taken forward.

With the merger of the Transport and General Workers' Union and AMICUS and the creation of a new union called UNITE, the whole face of the trade union movement will change.

RMT must, at this time, focus clearly on what counts most to its members, as expressed by them using our union's democracy. That, of course, is the key democracy. We should not underestimate the fact that we are a union where accountability of decision makers is alive and well, where the rank-and-file have the first say and the final say. RMT might not be the biggest union but we do have a constitution that enshrines a decision-making process that is led by the members and we're gonna keep it that way.

John Leach

BUILDING FIGHTING TRADE UNIONISM IN ISRAEL

Assaf Adv reports as part of a delegation from the Israeli Workers' Advice Centre that recently visited Britain

Our delegation from the Israeli Workers' Advice Centre undertook a series of meetings with trade-union leaders and activists.

The purpose of the visit was to introduce WAC to British trade unions and to develop fraternal relations in order to collaborate more closely in the future. As a new trade union movement, we were keen to learn from the vast experience of British unions. The visit was organised by Swindon TUC and RMT kindly provided accommodation.

We met Fire Brigades Union general secretary Matt Wrack, Owen Tudor, Secretary of the TUC's international department, members of the UNISON International Department, GMB's International Officer and Nigel Costley, South West TUC's Secretary.

We also met local GMB activists in Swindon who organise Polish migrant workers, UNISON activists who told us about initiatives concerning health and safety, and Bristol RMT activists resisting the impact of privatisation.

These were just three examples of initiatives within the British trade-union movement which inspired us.

Our delegation also met John McDonnell MP. He explained his bid to lead the Labour Party as a representative of those who are fighting against the view that the globalisation of capitalism is a fait accompli.

We see ourselves as part of this movement in Britain and elsewhere who believe in the potential of the working class to change the world for the better.

The situation we face in our country is similar in content but

differs in form.

WAC, as a left-wing, dynamic player in the Israeli trade-union arena, sees itself as a promoter of ideas and perspectives of fundamental change.

We at WAC believe that in order for solidarity among workers, and a socialist world-view to be achieved, they must first be reflected in recognition of the rights of Palestinian Arab workers, who suffer discrimination and national oppression in Israel.

WAC started off as an independent NGO, giving advice to Arab workers who are citizens of Israel as to their rights, with the purpose of filling a vacuum which was created in the mid '90s.

At that time, Israel launched itself onto the global market, and adopted the notions of the 'free market'. As a result, in the last decade we have seen the near-total destruction of our social safety-net, which left hundreds of thousands in a state of poverty and hardship.

There has also been a

dramatic slump of organised labour and union density fell from 85 per cent to 30 per cent. Until the beginning of the '90s the labour market was dominated by the Histadrut (General Workers Federation) which was able to force the hands of government and employers in a framework of collective agreements which gave workers generous social benefits.

However, with privatisation, Histadrut did not have the strength or vision to resist, losing a lot of its strongholds to manpower companies, contractors and other forms of unorganised workforce.

Today over ten per cent of workers are employed through personnel companies. In addition, five per cent of workers are migrant workers, receiving low pay and considered the most weakened in the work market.

The vacuum created by the growing numbers of unorganised workers has led to the birth of new initiatives that help to promote workers rights. NGOs, human rights groups and others were created as part of this new phenomenon of which WAC is one.

WAC is unique among these fresh initiatives not only due to organising Jewish and Arab workers within the same framework on the basis of equality, but also because it promotes a new type of trade unionism – one which strives to activate workers at the grass roots level.

WAC Association has been acting for the past ten years to organise and promote the welfare of Arab workers within the building, agricultural and tourist industries. Last year it began to represent Jewish workers at the Educational Television.

These small steps of organising one group of workers after another, and educating workers to take charge of their own working conditions, will not in themselves change the harsh and complex reality in which we live here in Israel.

A fundamental change in the reality of occupation, oppression, poverty and the domination of capital requires the creation of a new international power-balance in favour of the working class. ■

To read more about WAC visit their web site:
www.workersadvicecenter.org



The WAC delegation visits Unity House

FLYING THE FLAG

RMT general secretary Bob Crow recently unveiled a plaque in memory of the Irishman Jim Connell who penned the socialist anthem *The Red Flag*

Bob Crow paid a visit to the Irish town of Crosskiel, County Meath in Ireland recently to unveil a plaque in honour of Jim Connell who wrote the words to *The Red Flag* in 1889.

"It is a privilege to unveil this plaque to a man who inspired generations of socialists to fight on and, in many instances, to win against all the odds.

"Some may be embarrassed today by the militant sentiments of these words but millions of workers around the world are still inspired by them," he said.

Connell was born in County Meath and moved to Dublin where he worked as a docker until he was blacklisted for attempting to unionise the workers.

He came to live and work in London and was inspired to write the socialist anthem after attending a lecture at a meeting of the Social Democratic Federation.

He set down the words whilst on the number 28 bus journey to his home in New Cross, South London.

It is normally sung to the tune of the German carol *O Tannenbaum* (also used for the state song of Maryland), though Connell had wanted it sung to

the tune of a Jacobite anthem called *The White Cockade*.

In 1920 in *How I wrote The Red Flag* Jim Connell wrote:

"Did I think that the song would live? Yes, the last line shows I did: 'This song shall be our parting hymn'. I hesitated a considerable time over this last line.

I asked myself whether I was not assuming too much. I reflected, however, that in writing the song I gave expression to not only my own best thoughts and feelings, but the best thoughts and feelings of every genuine socialist I knew . . . I decided that the last line should stand."

After a variety of jobs Jim joined Keir Hardie's newspaper *The Labour Leader* as a journalist. During the last years of his life he was secretary of the Workingmen's Legal Aid Society.

He addressed a crowd of 600 at Crosskiel in 1918 and it was to be his last visit to Ireland. The monument to Jim Connell was unveiled on April 26 1998 at Crosskiel.

Jim Connell died in 1929 in London and *The Red Flag* was sung at his funeral in Golders Green to both airs and was, indeed, his parting hymn. ■



THE RED FLAG

*The people's flag is deepest red
It shrouded oft our martyred dead;
And ere their limbs grew stiff and cold
Their hearts' blood dyed its every fold.*

*Then raise the scarlet standard high!
Beneath its folds we'll live and die.
Though cowards flinch and traitors sneer
We'll keep the red flag flying here.*

*Look 'round, the Frenchman loves its blaze,
The sturdy German chants its praise,
In Moscow's vaults its hymns are sung
Chicago swells the surging throng.*

*It waved above our infant might
When all ahead seemed dark as night.
It witnessed many a deed and vow,
We will not change its colour now.*

*It well recalls the triumphs past
It gives the hope of peace at last
The banner bright, the symbol plain
Of human right and human gain.*

*It suits today the meek and base,
Whose minds are fixed on pelf and place,
To cringe beneath the rich man's frown,
And haul that sacred emblem down.*

*With heads uncovered swear we all
To bear it onward till we fall;
Come dungeons dark or gallows grim,
This song shall be our parting hymn.*



ENHANCING RAIL FREIGHT

Rail freight operators have drawn up a list of enhancement schemes across England, Scotland and Wales in response to the findings of the Stern and Eddington reports on climate change.

These have been submitted to the Department for Transport for inclusion in The High Level Output Specification (HLOS) and the rail strategy.



GLOBAL WARMING

Both the Eddington and Stern reports reinforced the importance of rail freight as the most efficient way of moving goods and materials from ports and sea containers.

Eddington identified the importance of "international gateways", such as ports, to the UK economy.

The Stern report focused on reducing the carbon footprint of the UK, a point reinforced by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

The emissions and carbon dioxide produced by rail freight is ten times lower than produced by road. At a time of considerable concern about Climate Change rail freight is the transport mode of the future.

FREIGHT ON RAIL

Supporting the lists drawn up by the Rail Freight Operators Association, the campaigning group Freight on Rail said that the fast route to reducing transport's carbon footprint is to increase rail freight which also acts as a freight by-pass and helps reduce road congestion.

Recent research has shown that a tonne of freight moved by rail creates five times less Carbon Dioxide than the same tonne being moved on the roads.

Rail freight is also up to fifteen times better than road in terms of other noxious emissions. It has been estimated that there is only a five to fifteen year window in which to take action to avert catastrophic climate change.

As Stern said, "The scientific evidence is overwhelming. Climate change presents serious global risks and it demands an urgent global response". A summary of the proposals are outlined below:

ENGLAND

The schemes announced for Transport Innovation Fund (TIF) funding by the Department for Transport in December 2006 include:

- Capacity enhancements on the rail routes from the South Humberside ports
- Capacity and gauge enhancement for 9' 6" containers between Barking and Gospel Oak and Willesden in North London
- A cord line near Liverpool to allow direct access to Liverpool Docks
- Gauge enhancement for 9' 6" containers between Southampton and the West Midlands

- Gauge and capacity enhancements for 9' 6" containers between Peterborough and the West Midlands

CHANNEL TUNNEL ROUTES

Currently the maximum gauge permitted on the routes from the Channel Tunnel to London and beyond is W9, which accommodates some mainland European gauge vehicles but does not maximise the traffic potential. To increase the volume of business available to rail there needs to be a two stage gauge enhancement project.

- (a) To enhance gauge to W12, which allows the movement of additional European rail vehicles and deep sea containers
- (b) To enhance a route linking the Channel Tunnel Rail Link with the West Midlands, North West and Yorkshire for full European gauge traffic.

Together these gauge enhancements will allow rail to compete for new traffic and generate a greater level of traffic between the UK and the continent.

SCOTLAND

Gauge enhancement on the Berwick to Glasgow line on the East Coast Main Line to W12 would allow 9' 6" containers to be conveyed.

These improvements and gauge enhancement are also proposed between Glasgow and Aberdeen. A modern signalling system, or more intermediate signals, would also unlock capacity.

Gauge enhancement on the West Coast Main Line to W12 will allow the full range of gauge dependant traffic to operate.

The route between Glasgow and Grangemouth also requires enhancement to W12.

Another rail loop is required at Kilmarnock to facilitate the construction of the Glasgow Airport Rail Link (GARL) project. The route between Hunterston and Glasgow via Paisley is currently the only route for the coal flows to Longannet power station.

Electrification of the line between Monktonhall Junction and Slateford Junction via Craiglockhart would allow freight trains to avoid the busy Waverly station area. Electrifying the Niddrie to Portobello route would also adding flexibility to the area.

The headway between trains on the Queensferry to Inverkeithing section is

currently seven minutes, restricting capacity between the Forth Bridge and Fife circle and Perth. An additional intermediate signal or a modern signalling system would enhance capacity.

The transfer of Millerhill signal box to Edinburgh IECC signal centre would also add flexibility to the area.

Removing weight restrictions at Paisley Gilmour Street, Annbank, Plean and Stirling affect loaded freight trains would allow freight to operate at normal speed.

The length of coal trains has increased from Hunterston as coal growth has continued. Enhancing the loop length will enable better use to be made of each freight path on the network and add capacity to the routes. The loops are:

- Stevenston – between Kilwinning and Ardrossan
- Elderslie – between Kilwinning and Paisley
- New Cumnock – on G&SW line

There is a five minute allowance required in all freight trains crossing the Forth Bridge. Reducing this allowance would therefore help the overall capacity of the network.

WALES

Upgrading the Blaenau Ffestiniog line would permit heavier trains to operate, freight could then convey slate waste by rail.

Upgrading signaling on the Newport to Shrewsbury line would enhance capacity and loops along the route should be extended to 775 metres, the standard length for freight loops.

Raising the speed on the Cardiff to Bristol line to 60 mph for bulk freight and 75mph for container trains would add capacity to the route and reduce journey times. The installation of additional signals in the Severn Tunnel would also add capacity and flexibility to the network.

The Cwmbargoed branch line is being reactivated to support the regeneration of a former coal site. An increase in the speed on the branch line to 30mph would significantly reduce the journey time.

Additional signaling capacity between Cardiff Central to Cardiff Queen Street would increase freight capacity and allow the freight operations during the day without the removal of a passenger services. ■

The Freight on Rail web site has all the enhancements listed under hot topics www.freightonrail.org.uk

LETTERS

Dear Bob,

For reasons connected to my local Labour Party, I have relinquished my RMT membership in order to join a union affiliated to the Labour Party.

Needless to say, this has not been an easy decision for me after more than thirty years membership of the NUR/RMT. The union has been an important part of my

life and an overwhelmingly positive experience.

I wonder if I might ask one favour of you – which is to arrange to send on to me my 25-year badge. I regret to say that, although we tried a couple of times, circumstances prevented my collecting it from my South London Rail branch.

Your sincerely, Rt Hon Keith Hill MP

General Secretary's response

Thank you for your letter dated March 16 2007.

I apologise for the delay in my response, however, you will appreciate that I have been very busy with elections.

I am sorry to learn that you have decided to relinquish your RMT membership. I see from your employment record that you began your career with the union on July 19 1976, and it is very disappointing that you have decided to join another union after all the money and resources the union invested in your Parliamentary career.

However, it would be wrong of me not to recognise the role you played in influencing the RMT's decision to leave the Labour Party. In view of the aforementioned, I think it would be both fitting and appropriate if I present you with your 25-year badge at this year's Annual General Meeting which takes place in Edinburgh from June 24 to June 29 2007.

Indeed, I would be delighted if you could attend the General Secretary's International Dinner which takes place during the evening of Saturday June 23 2007, where you would

be able to meet many of your old friends and colleagues.

I also enclose a signed copy of a recent RMT publication, "Never On Our Knees", which you will no doubt find an absorbing read.

You will see from the book that many of your old colleagues are mentioned and I can assure you that the following previous Executive Committee members, Peter Lindsay, Ken Thomas, Larry Cotton, Geoff Revell, John Milligan, Assistant General Secretary Pat Sikorski and Mick Atherton all remember your distinct contribution to the trade union movement.

Further, I also enclose copies of two films the Union commissioned to record the Rail Against Privatisation march which took place in 2005 and the march for trade union freedom which took place last year. I am sure that these films will enable you to keep abreast of the key issues facing RMT and trade union movement.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

R Crow, General Secretary.

FAREWELL TO DANUTA



Danuta Oliphant retired recently from her job in RMT's membership department where she was one of the main contact points for members calling into the office.

She joined the staff as a temporary finance administrator before transferring to the membership department.

Danuta was essential in maintaining membership records, subscriptions and liaising with the payroll offices that utilize the paybill deduction facility.

She proved to be popular with both her colleagues and members with her warm-hearted approach to her work and infectious laughter.

Danuta is hoping to settle in Poland where she has relatives and friends.

Pictured: Staff rep Ron Rodwell, Danuta and Bob Crow at the retirement party.

LOW COST HOME INSURANCE

RMT members could save up to £137 on home insurance

Thanks to our special relationship with RMT, you could save over £137 by switching your home insurance to UAA. It's yet another benefit of membership.

You can see from the table opposite the level of savings you could enjoy with UAA. And to make things even easier, you can spread your payments over 12 months, interest free.

Either call us on 0845 842 8421 (quote ref: News 207) or use the form below. We'll contact you nearer your home insurance renewal date with a free quote. We'll also enter you into a free prize draw to win a luxury weekend for two in Monte Carlo!

Call us for a quote today or buy online at www.uia.co.uk

See what you could save

	Liverpool L20 9	Harrow HA1 1	Birmingham B15 1	Portsmouth PO6 1
UAA Premium	£278.75	£363.56	£315.22	£288.76
Average Market Premium	£416.69	£485.25	£426.94	£389.05
SAVING	£137.94	£121.69	£111.72	£100.29

This is an estimate and your actual premium will depend on the details of your home. Premiums illustrated including Insurance Premium Tax (the current rate is 12.5%) and are based on a selection of buildings and contents insured for a building sum insured of £10,000 and contents sum insured of £20,000. These premiums are calculated for a 27 year old, living in a detached semi-detached house. Actual RMT Market average is based on a selection of the leading companies (Source: GfK, March, April 2007). Prices are correct as shown against April 2007. All prices are subject to change.

0845 842 8421

quote ref: News 207

For your no obligation quote, return this form to: UAA, FREEPOST 56 947, Kings Court, London Road, Stevenage SG1 2YF. NO STAMP NEEDED.

Personal data for home insurance: ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Title Forename Surname

Address Postcode

Daytime Phone Evening phone

Email

By entering your email address you are agreeing that UAA may occasionally contact you via email with carefully selected information and offers. 2007/07/23/2007. UAA and their agents would like to contact you to the latest details of their products and special offers. If you would prefer this not to happen please tick the appropriate box below.

☐ By post ☐ By phone

UAA is owned by and run for the benefit of its policyholders, so we can give you a better deal

UAA are part of the UAA Group. The quality and performance of our services is guaranteed by the UAA Group. For more information and details of the group please visit www.uaa.co.uk

NEW ADDITION

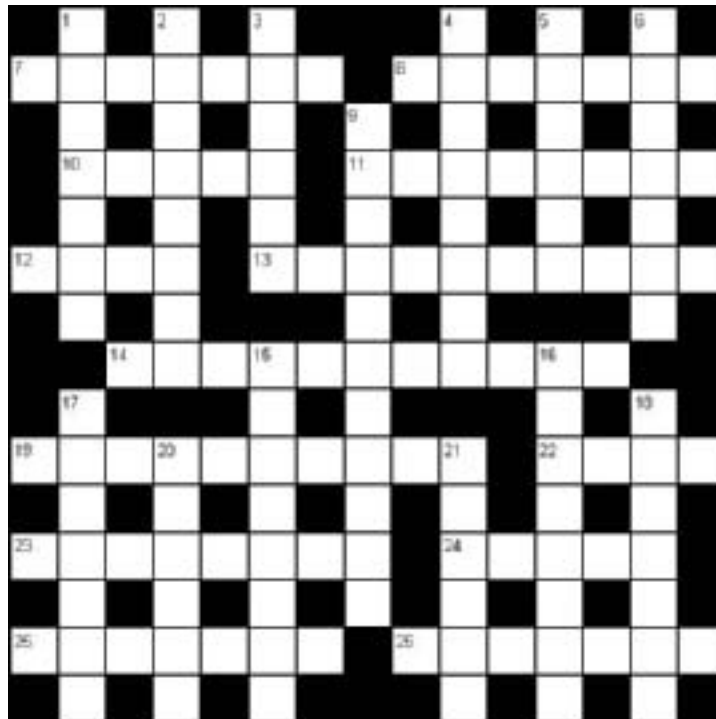
RMT staff member Mike Barry and his wife Debbie announced the safe arrival of Christy Stephen Barry (8lb 11oz) on Tuesday, May 15 at 16:41.

A very happy Roisen, aged three, now has a little brother and proudly sports "I'm A Big Sister" T-shirt. ■

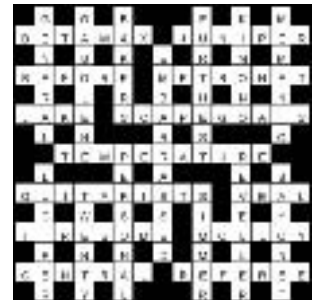


RMT £25 PRIZECROSSWORD

No. 36. Set by Elk



Last month's solution...



The winner of prize crossword no. 35 is James Rossforth of Steeple Clayton.

Send entries to Prize Crossword, RMT, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD by August 20 with your name and address.

Winner and solution in next issue.

CLASSIFIED ADS

AIRPORT CAR PARKING.

5% additional discount for RMT members

www.flypark.co.uk/discount

Get a quote and see savings

INDIAN WELLS KISSIMMEE

Villas 10% discount on rates for RMT members.

Beautiful 3 bedroom 2 bathroom villa in Florida 5 minutes drive from Disney. Exceptionally central location. Own pool with screen porch and overlooking a lake. Will sleep 8 and cot facilities are available

Tel. 01202 427854

www.indianwellskissimmeevillas.co.uk

VICTORIAN FARMHOUSE B&B

plus s/c lodge, sleeps 4, also B&B. Set in farmland overlooking forest.

Direct access to trailway. Small heated pool. Pets welcome. Ideal for walking, riding and cycling. Close to New Forest. For brochure call

01425 472115

ACROSS

- 7 Rodent, kept as pet (7)
- 8 Given, freely (7)
- 10 Covering sheets, in short (5)
- 11 Lift, US style (8)
- 12 Anti-union ones should be repealed (4)
- 13 Established cultural ways (10)
- 14 Maersk subsidiary, just recognised RMT (11)
- 19 They pay through the nose and are treated like cattle (10)
- 22 Temporary shelter (4)
- 23 Person who marries at least once too often! (8)
- 24 Kent port, used by 14 (5)
- 25 Most people dread to visit one! (7)
- 26 Animal skin, used as clothing etc (7)

DOWN

- 1 Such arts include judo and karate (7)
- 2 Strong coffee, Italian style (8)
- 3 Single-roomed dwelling (6)
- 4 Don't make a mountain of one! (8)
- 5 Strongly flavoured sausage, Italian style (6)
- 6 If the vote's close, demand one of these (7)
- 9 Incidents of trains off the road (11)
- 15 The most amusing (8)
- 16 Christmas story, especially performed by children (8)
- 17 Dogs (7)
- 18 Such folk have no weapons (7)
- 20 Song of the sea (6)
- 21 Without warning (6)

RMT Credit Union

Our Own Savings and Loans Co-operative

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.

Loan term (months) 9.9% APR (0.79% per month)

Amount	12	24	36	48	60
500	43.93	23.05	16.11	12.66	10.60
1000	87.87	46.1	32.22	25.31	21.2
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

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.

SPOUSE

The Credit Union Board has made the decision that spouse are also able to join.

DIVIDEND ON SAVINGS

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 **three per cent** on savings – a very healthy dividend rate compared to banks' interest rates



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

Authorised and Regulated By The Financial Services Authority FRN: 228612

RMT CREDIT UNION LTD.

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



MEMBERSHIP NUMBER

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

1 PERSONAL DETAILS.

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

2 Your Employment.

Employer		RMT Branch	
Job Description			

3 Mr ☐ Mrs ☐ Ms ☐ Miss ☐

4 Membership Status

RMT TU Member ☐ Retired RMT TU Member ☐

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

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

7 Next of Kin

Address

.....

.....

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

Your signature

Date



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



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

Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society

To: The Manager	Bank/Building Society
Address	
Postcode	

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

Bank/Building Society account number

Branch Sort Code

Originator's Identification Number

Reference Number

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

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society.

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

Signature(s)

Date

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

This guarantee should be detached and retained by the Payer.

The Direct Debit Guarantee

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



JOIN RMT BRITAIN'S SPECIALIST TRANSPORT UNION



Visit www.rmt.org.uk to join online
or call the helpline on freephone

0800 376 3706

Problems at work? Call the helpline
*(Now with two operators and the facilities to translate
into 170 languages)*

Open six days a week

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

e-mail: info@rmt.org.uk

Legal helpline: 0800 587 7516
Seven days a week

