

RMT *news*

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RETURN METRONET TO PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

END
TUBE
PRIVATISATION

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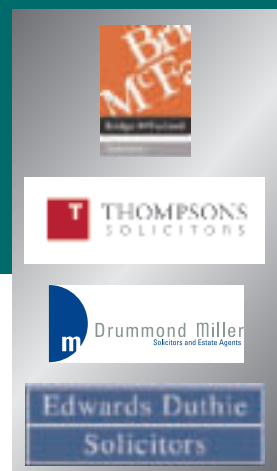
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PROTECTING AND PROMOTING OUR MEMBERS' INTERESTS



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EDITORIAL

METRONET VICTORY



The media went berserk when 2,300 RMT members at failed privateer Metronet went on strike and successfully protected their jobs and pensions.

I am proud of every one of those trade unionists who held the line and gave their negotiating team the strength to firm up the guarantees we had been seeking including a full pension scheme rescue.

Our members demonstrated that their jobs and pensions would not be the price paid for privateers walking away after robbing millions from the Tube network.

It is a scandal that taxpayers will be liable for up to half of the £2 billion cost of Metronet's collapse before the contracts are handed back to the same bunch of crooks.

RMT has made clear that it will resist any attempt to transfer Tube maintenance to another private-sector bidder. This work should be brought back in-house in the public sector, a position fully backed by TUC delegates.

The alternative would be to allow the dangerous fragmentation of the Tube network to continue. We have already seen the long-term damage that can be done by privatisation on the rail network.

During the Metronet strike there were the usual right-wing voices calling for strikes to be banned in public services.

Yet we already have to jump through hoops to take strike action at all, and our brothers and sisters in the Prison Officers' Association face the prospect of court action for striking at all.

POA members have done the entire movement a favour by taking action anyway and thumbing its nose at laws that belong in the history books.

That is why Congress delegates backed an RMT call to step up the campaign for trade-union rights and for an end to Britain's shameful position outside international conventions on labour rights.

In the same spirit of solidarity, RMT extends total support to postal workers in struggle and to civil servants in PCS campaigning against huge job cuts.

Now that election hysteria has abated, it is also time that Gordon Brown did what TUC delegates

demand and called a referendum on the EU constitution.

Labour promised us a referendum two years ago on the constitution and supporters and opponents alike admit that the new rehashed version is basically the same document.

This constitution will hand fundamental powers to EU institutions, including the power to privatise services, and abolish national vetoes in 52 areas including transport.

That means transport policy will be decided in Brussels in future not Westminster.

If it is good enough for Irish voters to have a say in a referendum on this crucial issue, it's good enough here.

The government should also stop hiding behind EU regulations that, for example, forced the tendering of Caledonian MacBrayne's lifeline ferry services, and start challenging them instead.

The CalMac tendering cost taxpayers a staggering £17 million – money that should have been spent on improving services.

I recently had the pleasure of visiting Cally Mac members at work to discuss the tendering debacle and other problems they face.

Congratulations to RMT members at UPS who have finally won their battle for trade union recognition. Workers need representation more than ever as storm clouds gather over the economy.

It's amazing that the government can find billions to deal with the crisis at Northern Rock yet can't find enough money to fund decent pensions.

Northern Rock had assets of £24 billion yet lent £100 billion.

When it all went wrong Joe Public had to cough up. That is what you call socialism for bankers, if you ask me.

In uncertain times it is good to know the union is there to protect workers. That is why RMT has its own Credit Union to help members and their families get access to loans at cheap rates. So join today.

Best wishes

Bob Crow

ALL CHANGE FOR ANNUAL LEAVE ENTITLEMENT

For a long time unscrupulous employers have exploited a loophole in the law which allows them to include public and bank holidays as part of the statutory four week paid annual leave entitlement.

This is now set to change. From October 1 2007 statutory annual leave entitlement will increase to 4.8 weeks (24 days for a five day week) and to 5.6 weeks (28 days for a five day week) from April 1 2009.

As the annual leave year starts at different times for different groups of workers, the new entitlements have been worked out on a proportionate basis.

This means that the benefit of the additional leave is applied on a pro-rata basis from October 2007 depending on the proportion of your current annual leave year that follows this date.

This change only applies to those employees that currently have bank holidays as part of their leave entitlement. You will see from the 'ready reckoner' chart, that further increases are then made incrementally up to April 2009.

To work out precisely how many days you are entitled to, multiply the number of weeks by the number of days you usually work a week.

Example 1: In 2007/08 your annual leave year starts on February 1 and you work four days a week. The calculation is 4.27 weeks x 4 days = 17.08 days

Example 2: In 2007/08 your annual leave year starts on April 1 and you work five days a week. The calculation is 4.4 weeks x 5 days = 22 days.

Example 3: In 2008/09 your annual leave year starts on June 1 and you work five days a week. The calculation is 4.93

Appendix A

Leave year starts	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
1 November	4.07 weeks	4.8 weeks	5.27 weeks	5.6 weeks
1 December	4.13 weeks	4.8 weeks	5.33 weeks	5.6 weeks
	2007	2008	2009	2010
1 January	4.2 weeks	4.8 weeks	5.4 weeks	5.6 weeks
	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010
1 February	4.27 weeks	4.8 weeks	5.47 weeks	5.6 weeks
1 March	4.33 weeks	4.8 weeks	5.53 weeks	5.6 weeks
1 April	4.4 weeks	4.8 weeks	5.6 weeks	5.6 weeks
1 May	4.47 weeks	4.87 weeks	5.6 weeks	5.6 weeks
1 June	4.53 weeks	4.93 weeks	5.6 weeks	5.6 weeks
1 July	4.6 weeks	5 weeks	5.6 weeks	5.6 weeks
1 August	4.67 weeks	5.07 weeks	5.6 weeks	5.6 weeks
1 September	4.73 weeks	5.13 weeks	5.6 weeks	5.6 weeks
1 October	4.8 weeks	5.2 weeks	5.6 weeks	5.6 weeks

Diving Deal



DIVING DEAL: RMT general secretary Bob Crow and regional organiser Stan Herschel (centre) signs deal with Diving company representatives following the settlement of the 44.7 per cent pay deal.

ORGANISING AT HELIPORTS

RMT and OILC activists continue to reach out to offshore workers by distributing joint union materials to the hundreds of workers flying offshore from heliports in Aberdeen.

Organising unit co-ordinator Alan Pottage said that activists always got a positive response from the workers.

"They are encouraged to see the OILC and RMT working together and feel that, at long last, their voices will be heard," he said.

RMT's membership amongst offshore workers has grown at a steady rate and OILC's membership will decide at their annual conference this month whether to proceed with the Transfer of Engagements with RMT. ■



SETTLEMENT AT ONE

Following the threat of further strike action at the 'one' rail franchise, management has offered a confidential settlement satisfactory to sacked guard Paul Yarwood, thereby recognising that they were wrong to dismiss him.

'One' management has also agreed to re-instate the Assaults Working Group and set up a Security Council to deal with all aspects of staff safety and security and to ensure that this

is a priority.

Paul Yarwood was sacked in June following an incident with a drunken and aggressive fare-dodger.

His dismissal led to an outpouring of anger among staff, two days of local strike action and overwhelmingly support for a company-wide strike which has now been called off following an offer from the company.

Paul said that he did not

want to pursue re-instatement as he did not want staff to lose money or disrupt the lives of passengers who had been very supportive.

"I want the best for you all and hope things are learnt from this and that nobody else goes through what I am going through," he said in a letter to staff and passengers.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that it had been a victory for common sense and

an object lesson in demonstrating what solidarity could achieve.

"It is only by the action of Paul's colleagues that this outcome has been made possible.

"It will also be difficult for management to neglect the safety of staff in the future and take the side of fare dodgers and hooligans that attack our members," he said. ■

WHY I JOINED RMT

Name: Nadra Craig

Job: Resource Co-ordinator

Company: NEOS networks (Scottish & Southern Energy)

My husband works offshore in the offshore oil industry and he has been heavily involved with the offshore workers union – OILC. He convinced me long ago never to go to work without a union card.

When the merger between OILC/RMT was proposed, I was delighted to learn that they hope to form an 'offshore/energy' branch of RMT.

I work in the energy industry,

my husband works in the offshore oil industry, so the proposed marriage of these great unions suits my own marriage.

Like OILC, RMT protect their members' interests at work. I also admire the strong leadership displayed both general secretaries Jake Molloy and Bob Crow.

I am also very impressed with the great work which is being done by RMT in support of women and ethnic minorities in the workplace. I fall into both of these categories, so I hope to get more involved in these areas with the union in the future. ■



TUC DEMANDS TUBE MAINTENANCE BACK IN-HOUSE



Bob Crow



Janine Booth



John Leach



Mark Carden

Delegates representing six million working people at the Trades Union Congress backed calls by TSSA and RMT for Tube maintenance to be taken back in-house following the collapse of Tube privateer Metronet.

Congress agreed to urge the government to support London Mayor Ken Livingstone's desire for infrastructure work to be taken under direct London Underground control.

RMT president John Leach seconded TSSA call for all London Underground maintenance work to be taken back in-house.

He made a successful call for an early conference to campaign for the re-nationalisation of Tube maintenance.

"We must demand full public control of the Tube and rail network to put an end to the carnage of privatisation," he said.

TSSA general secretary Gerry Doherty praised the strikes organised by RMT over job and pension insecurity after the

collapse of Metronet and vowed to stand "shoulder to shoulder" with RMT.

"The nonsense of public-private partnership, which we all knew wasn't going to work, has seen the dearest fares in Europe and diminished services," he said.

Delegates also backed RMT delegate Janine Booth's call to oppose planned Tube ticket office closures.

Janine warned that 39 outlets were facing closure, with around 270 job cuts and huge cuts in the opening hours of the rest.

"The Oyster card system is complex to use, there are already long queues at stations and, without ticket offices, they are more hostile places, especially at night," she said.

PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF SEAFARERS

RMT delegate Mark Carden addressed Congress on the privatisation of Caledonian MacBrayne ferry services as demanded by EU rules.

He won support from delegates to urge the government to challenge such EU regulations.

"RMT and others lobbied the Scottish Executive against putting CalMac out to tender and received guarantees that jobs, wages and routes would be protected.

"As a result companies pulled out of the £17 million pound tendering process because they could not slash jobs, attack terms and conditions and cherry pick the best routes," said Mark.

Delegates also backed the RMT call for a TUC conference to be organised a campaign against such EU directives that privatise public services.

FOR TRADE UNION RIGHTS

Delegates backed an RMT call for the repeal of Tory anti-union laws and in support of the Trade Union Freedom Bill.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said it is unacceptable that, after ten years of a Labour government, such vicious legislation is still part of UK

law.

"Action must be taken now to restore the rights of every worker," he said.

Delegates supported the establishment of a trade union week in Parliament along the lines of an STUC event last year.

Bob also seconded a successful motion from the Prison Officers Association demanding trade union rights for prison staff (see page 28).

CONGRESS DEMANDS EU CONSTITUTION POLL

RMT joined other delegations to overwhelmingly back a GMB motion calling for a referendum on the EU constitution.

The motion described the constitution as "a Trojan horse to provide unfettered privatisation throughout the EU".

GMB general secretary Paul Kenny said that the government should honour an election pledge to hold a referendum, warning that "ducking and diving" on the issue may cost Labour the election.

He also pointed out that big business interests and the CBI supported the treaty and opposed a referendum.

An RMT motion calling for a no vote was narrowly defeated due to a late decision by the Unite union – made up of T&GWU and Amicus – to oppose.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow argued that TUC policy was already against the Constitution and it was clearly

the same document which the French and Dutch rejected in 2005.

He said that the 'new' treaty "would mark a further transfer of power to unelected mandarins in Brussels and undermine democratic advances fought for over centuries".

PCS general secretary Mark Seworka pointed out that it was not somehow 'right wing' or anti-union to oppose the neo-liberal constitution.

Bob Oram of Unison warned that the treaty was "an attempt at creating a federal Europe with one currency, one government, one foreign policy, one military machine, one industrial policy and the complete freedom of labour, capital, goods and services and a free market which will include health and education".

Bakers' union delegate Tony Richardson stormed that the constitution was "undemocratic,

it's centralising, it's a privateers' paradise and it's certainly not a friend of workers".

Fire Brigade's Union delegate Mick Shaw warned that the treaty would privatise services, drive down wages and hand power to unaccountable EU institutions.

Aslef delegate Brian Corbett warned that if the constitution was imposed it would signal the end of the welfare state and democracy as we know it. ■

RECOGNITION DEAL AT LYNX/UPS



A joint statement agreed by RMT with UPS/Lynx Express:

UPS Ltd, Lynx Express and RMT are pleased to announce that they have amicably settled litigation brought by the union. The litigation resulted from UPS' acquisition of Lynx in September 2005 and concerned the recognition of RMT.

The T&GWU union and URTU co-operated in finding a solution. An agreement for the recognition of RMT, in addition

to the T&GWU and URTU, has been reached as part of this settlement.

Compensation will also be paid to RMT members. The settlement enables all parties to avoid spending further time and money on litigation and to move forward on a firmer and clearer basis together to provide the best service in the industry.

IMPROVED OFFER AT STAGECOACH YORKSHIRE

Following successful strike action at Stagecoach Yorkshire at the Chesterfield depot, management tabled an improved offer which has been accepted by members.

Bus workers voted overwhelmingly for 24-hour strike action, which members took in early September, and further industrial was called off following the improved offer. The deal includes.

- A 3.3 per cent rise in rates with effect from the 29 April 2007, meaning that the starter rate of pay would move to £6.99 per hour and the main rate to £7.75 per hour. This means that back

pay will be due on all hours worked from the 29 April to date.

- A further two per cent rise in rates with effect from November 2007 meaning that the starter rate of pay would move to £7.13 per hour and the main rate to £7.90 per hour. This is an overall increase of 5.3 per cent.

The company has been informed of the union's acceptance of the improved offer and the increase should be in the members' next pay packet.

The next pay review would then be due on April 27 2008. ■

LEARNING AT STAGECOACH

Learning is now on the timetable at Stagecoach's Morecambe depot with a new on-site education centre

A new fully-equipped centre was opened recently at Stagecoach Morecambe with the help of Unionlearn, the TUC's learning and skills organisation, to help Stagecoach staff gain more workplace skills and qualifications.

Following representations from RMT rep Ken Gillespie, the union made an application for funding to run a programme to engage "hard to reach" employees, within a culturally diverse organisation.

The result was £7,000 funding, with Ken Gillespie being nominated as union learning rep to run the project.

Of the eight Stagecoach depots in the North West, Morecambe is the only one with RMT recognition.

Ken, who is also branch secretary and health and safety rep, has played a huge part in ensuring that RMT sets the education agenda within Stagecoach North West.

Unionlearn's regional manager Dave Eva said that the learning centre offered a range of learning opportunities to staff.

"Shifts and other working arrangements for transport staff often make it very difficult for them to gain access to learning.

"This learning centre is the perfect solution to that problem, as it puts learning on their doorstep," he said.

The centre is based in a 50-foot long portable cabin at the depot on Whitegate in Morecambe's White Lund Industrial Estate. ■



LEARNING: Opening the learning centre is Chris Bowles, Stagecoach managing director, Tony Saunders from Unionlearn, RMT regional organiser John Tilley and RMT rep and project co-ordinator Ken Gillespie.

COMPANY WATCH

Metronet special...

Tube maintenance consortium Metronet may have collapsed in July after running up £2 billion of debts, but it has not stopped some of the companies involved chalking up huge profits.

Metronet was made up of Atkins, Balfour Beatty, Bombardier Transportation, EDF Energy and Thames Water.

Balfour Beatty reported pre-tax profits up 36 per cent to £76 million for the six months to 30 June 2007.

EDF Energy enjoyed pre-tax profits of £402 million for last year. Thames Water's financial statement for the year to 31 March 2007 showed profits of £256 million. Also out the ashes of the PPP disaster, EDF has been named as an official sponsor of the 2012 London Olympics.

Moreover, the hugely complicated PPP contracts—the brainchild of our new PM Gordon Brown—ensure that if the lenders request re-payment from

Metronet then Transport for London/LUL is responsible for 95 per cent of the debt – so much for taking risks.

By July 2006 Metronet and Tube Lines had been paid £3.3 billion in performance-adjusted Infrastructure Service Charges. Given this huge taxpayers' subsidy, it is not surprising that the Infracos have generated such huge profits for their shareholders.

Between 2003/04 and 2005/06 Metronet BCV, Metronet SSL and Tube Lines made pre-tax profits of £286 million. Predictably, performance did not match profit margins.

No fewer than eight reports cast serious doubts on the PPP's ability to deliver the upgrade of the London Underground in an economic and efficient manner.

In June 2004 the National Audit Office published two reports into the PPP. *The London Underground PPP: Were they good deals?* detailed the PPP's

huge start-up costs including £109 million spent by London Underground on external advisors and £275 million paid by LU to reimburse private-sector bidder costs.

The report warned that final PPP costs remained uncertain.

Not known for its radical language, the NAO stated: "there is only limited assurance that the price that would be paid to the private sector is reasonable".

At least we now have the answer and it looks like the taxpayer will foot the bill.

Shortly after the demise of Metronet, the Office of National Statistics decided to reclassify Metronet and Tubelines from the private sector to the public sector for 'National Accounts' purposes, highlighting that the growing cost of the PPP is being borne by the public purse.

London Mayor Ken Livingstone wants to take control of the company and split up the remains of its £17 billion contract.

However, Metronet administrator Ernst & Young is trying to value the company with a view to selling it to the highest bidder to pay off creditors.

Worse still, a preliminary ruling from Tube arbiter Chris Bolt claimed that Metronet could recover between £140 million and £470 million for the Bakerloo, Central and Victoria lines and £230 million to £600 million for the sub-surface routes such as the Metropolitan, District, Circle, Hammersmith & City and East London lines, leaving TfL facing a bill of over £1 billion.

Mr Bolt said his findings would "narrow the range of uncertainty over what these contracts are worth", thereby helping Ernst & Young to find a buyer for the business.

Some would say that corporate welfare is the overriding issue here, but we couldn't possibly comment. ■

Parliamentary column

REPORT FROM SCOTLAND

The new Scottish Parliament session began in early September, with the First Minister Alex Salmond unveiling the legislative programme for the coming year.

The Scottish National Party has formed a minority administration, with some support from the two Green party MSPs. The proposals for new legislation are fairly cautious, as agreement will be needed from other parties to for anything to go forward.

Some announcements were welcomed, such as the proposal for new legislation on Rape and Sexual Offences, taking forward recommendations from the Scottish Law Commission, with the intent of tackling the very low conviction rates.

Over the summer, the new administration has sought to honour election promises and to reassure local communities of continuing service provision, reviewing hospital and school closures.

However, the Scottish budget for the forthcoming financial year cannot be fully considered until December 2007, when the Westminster government make the Comprehensive Spending Review announcement which includes the allocation for Scotland (delayed from summer 2006), so decisions on policy

priorities will not be clear until later in the year.

Following a vote in the Scottish Parliament in June, where a majority view was expressed against the replacement of the Trident nuclear weapons in Scotland, the government has convened a forum later in the autumn to discuss this further with campaigning groups and wider civic society.

On transport policy, there has been no significant change yet from the framework agreed under the previous government, to which RMT and the STUC had strong input.

New rail projects are continuing, with work starting on the Airdrie to Bathgate line, and on the Glasgow Airport link. The proposals for heavy rail link to Edinburgh airport will however be subject to further financial scrutiny, with costs are already predicted to be well over £600million, and may not go ahead.

Despite strong pre-election statements opposing the tendering process for the Hebrides and Western Isles ferry services (Cal Mac), the new SNP government have taken the view that there is no alternative but to continue with it.

The new Transport Minister Stewart Stevenson MSP has

made absolutely clear that the tendering process for the Hebrides and Western Isles ferries will be completed by October 1, arguing that this is the best option for the running of these lifeline services. RMT will continue to be putting the case for an exemption of such services, highlighting the cost of the process at over £17 million, public money that could have been far better spent elsewhere. An early meeting with the Minister is being sought by the transport affiliates to the STUC.

Another SNP pledge was the abolition of road tolls on the Forth and Tay Bridges, and consultation on that is now at the Transport committee stage.

In giving evidence, the STUC has raised concerns about the job losses amongst the toll booth staff, but also took the opportunity to argue for any new replacement crossing for the Forth to be multi-modal, encouraging further infrastructure commitment to public transport rather than promoting private car use.

Following on from the guilty verdict in the case against ICL Plastics and ICL Tech Limited, relating to the explosion in 2004 at Stockline plastics factory in Glasgow in which nine workers lost their lives and many were seriously injured,

Karen Gillon MSP has called for tighter legislation on corporate killing.

Her Member's Bill was supported by the STUC last session, and is likely to be resubmitted. Although Health and Safety legislation is primarily reserved to the Westminster government, there is a strong feeling that the new laws do not go far enough, and the trade union movement in Scotland, including RMT, is working with the Karen Gillon MSP to hold bosses and businesses accountable, using whatever powers exist under devolved government.

RMT is seeking to re-establish a Parliamentary Group at Holyrood to allow us to continue to work closely with MSPs, bringing policy concerns of RMT members into the wider political arena.

There are considerable changes in Holyrood, with nearly a third of the MSPs being elected for the first time, and many others not returned.

The union will be writing out to MSPs, and will also continue to work with the STUC in its discussions with the new Scottish government. ■

Ann Henderson

RMT Scottish

Parliamentary Officer



VICTORY AT METRONET

After taking effective strike action, RMT members at Metronet secured guarantees over jobs, conditions and pensions from the bankrupt company's administrator

PROTEST: Delivering the message to the Department of Transport





Over two thousand Tube maintenance staff walked off the job on Monday September 3 and, after marathon talks, went back to work with a full pension-scheme rescue in place and the threat of job losses lifted.

Outstanding issues remain to be resolved surrounding the train-fleet contract with Bombardier and further talks are to be held with Metronet and the administrator.

Three further days of strike action were suspended following detailed consultation with workplace union reps.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that Transport for London had done themselves no favours by insisting that nothing had changed as a result of the lengthy negotiations that went on through the night.

"It did not help either that we had to deal with crude attempts to victimise some of our members, despite the written undertaking not to do so.

"Our members delivered a rock-solid and 100 per cent effective strike in defence of their jobs and pensions, and the clear message is that any further attacks will be met with more of the same," Bob said.

METRONET – THE DEAD PARROT

TSSA and RMT announced that both unions would resist any attempt to transfer the contracts of failed PPP privateer Metronet to another private-sector bidder.

The unions renewed their call for the collapsed consortium's contracts to be taken back in-house after the PPP arbiter published a draft ruling that

taxpayers, through Transport for London, were liable for up to half of the £2 billion cost of Metronet's collapse.

The call also follows the decision by the Office of National Statistics to reclassify Metronet and Tubelines as public corporations, highlighting that the growing cost of the part-privatisation of the Tube is being borne by the public purse.

"Enough public money has already been wasted on the PPP fiasco, and our members and the travelling public deserve better than this," said TSSA general secretary Gerry Doherty.

"We remain committed to the contracts going back to TfL and we will oppose any potential transfer to the private sector of these contracts," he said.

Bob Crow said that any attempts to dress up the corpse of Metronet as if it has still got some life in it are pointless, and no-one will be fooled by any crude attempt to divert even more public money to lure potential private-sector bidders.

"Metronet is not resting, stunned or pining for the fjords, it is stone dead, and the only solution is to bring its maintenance contracts back into the public sector, where three-quarters of Londoners want them," Bob said.

Bob said that from the start that RMT members had not been prepared to pay for the collapse of Metronet with their jobs and pensions.

"What our members want is to be transferred to a public-sector organisation, and that is the only way in which their jobs and pensions can be protected,"

he said.

OLYMPICS 2012

Bob said that Tube workers are the people who get out there and keep the system running seven days a week, and it is they who would deliver the improvement the network must have if it is to be up to the standard required by the 2012 Olympics.

"The PPP stands in the way of those improvements, and the time has come to return the work to the public sector where it belongs.

"Maintenance on the national railways has improved massively since it was brought back in-house, and that is the only sensible solution for the Tube as well," Bob said. ■

EDM 2002

METRONET AND LONDON UNDERGROUND

That this House notes with concern the collapse of Metronet, which was responsible for two thirds of London Underground maintenance and renewals; further notes with concern that the collapse may leave a debt of billions of pounds which might have to be paid for by the tax and fare payer; further notes the success of Network Rail on the mainline railway of bringing maintenance back in-house which has resulted in reduced delays and greater control over costs; believes that bringing London Underground maintenance back in-house would result in a more economic and efficient Tube; and therefore welcomes the Mayor of London's indications that some of Metronet's contracts should be brought back in-house and urges the Government to support this position.

John McDonnell MP

LONDONERS WANT TUBE MAINTENANCE BACK IN-HOUSE

More than three-quarters of Londoners want future Tube maintenance to be carried out in-house by London Underground, a poll commissioned by the union.

The poll was released as striking Metronet workers and supporters lobbied the Department of Transport to call for an end to the disastrous privatisation and for the return of maintenance work in-house.

The ICM omnibus poll asked 1,028 Londoners who should carry out the future London Underground maintenance of track, signals, stations and trains.

76 per cent believed it should be carried out by London Underground, while just 13 per

cent believed it should be done by a private company, while six per cent said it didn't matter and six per cent said they did not know.

"This poll result shows that the vast majority of Londoners agree with the people who do the work that Tube maintenance belongs in-house," RMT general secretary Bob Crow said.

"The collapse of Metronet gives us the opportunity to bring the majority of infrastructure work back home into London Underground.

"This is what Tube workers and RMT want, it is what Londoners and their Mayor want, and it remains the only sensible solution," he said.

REVIVING ROLLING STOCK

RMT News looks
at how train
manufacturing
can be revived
in Britain



York works in its heyday

The railway workshop sector has seen thousands of job losses over the past few decades.

Under British Rail, in preparation for full-scale privatisation, plants were closed and jobs were decimated at sites including Shildon, Derby, Crewe, Horwich, York and Swindon.

Since privatisation the sector has, along with the rest of the industry, been fragmented and the 'feast and famine' nature of rolling stock orders has contributed to job losses and closures at various locations including Washwood Heath and Eastleigh.

The sole remaining train manufacturing plant is Bombardier's Litchurch Lane works at Derby.

The scale of the problem facing the railway workshops is illustrated by the fact that Hitachi is building the new 'bullet-train' Javelin stock for the CTRL Domestic Service routes at Kobe in Japan.

After a six week, 10,760 kilometre journey by sea, the first of the new units arrived in Southampton during August.

Clearly, it would have made much more sense in terms of carbon emissions and environmental protection for the units to be built in Britain and then transferred by rail to the south-east of England.

NEW STOCK

Two recent government announcements present a serious opportunity to regenerate the sector. Significantly, the government will be ordering the new stock and look likely to marginalise the rolling stock companies (ROSCOs). Relations between government and the ROSCOs have been poor since the DfT

referred the operation of the rolling stock market to the Office for Rail Regulation in 2006.

The July 2007 White Paper: Delivering a Sustainable Railway promises 1,300 new carriages to ease overcrowding. In addition, the DfT announced the shortlist for the Inter City Express Programme in August that will see the ordering of between 500 and 2,000 new vehicles to replace the current HST stock (See box for IEP timetable). The shortlisted bidders for the 30 year PPP contract are:

- Alstom-Barclays Rail Group
- Express Rail Alliance (Bombardier, Siemens, Angel Trains, Babcock & Brown)
- Hitachi Europe Ltd

RMT's position is clear; both the IEP trains and the new 1,300 carriages should be built and maintained in the UK.

It would be an outrage if RMT members in the high-skilled work-shop sector were to be the losers in a replacement programme that will benefit both the travelling public and even TOC shareholders.

RMT has met with the DfT and pressed the case for the new stock to be built in the UK and for the train specification to defend the operational role of the guard.

PLANNING

In the defence industry the MoD coordinates arms procurement needs with the capabilities of UK manufacturers so production cycles can be planned and the 'feast and famine' nature of orders that has blighted the railways can be avoided.

RMT believes that as a first step, similar arrangements should apply in relation to the manufacture of rolling stock.

An Early Day Motion to that effect will be tabled by the RMT Parliamentary Group when Parliament returns in October.

EU MISRULE

The fragmented, privatised nature of the train manufacturing sector is not the only obstacle to regenerating the railway workshops.

EU procurement rules do not allow the British government to simply award contracts to UK based manufacturers. These rules have often been ignored by the French and German governments who routinely award contracts to their own domestic producers, Alstom in France and Siemens in Germany.

Due to the strength of these two EU states, Brussels does very little about this routine disregard for rules that are imposed harshly on other member states.

However, the neo-liberal EU agenda, with its emphasis on ever increasing competition, is making it more difficult to sustain the French and German position. RMT believes that the EU rules are an obstacle to the regeneration of the rolling stock

sector in this country and has called for them to be scrapped.

WHAT YOU DON'T OWN, YOU CAN'T CONTROL

The problems facing the railway workshop are further compounded by the fact that even where multi-national rolling stock manufacturers have plants in the UK, and are awarded contracts, there is no guarantee that new trains will actually be built in Britain.

The experience at Washwood Heath is a case in point. Alstom, were awarded the contract for the new carriages on the Jubilee Line. Instead of building them in Birmingham, the firm chose to do the work in their plants in Spain. Alstom's decision was central to the closure of Washwood Heath in 2005.

Clearly, then what is required is a publicly owned, democratically accountable railway network which re-unites all of the old sections of BR – not just track and train but also the railway workshops.

Not to bring train manufacturing into public ownership would leave RMT members in the sector open to the vagaries of the market and the undemocratic rules and directives imposed by the European Union. ■

Inter City Express Programme tendering timetable

Deadline for Expressions of Interest	18 June 2007
Selection of qualified candidates	16 August 2007
Issuing of Invitations to Tender	Autumn 2007
Receipt of Proposals	Spring 2008
Best and Final Offers	Summer 2008
Award of contract	Winter 2008/09
Start of pre-series train running	2012 (on ECML)
Start of fleet introduction	2014/15

ONE-PORT SECTOR WORK PERMITS

The government plans to implement a work permit regime for the one-port sector of the UK shipping industry which services the offshore industry.

This follows numerous representations from RMT regarding the need to restrict the number of low-paid foreign national seafarers being engaged to work on ships trading from UK ports.

The scheme originally applied to domestic passenger services and in 2000 the Government extended this to domestic freight voyages. It only applies to vessels trading between two UK ports.

The work permit regime requires that shipping companies who run services trading between two UK ports must engage seafarers from the European Union or EEA.

If they wish to employ seafarers from outside these areas they must apply for work permits which will only be issued by the Home Office if it can be demonstrated that EU

seafarers are not available to undertake this work.

The implementation of this measure will affect vessels engaged in operations in the offshore sector which use a UK port as a basis for their operations.

The proposals are being introduced in accordance with the new tier two of the revised points based system of the Home Office and are to be introduced as from April 2009.

RMT has made representations to the new Shipping Minister for an earlier implementation date, and DoT officials have been asked to follow this up through contact with Home Office representatives.

This measure is, of course, limited in so far as Eastern European nationals can still be employed on exploitative rates of pay and it only applies to UK services. However, it is still welcome given that shipowners have made representations against the extension of the scheme. ■



MN RATING?

go full ahead
for career
development

Slater Fund can provide up to £10,000 to help you on the way

The J.W. Slater Fund, administered by Nautilus UK, offers awards of up to £10,000 to help ratings study for a first certificate of competency.

Over the past decade alone, Slater Fund awards have been given to nearly 500 individuals and the value of support available has quadrupled over the past 10 years.

Named in honour of former AMIAQA general secretary John Slater, the awards are made to

selected UK-resident ratings aged 20 or over.

The money can be used towards the costs of any necessary full- or part-time education, and to provide some financial support during college phases for those off pay.

Nautilus UK is now inviting applications for the 2008 awards.

If you want to make the next move, don't leave things to chance — fill in the form on the right...

**COMPLETE THIS
FORM AND SEND
IT TO:**

The Marine Society
& Sea Cadets
202 Lambeth Road
London SE1 7JW

To arrive no later than
31 December 2007

I am over 20 years of
age and a rating
normally resident in
the United Kingdom

Please send me
details of the
John Slater Award

Email to
Captain Ian Smith at:
ismith@ms-sc.org

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

321

SEAFARERS WORKING WHILST ON LEAVE

RMT is calling on shipping members to provide any information possible to support any RMT representations to industry or government on problems related to seafarers working whilst on leave.

Problems related to seafarers working whilst on leave on a temporary basis whilst on rest periods or annual leave from their primary employer have been discussed many times at the RMT Annual General Meeting.

It is an issue RMT wish to tackle as this problem could be far more prevalent than previously imagined.

It is self-evident that this is not good for the individual concerned, but also it could endanger the safety of vessels, crew and passengers.

The union has discussed the problems involved with Nautilus UK, TGWU and the Chamber of Shipping.

For example, in one company in Scotland an officer normally employed in the offshore sector was discovered working as a rating on a passenger ferry to gain

additional income. There are concerns that this practice is becoming more widespread due to the shortage of skilled and qualified seafarers.

FATIGUE

RMT is opposed to such 'moonlighting' on both moral and safety grounds. The seafarer should have the necessary rest and by working during their leave they place themselves and their colleagues in potential jeopardy.

Fatigue will be the inevitable result and we know from maritime statistics that approximately one in three accidents around the UK Coastline have fatigue as a contributing factor.

The 'moonlighting' seafarer also denies another seafarer a job, and allows shipowners to defer training additional staff to meet the demand that exists in some sectors.

There is also a responsibility on companies to discharge their obligations fully. This can be done by reminding seafarers of their responsibilities to ensure they are properly rested but also

with appropriate health and safety guidance.

In response to RMT's previous representations in 2006, the Department of Transport declared that it was hopeful that existing international crewing guidelines might be revised to reduce the stress of long working hours and fatigue.

However, the pace of international action through the IMO is very slow and this problem still needs to be addressed.

DISCHARGE BOOKS

Another avenue for dealing with the problem is the issue of discharge books and whether or not 'moonlighting' could be tackled with the assistance of the Maritime and Coastguard agency, who issue the books.

Unfortunately, the Department for Transport advised us that the MCA did not consider that this would be effective as secondary work may be ashore where no discharge book was issued and, where it was at sea, work could be on local passenger ferries that

operate in harbour areas or inland waterways for which a discharge book was not required.

EVIDENCE

The Chamber of Shipping also advised the maritime trade unions that whilst they were supportive of efforts to tackle this problem, evidence would first of all need to be provided that indicated 'moonlighting' was causing a problem.

RMT needs to build a strong case, alongside other maritime unions, if it is to influence government officials and the rest of the industry to work on this issue.

Your evidence can then be used to support efforts to tackle this problem. Confidentiality is guaranteed and the information provided might enable RMT to identify particular problem companies. ■

Please send in any information to Steve Yandell 020 759 8819 or e-mail s.yandell@rmt.org.uk or Unity House 39 Chalton Street London NW1 1JD

RECOGNITION BATTLE AT SPEEDFERRIES

RMT is taking legal advice after the Dover-based ferry company SpeedFerries withheld post to its 60 staff from the union.

The firm, which operates ferries to Boulogne in France, claims that it is within its rights to withhold post, which outlined the benefits of RMT membership, and claims that "it controls its own mail".

However, the union has pointed out that SpeedFerries clearly do not own the mail as it is addressed to individuals and is deemed their property from the point of source.

In a letter to the company, RMT general secretary Bob Crow pointed out that it had breached section 84 of the

Postal Services Act 2000, which makes it illegal to "intentionally delay or open a letter or package during the course of its transmission".

SpeedFerries entered into a single union agreement with the officers union Nautilus without the knowledge of ratings on board.

Following a local recruitment campaign by RMT shipping rep Malcolm Dunning and activists like Mike Sargent, a third of the ratings on board have already joined RMT.

RMT has received messages of support from the French shipping unions and a meeting is planned with them in the near future. ■



RFA SPONSORED RESERVISTS

RMT national secretary Steve Todd outlines the status of Sponsored Reservists in the Royal Fleet Auxiliary and what it means for members

Issues surrounding the status of Sponsored Reservists affect all seafarers employed by the Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) irrespective of rank.

Throughout the process of developing an RFA Sponsored Reservists Agreement, discussions and consultation on the document have taken place with both maritime trade unions.

A list of frequently asked questions was sent to all RFA personnel in December last year. It outlined all the reasons why RFA was adopting Sponsored Reservist (SR) status.

"The adoption of SR status is to provide a higher level of legal protection for RFA personnel when carrying out specific operational tasking in support of the royal Navy. It is not the intention to use any RFA SR on any non-related RFA tasks," it said.

In other words, you will not be asked to serve on Royal Navy ships.

LEGAL STATUS

Throughout the process of discussion and consultation, many members have asked many questions. Perhaps the most difficult to one to answer has been that of your legal

status when in support of military operations, or more to the point what does taking a "direct part in hostilities" mean.

As RFA units are increasingly undertaking more direct roles in support of military operations, the legal status of its civilian personnel during armed conflict needs to be extremely clear. Legally RFA members, like any other individual, military or civilian, are entitled to use force to defend themselves. However, international law on armed conflicts states that only members of the armed forces are provided protection under international law and thus take part in hostilities.

Current RFA legal opinion is that during armed conflict, the status of the RFA remains that of civilian. As such, they could be regarded as unlawful combatants.

This may leave the UK government open to be challenged and deemed to be in breach of international law on Armed Conflict (The Rome Statute). More importantly, it leaves the legal status of members, at best, unclear.

RFA ships are increasingly undertaking more direct roles in military operations. For example, RFA vessels can



operate as command platforms for mine clearance and for assault landings. As a result the ambiguity over the status of RFA personnel grows.

The union would be failing in its responsibility to members if it did not seek to ensure you have the fullest legal protection in such circumstances.

The difficulty is that we will not know whether members have deemed to have taken a "direct part in hostilities" and adjudged to be illegal combatants by the international law community until the UK government has been brought before the International Criminal Court.

The problem is that to designate you as members of the armed forces would, in effect, be 'conscription'. Clearly this is not acceptable.

The alternative is for the RFA to ask you to volunteer to become a Sponsored Reservist. SR status is not an increase in militarisation and requires no additional requirement from that expected from RFA personnel today.

As your representatives, the union's role has been to ensure that you main employment terms in BR875 are maintained

and any changes brought about by the Sponsored Reserve Agreement are statutorily necessary for those who sign up.

YOUR SAFETY

RMT campaigns and lobbies at national and international level to improve your safety at work. It engages in discussion with the IMO, ILO and MCA and many other industry-related bodies to ensure your safety and that of the ship.

The union's role in the Sponsored Reservists issue is no different. It is an extension of our commitment to your safety.

The uncertain challenges you face in a constantly changing world and the ambiguity of your status in certain situations could leave you exposed. The decision to volunteer for SR status removes this ambiguity. There is not doubt that as an activated Sponsored Reservist you are a voluntary member of the armed forces and as such your legal status is not in doubt.

YOUR DECISION

The decision to become a Sponsored Reservist is yours alone and some individuals will never volunteer. However, following legal advice, we cannot see any reason not to volunteer.

I know members are worried if they do not sign up their promotion prospects may be affected.

However, RMT has made quite clear that any individual who finds themselves disadvantaged in any way by signing or not signing up to SR status will receive one hundred per cent support from the union.



SUCCESS IN INVERNESS

Jim Philps reports on the annual RMT branch secretaries conference, this year in Inverness

Once again another successful conference, The Branch and Regional Secretaries Conference was held in The Beaufort Hotel in Inverness.

General secretary Bob Crow was in attendance with some 30 delegates from all over the country.

On Saturday night a civic reception was held in the Town House Inverness with civic dignitaries in attendance, we were welcomed to the City of Inverness by Cllr Jim Gray the leader of the Labour Group of the Highland Council.

The general secretary thanked Cllr Gray for the reception given to conference delegates in such elegant surroundings.

He also remarked that the Council Chambers of Inverness are one of a few places the British Cabinet have met outside



of Westminster.

Bob gave out 10 year badges to Inverness branch secretary Bob Bowie and branch chair George McIvor Chair and thanked both members for the excellent work they do in their area.

Conference proceeded with president Peter Daniels welcoming all to Inverness and the Civic authorities for the reception in the Town House.

Guest speakers included Alan Pottage of the Organising Unit, Nicky Hoarau of the RMT Credit Union, Ian McIntyre, Scottish Regional Organiser and, of course, our lawyers, Angus McPherson of Drummond Miller and Malcolm Cherry of Edwards Duthie.

Next year's conference will be in Chester – Look forward to seeing you there. ■

TUC DISABILITY CONFERENCE PROTESTS AGAINST REMPLOY CUTS

Paul Southwood reports from the TUC disability conference which condemned plans to shut 43 Remploidy factories

Nearly two hundred delegates representing over 30 unions gathered at Congress House for the annual TUC disability conference recently.

Delegates held a protest outside conference to protest against government plans to shut 43 Remploidy factories providing skilled work for over 2,300 disabled workers.

The TUC congress in Brighton also supported the campaign and called on the government to place a moratorium on the closures.

Remploidy was set up in 1946 to provide work for disabled ex-servicemen. Today, it receives an annual grant from the government to fund training, development and the finding of employment for disabled



people.

However, Remploidy shop stewards were called to a meeting on May 22 to be told that the factories would be closed. At the same time the workers were shown a video telling them that they would be sacked, sparking protests from the GMB union which represents them.

GMB representative Les Woodward told the disability conference that directors which had been appointed by the government had over 200 company cars and better pension schemes than employees.

He compared the dispute to the great miner's strike of 1984.

"They come for the big ones first and, if that goes, all the others go the same way," he said.

TUC deputy general secretary Francis O'Grady told the disability conference that the TUC gave full support to the campaign.

She said that some thought that unions were not interested in the disabled but this was not true. ■

REVERSE THE 'CONTRACT CULTURE' IN THE RAIL INDUSTRY

RMT condemns 'shabby' attempt to divert attention from management failings in the report into the Grayrigg rail crash

The industry report into the Grayrigg crash highlights the need to tackle systematic management failings, eradicate the 'contract culture' still prevalent in Network Rail and to reverse spending cuts.

RMT also condemned the "shabby" attempt by Network rail to divert attention to systematic failings by pointing the finger of blame at one of its own supervisors.

Renewing its call for renewals work to follow the bulk of maintenance back in-house, RMT also called for the re-creation of a single command structure and to end the fragmentation that has blighted the industry since privatisation.

The union also demanded a joint public inquiry into both Grayrigg and the 2002 Potter's Bar derailment – whose causes were still unknown – with a remit that would include the structure and continued fragmentation of the industry.

WHY?

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that the report revealed how the Grayrigg accident may have happened, but revealed little about why it happened.

He said that it did not explain how a set of points in place for 20 years could deteriorate to such a disastrous condition in less than a fortnight.

"Network Rail's report points to systematic failings, but it also points to a lack of resources, and we know that NR has faced a 30 per cent cut in its spending targets over the last five years.

"On the ground that has led to serious concerns about the

workload placed on individuals, which we have raised with the company on a number of occasions.

"Network Rail is well aware that maintenance patrolling was truncated into a restricted Sunday morning timescale, as routine inspection and maintenance functions become secondary to extended timetables and faster line speeds.

"It is therefore very shabby indeed for Network rail to attempt to divert attention from its systematic failings by using the media to scapegoat one of its own supervisors," he said.

SAFETY CULTURE

Bob said that the ethos should be about getting things done properly and safely, but there was still too much emphasis on getting things done quickly and cheaply, and the challenge facing now Network rail is to change that culture.

"Many of the working arrangements still in place on Britain's railways were introduced by the private sector contractors, and the use of points maintenance teams was introduced by Carillion, despite RMT opposition, and system was in place on the WCML at Lambrigg.

"Some private operators have suggested that they should be given responsibility for maintaining infrastructure, but that would be recipe for more of the disastrous fragmentation that the industry should be leaving firmly behind," Bob Crow said. ■



NETWORK RAIL BREACHES DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY



Network Rail was in breach of its own policy when it sent an RMT member for a urine test for blood alcohol levels, even though he had already passed a breathalyser test.

Keith Nichols was sacked when the urine test indicated that he had above permissible levels of alcohol in his blood. A colleague had told management that he thought he could smell alcohol on Mr Nichols's breath.

Mr Nichols was first sent for a breathalyser test, which he passed, and then for a urine test, which he failed. He appealed against his dismissal, but this was rejected.

But an Employment Tribunal found that Mr Nichols, who was employed by Network Rail for over 30 years, had been unfairly dismissed.

It said Network Rail had breached its own rules by requiring him to undergo a urine test after he had passed the breathalyser, and had relied upon the urine test results despite the disparity between the figures.

The tribunal found that Network Rail had not carried out a reasonable investigation and that, given Mr Nichols' long service history and clean disciplinary record, it was unreasonable of the employer not to consider a lesser sanction.

Mr Nichols had been transferred from Jarvis to Network Rail by way of TUPE transfer a few years before the incident. Therefore his employment was still governed by the Jarvis terms and conditions of employment.

In accordance with the Jarvis Drugs and Alcohol Policy, once an employee suspected of being under the influence of alcohol passes a breathalyser test then no further action will be taken.

Emily Greenshields of Thompsons Solicitors, who was instructed by the union to represent Mr Nichols, said that the case should send a clear message to employers in the rail industry and elsewhere of the importance of adhering to drugs and alcohol policies.

"Such policies are designed to protect the public but also employees by clearly setting down the rules and procedures around drugs and alcohol in the workplace.

"It is unacceptable to breach a policy in order to get a

'different result' and to sack a worker on the basis of that result," Emily says.

The case is listed for a hearing in November which will decide whether Mr Nichols is awarded compensation or is re-instated in his job. ■

Legal update

Summary of fatal and non-fatal accidents and assaults to members for the period April 1 to June 30 2007

	Fatal Accidents	Non-Fatal Accidents	Assaults
Rail Operating Grades	0 [0]	87 [93]	7 [6]
Rail Engineering Grades	2 [0]	31 [23]	0 [2]
Workshops	0 [0]	1 [1]	0 [0]
Road Transport	0 [0]	0 [7]	0 [0]
Buses	0 [0]	9 [17]	0 [0]
LUL and Metros	0 [0]	15 [14]	3 [5]
Shipping	1 [0]	11 [5]	0 [0]
RMT Head Office Staff	0 [0]	0 [0]	0 [1]
Taxi Driver	0 [0]	1 [0]	0 [0]

Claims for damages at common law for the period April 1 to June 30 2007

Number of claims settled	100
Total amount recovered	£647,001.28p including CICA Claims

Legal assistance granted in respect of charges brought by the police for the period April 1 to June 30 2007

Road Traffic Act	2
Other police charges	7

CARING FROM PHUKET TO BRIGHTON

RMT's London Widows and Orphans Fund is raising funds to help orphans here and in Thailand

This summer bungalow number one, bearing the RMT logo, was opened in the Sunshine Orphan Village in Phuket, Thailand which will care for eight children and a 'mother' to care for them.

RMT's London Widows and Orphans Fund fund secretary Jim Stevenson said that the idea to open such a shelter for these vulnerable children came after the devastating Tsunami that hit the region on Boxing Day 2004.

Today Jim, who is also an RMT regional organiser, and the fund committee are looking for members to sponsor the children so they can grow and develop in a safe environment.

"Following investigations we found out that the cost of housing, schooling and food is about £400 per child per year or £3,200 for all the children in the RMT-sponsored bungalow," said Jim.

The fund committee is asking individuals to donate £10 or more on an annual basis to

sponsor the children.

"We are also inviting people to act as pen pal 'mums and dads' to the eight children to maintain contact with the children and keep each other informed of events," he said.

For more information on the project visit www.phuketsunshinevillage.org and for a standing order

mandate to sponsor an orphan contact Jim Stevenson in the RMT South East region office at Unity House in London.

LONDON OUTING

The London Widows and Orphans Fund recently took over a hundred orphans and widows of members on a day-out to Brighton recently.

The fund committee negotiated for Southern trains to donate the tickets to and from Brighton and Gatwick Express provided picnics for the orphans.

After a full day out, including a visit to the Brighton marina, the day trippers enjoyed an evening event at the Brighton railway club jointly organised with the Brighton Widows and Orphans Fund (below).

The committee raises most of its funds from selling diaries and calendars advertised below and through donations.

Anyone wishing to join the committee should contact Jim Stevenson in the RMT South East region office at Unity House in London. ■



2008 London orphan fund calendars!

Calendars featuring either steam trains, modern trains or vintage buses are available for £5 each. 2008 London orphan fund diaries also available for £2.

Please send your order to:

Mark Harding
Unity House
39 Chalton Street
London NW1 1JD



REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS

Set out below is the report of the independent auditors to the members as contained in the accounts of the Union for the year ended 31 December 2006:

We have audited the accounts of the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers for the year ended 31 December 2006.

This report is made solely to the Union's members, as a body. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Union's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Union and the Union's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVES AND AUDITORS

As described on page 13, the Union's Council of Executives is responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). Our responsibility is to audit the accounts in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

We report to you our opinion as to whether the accounts give a true and fair view. We also report to you if, in our opinion, the Union has not kept proper accounting records, or if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

We read other information contained in the Annual Report and consider whether it is consistent with the audited accounts. This other information comprises only the Report of the General Secretary. We consider the implications for our

report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the accounts. Our responsibilities do not extend to any other information.

BASIS OF AUDIT OPINION

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the accounts. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made in the preparation of the accounts, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Union's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the accounts are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion, we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of the information in the accounts.

OPINION

In our opinion the accounts give a true and fair view, in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, of the state of the Union as at 31 December 2006 and of its transactions for the year then ended. ■

H W FISHER & COMPANY
Chartered Accountants, Registered Auditor
Acre House, 11 – 15 William Road,
London NW1 3ER, United Kingdom
Dated: 24 May 2007

SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION EXTRACTED FROM THE FULL ACCOUNTS

Summary income and expenditure accounts for the year ended 31 December 2006:

General Fund and Orphan Fund

	2006 £'000	2005 £'000
Subscription income	9,724	8,755
Operating expenditure	(10,659)	(9,279)
Operating deficit before investment operations	(935)	(524)
Income from investment operations and donations	1,864	2,019
Operating surplus after investment operations	929	1,495
Other non-operating income/(expenditure)	364	334
Surplus for the year	1,293	1,829

Political Fund

	2006 £'000	2005 £'000
Subscription income	204	196
Investment income	20	-
Other income	-	-
Total income	224	196
Total expenditure	(237)	(375)
(Deficit) for the year	(13)	(179)

SUMMARY OF SALARIES AND BENEFITS PROVIDED

Name	Position	Details	Amount
R Crow	General Secretary	Salary and expenses	£87,288
		Pension Contribution	£23,950

The members of the Council of Executives do not receive any benefits but do receive attendance and lodging allowances which are set out below. The General Secretary, the President and the members of the Council of Executives are reimbursed for any expenditure incurred by them in the performance of their duties on behalf of the Union.

Summary of Attendance and Lodging Allowances paid to the Council of Executives

General Grades

Name	Amount	Name	Amount
D Collinson*	£ 40,603	J Jones*	£ 39,579
P Burton	£ 34,109	J Leach (President Elect)	£ 33,199
M Facey*	£ 40,838	A Lister	£ 41,404
F Cochrane (deceased)	£ 13,592	P Pinkney*	£ 42,758
P Rowland*	£ 37,286	P Trend*	£ 38,782
D Marr	£ 34,036	D Shannon*	£ 19,159
T Donaghey (President)	£ 34,053		

Shipping Grades

Name	Amount	Name	Amount
M Carden*	£ 9,530	A Gordon*	£ 12,265
M Dunning	£ 11,968	D Nelson*	£ 7,359

* In addition, the Union provides accommodation while on Union business

We are required by the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (amended) to include the following declaration in this statement to all members. The wording is as prescribed by the Act.

"A member who is concerned that some irregularity may be occurring, or have occurred, in the conduct of the financial affairs of the union may take steps with a view to investigating further, obtaining clarification and, if necessary, securing regularisation of that conduct.

The member may raise any such concerns with such one or more of the following as it seems appropriate to raise it with: the officials of the union, the trustees of the property of the union, the auditor or auditors of the union, the Certification Officer (who is an independent officer appointed by the Secretary of State) and the police.

Where a member believes that the financial affairs of the union have been or are being conducted in breach of the law or in breach of rules of the union and contemplates bringing civil proceedings against the union or responsible officials or trustees, he should consider obtaining independent legal advice."

NO TO ROAD TRAINS

RMT is calling on members to write to their MPs to urge them to oppose trials of 84 tonne road-train lorries

The Department for Transport is continuing to evaluate longer heavier lorries (LHVs), ranging from 25.5 metres to 30 metres in length, 60 to 84 tonnes weight.

Final reports to ministers are expected shortly so the campaign group Freight on Rail and RMT are asking you to write to the

Secretary of State for Transport, the Rt. Hon Ruth Kelly [], ideally copied to your local MP, to urge her not to allow trials of longer heavier lorries. You may also like to sign the Number 10 online petition started by a Freightliner employee *Alan Edwards* on <http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/Ban60tonlorries/>

GROWING OPPOSITION

Thanks to your previous support over one hundred MPs have signed Early Day Motion 730 opposing LHVs. Since the article in RMT News February 2007, the rail freight industry has carried out further detailed analysis of the implications of longer and heavier lorries with findings which strengthen our case.

LHVs will mean more lorry-miles not fewer because demand will be stimulated if transport becomes cheaper at point of use as modal choice is dominated by price.

Trainloads of freight will be forced back onto the congested road network and rail freight

will be severely undermined. The latest Freightliner analysis shows that up to 66 per cent of the deep-sea container rail market could be lost to road with the introduction of the 25.5 metre lorries, which, as the favoured size and model, would be fifty per cent longer and over a third heavier than existing 44 tonne lorries.

ENVIRONMENTAL COST

Analysis by Oxera for EWS in May found that 40 per cent of rail aggregates flows and 20 per cent of metals flows could be transferred to road if LHVs were permitted.

At a time when the



"B-double" - articulated vehicle towing a semi-trailer with the second semi trailer resting on the first - Up to 25.5 metres long and 60 tonnes

government is committed to reducing carbon emissions, it seems perverse to allow trials of vehicles which will decimate rail freight when rail freight has a much better environmental record than road haulage.

The claimed environmental benefits rely on very high levels of load utilisation – in excess of that routinely achieved within the haulage sector. At lower levels of utilisation the environmental performance is worse because of the dead weight of the additional trailer.

These vehicles will have minimal impact on road congestion whereas an average freight train which is designed for heavy and bulky cargoes, can remove 50 HGVs from our roads.

SPEED KILLS

The question must be asked why is the government considering trails of longer and heavier lorries when there is poor compliance with existing road regulations on speed limits, drivers hours and weight, all of which put the public at extra risk?

The latest DfT research shows that HGVs do not follow existing speed restrictions. In 2005, for example, on major single carriage roads a staggering 76 per cent of articulated HGVs exceeded their 40 mph limit by 6mph on average, with 28 per cent exceeding the limit by more than 10 mph in 2005.

Rates of speeding increase with vehicle size with vehicles of five or more axles 33 tonnes and over the worst offenders 29 per cent of 5 axles HGVs exceeded the limit by more than 10mph.

Speed cameras are calibrated to enforce the speed-limit that applies to cars, not lorries. This allows lorries to exceed their own speed-limits with impunity when these are lower than those for cars. This is indicative of the general behaviour of HGVs and of the difficulty in enforcement.

LHVs also have safety dangers due to their size and lack of manoeuvrability.

DfT research found that HGVs were twice as likely to be involved in fatal accidents as cars. Bendy buses, which are 18 metres long, also cause more than twice as many injuries as any other bus, according to official figures.

Other questions remain concerning LHVs braking distance, ability to overtake, drivers' blind spots, jack knifing, and ability to reverse the LHV with its trailer. In emergency situations when reversal may be absolutely essential, such as when vehicles are on fire, and or in a tunnel, on a bridge or in a motorway underpass, it is unclear that LHVs can perform this manoeuvre. There is a particular danger in road tunnels such as those at river crossings where an accident can result in a serious and lethal fire.

Opinion polls have consistency shown that the public is opposed to larger lorries, find existing HGVs intimidating and would prefer to see freight shifted to the railways by bringing in longer and heavier trains.

The cost to communities including difficulty in crossing roads, visual intrusion, damage to buildings, noise and vibration are not being properly assessed. The location of some lorry depots takes heavy vehicles through communities as well as the problem of lorries using unsuitable roads as shortcuts/rat runs.

Restricting LHVs to dual-carriageways and motorways simply will not work as there is no mechanism to keep them to this.

The reality is that these vehicles will need local access to distribution hubs which are usually off the motorway network.

Unlike other European countries, the UK allows all vehicles to operate on any road and at any time unless specifically prohibited from doing so and even then it normally allows access.

As a result, we will get these very large vehicles travelling

SAY NO: Freight on Rail lobbied Labour Party Conference against larger and heavier vehicles.

Freight on Rail produced a joint leaflet arguing that there is no need for 'roadtrains' and pointing to a recent national opinion poll which revealed that

75% of the public supports a ban on these monster trucks. Transport minister Ruth Kelly later told Conference delegates that she would need a "heck of a lot of persuasion" to agree to allowing longer and heavier lorries on to UK roads.



Left to right -James Croy (Political Officer RMT) Keith Norman (General Secretary ASLEF), Lord Berkeley (Rail Freight Group Chairman), Gerry Doherty (General Secretary TSSA) and Frank Ward (TSSA)

down local roads that are wholly unsuitable for the purpose, with consequent intrusion, noise and road damage and safety implications when rail provides a low carbon alternative at a time when there is uncertainty about energy sources and road reliability is worsening.

UK rail freight is thriving and rail's market share has increased by 68 per cent in the past 12 years with forecasted tonne kilometres growth of 50 per cent over the next ten years if LHVs are not introduced.

Freight on Rail promotes the economic, environmental and social benefits of rail freight. In particular it works with central, regional and local government to set the framework for rail freight. ■

Contact Philippa Edmunds – Freight on Rail campaigner if you want more details: 020 8241 9982: Philippa@freightonrail.org.uk: www.freightonrail.org.uk

Secretary of State for Transport
Rt. Hon Ruth Kelly
Great Minister House
76 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DR

75 PER CENT OPPOSED TO INTRODUCTION OF 'ROAD TRAINS'

A National Opinion Poll (NOP) survey shows that 75 per cent of the general public is opposed to the introduction of 'road trains' – known as LHVs – onto UK roads.

The survey further revealed that 80 per cent of the general public favoured the government encouraging more freight to go by rail instead of by road.

Freight on Rail campaigner Philippa Edmunds argues that more rail freight is much more positive than 'road trains' as it reduces carbon emissions and alleviates road congestion.

However, she warns "rail freight could be halved over the next few years if the government allows these monstrosities onto our roads.

"If the government is genuinely committed to the environment and travel safety it will reject these trials," she says.

Tony Berkeley, Chairman of the Rail Freight Group, said it is no surprise that 75 per cent of the public are opposed to longer and heavier lorries.

"In part this is because the public doesn't believe the government is serious about enforcing standards on UK roads, whilst at the same time it puts strong regulatory and safety rules on rail, where the safety record is already immeasurably better".

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF SAFE, LEGAL ABORTION IN BRITAIN

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the 1967 Abortion Act – a piece of legislation which has saved the lives and health of hundreds of thousands of women and to this day remains fundamental to women's autonomy, equality and freedom.

However, as we celebrate 40 years of safe, legal abortion in Britain the issue continues to be surrounded by a veil of secrecy and misinformation and myths on abortion abound.

Abortion, we are told, is available on request. This is not so – women need the agreement of two doctors before they can access the procedure and many face delays of up to six weeks.

But it is the 24-week time limit that continues to dominate the debate on abortion. The publication three years ago of 4 D-scan pictures of fetuses in the womb sparked off a heated media debate about the later abortion driven by the anti-choice lobby in the hope of gaining support for a reduction of the time limit.

In reality, almost 90 per cent of abortions are carried out at under-13 weeks gestation whilst only a tiny proportion – less than one per cent – take place after 22 weeks. The women who need to access later abortion do so for compelling, exceptional and complex reasons.

Gradually media misinformation and hysteria has found its way to Westminster. Over the last few months we have witnessed several attempts by anti-choice MPs to raise to profile of the issue in parliament.

October 2006 saw the defeat (187 – 108 votes) of 'Abortion time limit and delay' Bill, which aimed to reduce the abortion time limit from 24 to 21 weeks and introduce a 10-day 'cooling off period'.

The 'Parental notification' Bill introduced in March 2007 which sought to end confidentiality for young women seeking abortion and other sexual health care was also sunk (159 – 87 votes), as was the 'Compulsory

counselling and delay' Bill (182 – 107 votes).

But the assault goes on. In May, the anti-choice lobby signalled its plans to launch the strongest attack on women's legal rights since 1990 by proposing amendments to the government's Human Tissue and Embryos (HTE) Bill. These must face strong opposition.

CAMPAIGN

Abortion Rights has launched its 'pro-choice majority' campaign calling for:

- Women, not doctors, to make the abortion decision
- An end to waiting times of longer than three weeks
- An end to attacks on current rights, including the upper time limit

40 years since abortion was legalised, it is time for a law that trusts women to make their own decision about whether or not to continue a pregnancy.

Or in the words of Lord David Steel, architect of the 1967 Act: "With the expectation

that legislation on abortion will again be raised in the next session of parliament, it is essential that we use the opportunity not only to resist regressive amendments but to make it easier for women who need to obtain terminations to do so as early as possible in their pregnancies'.

The time has come to move forward on women's rights – not back.

Take action to protect women's crucial abortion rights!

- Affiliate your branch or region to Abortion Rights – together we are stronger!
- Join as an individual member
- Sign up to Abortion Rights' Action Alerts:
www.abortionrights.org.uk
- Add your voice to the pro-choice majority:
www.prochoicemajority.org.uk
- Get involved in the Pro-Choice Week of Action 20 – 27 October ■



ELECTION ADS

Plymouth No1 branch

supports

NICK QUIRK

for Council of Executives,
south west region

Bristol Rail branch

is proud to nominate

BRENDAN KELLY

For Regional Organiser South
Wales & West Region

*A winning combination of experience
and commitment to members*

Wimbledon branch

nominates

PETE GALE

For regional organiser

A proven candidate

Cinque Ports Branch

Nominates

PAUL COX

For Regional Organiser South
East Region

For a member-led agenda.

Penzance No 1 Branch

nominates

NICK QUIRK

for C of E seat for ,
South West Region

Dorset Rail branch

Nominates

MICK TOSH

For Regional Organiser,
Wessex Region

And seeks supports

The East Kent Branch

Nominates Branch Secretary

KEN SLADE

For South East Regional
Organiser

"An honourable candidate"

Three Bridges Branch

Nominates

PAUL COX

For Regional Organiser South
East

For a member-led agenda

Exeter Rail Branch

Supports

NICK QUIRK

For The Council of
Executives.
South West Region

Portsmouth Branch

Nominates and Supports

MICK TOSH

For Regional Organiser,
Wessex Region

*Proven track record, 25 years
representing members*

Orpington Branch

Nominates

KEN SLADE

For South East Regional
Organiser.

"the membership's choice"

Chiltern Line Branch

Nominates

PAUL COX

For Regional Organiser South
East And Asks

*Members to Vote for The Experienced
Candidate.*

Birmingham Engineering branch Region 6

nominates

PAT COLLINS

for Council of Executives
Region 6

Lymington No1

Nominates

MICK TOSH

For Regional Organiser,
Wessex Region

*The candidate with genuine experience
and integrity*

Gillingham Strood Branch

Nominates

PAUL COX

For Regional Organiser S. East

*And asks members to support this
experienced candidate*

Ramsgate Workshops Branch

Nominates

PAUL COX

For Regional Organiser S. East

Always Putting Members First

Wolverhampton Branch

nominates

PAT COLLINS

for Council of Executives
Region 6

Waterloo branch

Nominates

MICK TOSH

For regional organizer,
Wessex region

Able candidate for a multi-grade region

East Sussex Coastway branch

Nominates

PAUL COX

For Regional Organiser,
South East

Always putting members first

Deptford Branch

Nominates

PAUL COX

For South East
RegionalOrganiser

And Asks Members to Support Him

South West Midland branch

supports

PAT COLLINS

Council of Executive Election
Region 6

Surrey and Hants branch

Nominates

MICK TOSH

For regional organiser
Wessex region

*Support for this able and experienced
candidate*

South London Rail Branch

Nominates our secretary

PAUL COX

For Regional Organiser
South East Region

A Strong Voice For Members

Poole and district branch

Says vote

PETE GALE

For regional organiser,
Wessex region.

Support this able and worthy candidate

MEMORIES OF

Life-long socialist and trade Union activist Jock Nicolson died recently at the age of 87.

Jock was born in Hamilton, Lanarkshire in 1921 into a poor family of five siblings. The only holiday Jock remembered was a day trip with his Mum to the falls of Leni, near Callender in Ayrshire.

On leaving school at fourteen Jock got a job as a laundry van boy for a short time before getting the sack and, by the time he followed his father and brother into the railways, he was already a political activist.

Such was the impact of his experiences of poverty where porridge and whatever he could catch as a poacher would be the staple diet, he became acutely class-conscious.

His first job on the railway was as a 'Caller Up' at Hamilton West Depot, a night shift which involved riding a bicycle waking up drivers and guards for early morning shifts.

He joined the National Union of Railwaymen as it was then and became and remained an activist both at work and in retirement.

The pay was not good but it was looked upon as a "job for life" which was considered important during the depression of the thirties.

Jock was promoted to a Fireman shortly after the outbreak of the Second World War as railwayworkers were classed as vital and were exempt from call-up to the forces.

He said there was little romance in being a Fireman as it was dirty, hard, manual work. During a shift he would shovel several tons of coal into the firebox of a steam engine while doubled up, twisting round every few seconds and standing on a moving floor and staggering like a drunk man when he stepped off the engine.

By the time Jock was

seventeen years old he was an ardent socialist, reading Kier Hardy, and Karl Marx, as well as poaching in High Parks which was the Duke of Hamilton's estate.

He attended Labour College classes and other political meetings. Hamilton at that time was a hot-bed of political groups such as the Labour Party, the Independent Labour Party, Socialist Party of Great Britain, as well as the Communist Party.

Around that period the Spanish Civil War and the actions of Nazi Germany stirred political passion in Britain.

After going to a meeting to an "Aid Spain" in Glasgow, Jock made his first political donation to the Spanish cause and joined the Communist Party. He later to became a CP organiser in Lanarkshire.

At the end of World War Two, the political parties were getting ready of the famous 1945 Labour election victory and Jock was active in his NUR Hamilton branch getting members to sign up for the political fund..

In 1947 Jock moved to Fife to campaign to get the well-known Communist MP Willie Gallacher re-elected when the Cold War raised its head.

Around this time, Jock was at a Communist Party school in Sussex; where he met Bridget and began a life-long relationship. Jock moved to London to be with Bridget and he joined the Chalk Farm branch of the union, and continued as an activist as a Goods and Cartage clerk in Chalk Farm depot.

He also stood as a local Communist Party candidate in Camden, and the Holborn and St.Pancras Parliamentary Constituency twice. Jock was a well known orator on his soap box outside Kentish Town Station for many years, and was heavily involved in the famous



Camden rent strikes in the sixties.

Jock served two terms on the NUR National Executive during the 1970's and was secretary of the influential North London District Council prior to the re-organisation of District Councils in the 80's. Many activists felt that the leadership of the union at that time carried out this re-organisation to defuse the power of these Councils and the North London one in particular.

Jock Nicolson was also a dedicated Father to Mark, Josie, Laura, and later grandfather and

great grandfather to many of the Nicolson clan.

Jock sometimes gave the impression of being a 'hard line Communist' and was a thorn in the flesh of any trade union leader, including the NUR, if they didn't lead and defend workers.

He was a great Socialist, Communist and humanist who believed and defended working people. Jock's Memoirs "A Turbulent Life" is to be published soon. ■

TONY DONAGHEY

JOCK NICOLSON

I first met Jock when I was an unofficial strike leader in 1968 and he was a great influence in the huge 50,000 strong NUR North London District Council. Later we served together on the national executive of the then NUR.

I remember as well a kindly, witty, interesting man whose company we sought. Jock would hold social evenings at home where we ate well, drank wine and had heavy political discussions into the night. But there were always lighter conversations later on and we loved his tales.

I recall the story he told about when he was wooing Bridget, who became his lifelong partner. Jock had a rival – he described him as an “Errol Flynn type” – who would regale Bridget with stories of derring-do, fighting fascism, piloting planes etc.

Jock was a member of the Communist Party. On May Day 1949 the party in Scotland organised an open air event in a field outside of Glasgow.

Unfortunately, two days before the famous ‘Yangtze incident’ took place. The Chinese had attacked and seriously damaged the British warship HMS Amethyst on the Yangtze river killing thirty sailors. A huge wave of anti-communism was whipped up by the British press and some CP offices were attacked.

Jock and Bridgette were at the CP event, along with “Errol”. Four coaches of Orange Order members pulled up on the other side of the field.

They spotted the CP flags, poured off the coaches, tore a nearby fence down to make weapons and charged down on the gathering. Jock was small in stature but stood his ground and took a bloody beating. Later, Bridgette told him that ‘Errol’ had fled the scene and there was no serious rival after that.

At the end of the evening when you left Jock’s home, you found Bridgette standing behind a table that had been placed near the front door. On the table were books and publications that you felt obliged to purchase on the way out. A free meal at Jock’s always proved to be very expensive.

The younger generation of my day had the arrogance of youth, like all generations. But we chose to listen attentively to the fighters of Jock’s generation. Why wouldn’t we? These were the people, socialists all, who organised during the great depression.

They witnessed the rise of fascism in

Europe and fought it. They risked their lives and watched their comrades die in a world war. They came home and created the NHS, nationalised the coal and steel industries and the railways. They would not be refused the welfare state and successfully argued that housing and education were a basic right.

They made trade unionism stronger than it had ever been by tireless organisation. It was an NUM leader who formed the NHS, the Atlee government had cabinet members and ministers from the trade unions.

We were deeply respectful of them all including Jock and, whilst not always agreeing, learned from them. We learned how to debate, how to put the case for our

cause at the workplace and the importance of class history. Women and men like Jock taught us that corruption cannot be contained, that it’s corrosive and spreads.

I consider myself fortunate to have known Jock Nicolson. He fought the excesses of the boss class all his life. In his final years on the leadership of his union, he courageously fought the threatened corruption of our own democratic forums and re-established the principles we were founded on.

When the last of his generation goes it true to say we will never see their like again. ■

GEOFF REVELL

Cuba Solidarity Campaign



Cycle Cuba Challenge

23 April – 03 May 2008

Unique sponsored cycle ride to raise funds for vital educational equipment. Deliver aid direct to a school for visually impaired children in Havana.

Cycle an exhilarating 370 km to the salsa beat. Experience dramatic landscapes and vibrant Cuban culture first hand. Meet the Cuban people at cultural and workplace visits. Special invitation to attend May Day Rally addressed by Fidel Castro in Plaza de la Revolución.

£199 registration fee plus minimum sponsorship.

Full details and registration pack contact: tours@cuba-solidarity.org.uk
www.cuba-solidarity.org.uk/tours Tel: 020 7263 6452

In aid of the Music Fund for Cuba. Registered charity 1096283

PRISON OFFICERS DEMAND THE RIGHT TO STRIKE

RMT has given its full support to the Prison Officers' Association in its campaign to win the right to strike

Over 20,000 prison officers took government and Prison Service officials by complete surprise on August 29 by staging a national strike over pay despite the fact that prison staff were robbed of the right to take industrial action by the Tories in 1994.

The unofficial action showed the level of anger at government threats of court action and imprisoning members in order to impose a two per cent pay rise which amounts to a real-term pay cut.

POA officials, general secretary Brian Caton and president Colin Moses, visited

Unity House and addressed the RMT executive shortly after the walk-out to outline their long struggle for trade union rights and decent pay.

Brian recounted how the POA has been the recognised trade union for the professional men and women of the Prison Service since 1939.

Yet the union has been the subject of anti-trade union legislation since 1994 when he right to strike was withdrawn.

The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act was introduced by a Conservative government determined to destroy what

Margaret Thatcher described as the "last bastion of trade union militancy".

"Today, prisons are still overcrowded, short of front-line staff and regrettably have a management that conducts industrial relations through the Courts, rather than through negotiation," Brian said.

He said that the union had welcomed the introduction of the Prison Service Pay Review Body in 2001, a mechanism that was supposed to provide an independent system to determine pay.

However, the system had

been tarnished with interference from the Prison Service and government.

"We have been subjected to staged pay awards, below inflation pay awards and starved of our fundamental rights to collective bargaining," he said.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow promised the full RMT backing for the POA's struggle for union rights and decent pay.

Shortly after the meeting RMT seconded a motion at TUC Congress, overwhelmingly backed by delegates.

"It is a disgrace that, after 10 years of a Labour government, they still do not have the same rights as other public-sector workers," he told Congress to applause. ■

POA officials Brian Caton and Colin Moses enjoy support from officers and the executive committee at Unity House



Meeting the members



On August 29 2007 the POA took national strike action for the first time in 68 years, this is why:

- Because the Government refused to follow the recommendations of the Pay Review Body for an award of 2.5 per cent, even though that was below the rate of inflation and 1.3 per cent below the RPI;
- Because the Government undertook to the ILO that they would follow the Pay Review Bodies recommendations and they didn't downgrading the pay award to 1.9 per cent
- Because the Prison Service owes Prison Officers 422,071 hours of TOIL (unpaid overtime) worth £6,000,000
- Because between 1993 and 2006 the prison population in England and Wales has gone up by 28,400 and officer numbers by 440
- Because of planned budget cuts of £60 million a year for 3 years
- Because over the last seven years assaults on female Prison Officers have increased by 121 per cent and on male officers by 50 per cent ■

Recently I visited members in their workplaces, on trains, in depots and on stations in Cardiff and in around south Wales. This was followed by attending the Bridgend and Llantrisant branch meeting.

The whole day was highly informative, constructive and the branch was very friendly and positive.

I also went back to my own workplace, which is Knightsbridge London Underground station.

It was good to see all my old workmates on duty. As always, there was a bit of fun, but we were also able to spend some time talking about the latest exploits of the local managers and the big issues such as LUL plans to cut back on booking office positions.

It's my view that it is vital that the leadership of our union remains in touch with members in this way. And, as president, I make it one of my priorities.

It was a complete contrast to lead the RMT delegation to the TUC Congress in Brighton. Grey suits, self-congratulating speeches from government Ministers and very little real debate seemed to be the order of the day, which left us asking sometimes, is this the real world?

Importantly, our union did push RMT policies for the whole week.

Our delegation won widespread support against the EU constitution and for a referendum which the government

promised us two years ago.

We also successfully backed the call for the repeal of the anti union laws, the scrapping of the PPP on London Underground and for renationalisation of our industries.

Our campaign to keep Calidonian MacBrayne ferries in the public sector regardless of EU diktats, which demand the so-called 'liberalisation' of these lifeline services, also found support among delegates.

I seconded a motion calling for the rail industry to be brought back into the public sector, making particular reference to the collapse of the Metronet consortium on the Tube.

I was proud to salute those RMT members that went on strike at Metronet.

It is amazing that this gang of privateers can walk away from these contracts after pulling in over £1 million a week and the government is already trying to hand it back to the private sector.

It is vital that all unions strive for real solidarity through good organisation and cooperation. We as a union play our part and represent this belief at the TUC and at the workplace.

However, in all honesty, I was glad to get back to Unity House and my responsibilities as your national president of the union.

John Leach

RIDING AND WRITING

London Underground signaller, RMT rep and train enthusiast Robert Gillman has turned his hand to writing, *RMT News* tells his story



The author with Romulus

Union rep Robert Gillman has had a passion for trains for as long as he can remember.

And it is that passion that led the London Underground signal operator to write *Tales of Upchurch Station*, a collection of short stories for children.

Robert originally wrote the stories about the fictional railway for his grandson, passing on his enthusiasm to another generation, just as it had been passed on to him. Robert's father – William Gillman – was at one time a boiler fitter's mate at the Great Eastern Railway works at Stratford in East London.

It seems it wasn't only a love of the railways that William Gillman passed on. He was a staunch union man and National Union of Railwaymen (NUR) branch secretary of Stratford Works No 3 Branch where he worked between 1924 and 1930. He received an illuminated address for his union work.

Robert recalls that after leaving the railways his dad became heavily involved with local politics, becoming a Labour councillor and mayor of West Ham. "I grew up with people knocking on the door for advice" he recalls.

"My father went on to work for the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) at London Airport and I remember visiting it in the 1950s and seeing just a collection of huts, nothing like the huge place at Heathrow that you see today", says Robert.

William Gillman remained a lifelong trade unionist and after leaving the airport became an organiser for the TGWU on the East India Dock.

Bob's own career is equally interesting. He started out his working life in the print in Fleet Street, as a plate engraver and then lithographer. He was father of the chapel – equivalent of shop steward – for his union the National Graphical Association (NGA).

Having experienced a couple of redundancies and a spell where he ran his own print business, Bob decided that he

wanted a career change. He took a gamble and left his job after hearing that London Underground was looking for staff.

After a nervous spell of waiting to see whether he had qualified, in 1999, at the age of 53, Bob started work as a signal operator on the District Line in Essex. He says he wished that he had worked on the rails earlier but then perhaps without his background in print he wouldn't have thought of bringing out a book.

Long before Bob worked on the Underground, he kept an active interest in trains as a volunteer on The West Somerset

Railway, which runs from Minehead to Taunton. The line is Britain's longest heritage railway, celebrating the golden age of steam trains with ten restored stations along its 20 mile route.

Just like the old days, Bob had to start at the bottom, as a cleaner, before becoming qualified as a steam fireman.

Bob likes to relax by being creative. He writes short stories, poetry or songs, often in collaboration with Alexandra, his wife. He also likes to play country and folk music, recalling that his first instrument was a five-string banjo.

But even at home, even when relaxing, trains aren't far from his mind. He recently built a miniature railway in his garden to run his train *Romulus*. The train was built by a retired engineer back in 1987, and Rob purchased it from him to give children rides at local junior school summer fairs for many years to raise money for the schools.

Nowadays *Romulus* is in semi-retirement and happily chuffing around the garden on track laid by Rob. "It required a lot more work than I thought it would" he says modestly with a smile. ■

Book review

Tales of Upchurch Station

Written by Robert Gillman, illustrated and designed by Alan Ward

The book carries five short stories that, while written for children between 4-8 years of age, can be enjoyed by anyone.

Set in a fictional place somewhere between Upminster and Hornchurch, the stories carry simple messages about helping one's fellow man and other positive values.

Sir Harry Hurry's Doze, the tale of a passenger who falls asleep on the last train and finds himself on a carriage that's been shunted into the depot, is loosely based on an incident that happened while Robert Gillman was at work.

Other stories stemmed from ideas that came to the author while working as a volunteer steam fireman on the West Somerset Railway.

There are charming characters in the book, such as Sid the Shunter, Stanley the Stationmaster and Derek the Engine Driver.

The characters have been brought to life by well known professional railway artist Alan Ward who is also

a keen supporter of the heritage railways. There are over fifty pen and ink line illustrations in the book.

The collaboration of artist and writer makes for a really enjoyable book not only for kids, but for the kid in all of us.

As Alan Ward says in the introduction to the book, "Many seemingly old fashioned messages and values are evident throughout. Perhaps they also echo a hope for the future".

Steve Silver

Tales of Upchurch Station (£5.99) is available, post free, from the publishers: Railway Cat Creations, PO Box 299, Rainham, Essex, RM13 8XT (enclose your address and a cheque made payable to Railway Cat Creations). Or can be ordered from your local bookshop. ISBN: 978-0-9537406-3-5



TAKING PRIDE FROM LONDON TO BRIGHTON



BRIGHTON: Left to right Joanne Parry carrying banner, Colin Wright in hi-vis and unknown tube worker in black costume.

Rain certainly didn't stop the London Pride parade thanks to RMT umbrellas.

There were a number of enquiries from prospective members at our recruitment stall in Trafalgar square from individuals who were going through interview process with TfL and One. Even a few ASLEF members asked about becoming joint members.

Activists managed to communicate to the public the union's opposition to proposed LU station closures and the plans for privatising the East London Line, gaining well over 200 signatures on petitions including a signature from Lord Dutton who asked if he could have an RMT baseball cap. People asked if they could buy East London Line Campaign T-shirts. ■



LONDON: RMT team at the stall in Trafalgar Square Pride London. Left to right is Andy Melvin, Joanne Parry, unknown, Jitendra Patel.

DELIGHTS OF DURHAM



Ricky Tomlinson was a special guest at the annual Durham miners' gala this year and shared a joke with RMT general secretary Bob Crow.

40 YEARS FROM BUTLER

EC member Dave Gott presented Bob Butler with his 40-year membership badge recently.

Bob is a S&T tech at Retford and has served as secretary for both Retford and Bassetlaw branches and has held many other positions within the union. ■



KEITH SAYS ADIEU TO BARRY

Keith branch held a farewell presentation recently for branch secretary Barry Hoper who is leaving the railway to concentrate on his 'Transport Treasury'. All members wish him all the best for the future. ■



Left to Right - John Shinie, Steven Murray, Kenny Gray, Dougie McKay, Barry Hoper, Derek Hope, Linda Malcolm and Martin Jamieson.

REMEMBERING THE LONGEST STRIKE IN HISTORY

Bob Crow addressed this year's annual rally to commemorate the children's school strike at Burston which ran from 1914 to 1939

The annual rally in Burston village on the Norfolk/Suffolk border not only commemorates the longest strike in history but includes the only march in the world where you can pick blackberries along the whole picturesque route.

Thousands come each year to retrace the footsteps of schoolchildren nearly a hundred years ago that went on strike in support of their sacked teachers Kitty and Tom Higdon.

The teachers were dismissed from the village's Church of England school after they complained of the appalling conditions the local children were forced to endure.

Looking for a pretext to sack the teachers, the vindictive school managers led by Reverend Charles Tucker Eland accused Kitty of lighting a fire without their permission - to dry the clothes of children who had walked three miles to school in the rain.

For this and other ludicrous trumped-up charges, the Higdens were sacked on 1 April 1914. However, as the authorities were taking over, the sound of children marching and

singing could be heard and they began their fateful march which is re-enacted to this day.

STRIKE SCHOOL

The children never returned to the school, but instead had lessons on the village green and maintained a full timetable and observed registrations with the full support of parents.

This act of defiance led to 18 parents being summonsed to court and fined for failing to ensure their children's attendance at school. Collections outside the court paid the fines and the authorities were soon forced to back down.

With the onset of winter, the school moved into empty workshops. But the authorities kept up their intimidation and farmers sacked and evicted farm labourers. Striking families who rented land from the Rector for growing food were also evicted and their crops and property destroyed.

Yet the local children and their families stood firm and, following donations from miners' and the National Union of Railwaymen and Trades Councils, a new school was

opened in 1917, with the leader of the 1914 demonstration Violet Potter declaring, "With joy and thankfulness I declare this school open to be forever a School of Freedom".

The Burston Strike School continued until 1939 when Tom Higdon died and Kitty, in her seventies, was unable to carry on alone. Both are buried in Burston churchyard.

However, in 1949 The Strike School was registered as an educational charity and today it is a museum, visitor centre, educational archive and village amenity.

Each year the annual rally celebrates the people who continue to fight for trade union rights, working class education, democracy and international solidarity.

RMT general secretary told the crowd that the Higdens and the school children had shown that another world was possible where the rich did not dictate how the poor should live.

"They showed us that if you want decent education, pay and healthcare you must fight for it and you can win," he said. ■



Bob Crow



Tony Benn and Billy Bragg

Children lead the march





new **RM'T** t-shirts

RMT activists attending this year's AGM Young Members Course were all proud to wear the new look RMT t-shirts. AGM delegates also snapped them up - spending an amazing £1,500 at the RMT's Organising Unit stall.

The t-shirts are now available to RMT members for the special price of £5 each.

The t-shirts (like the recent badge designs) are a limited edition so make sure you order yours soon - before they all go. Members can pay by credit/debit card by calling the RMT freephone number: 0800 376 3706.

Branches can also order using their goods order form in the normal manner. sizes XS - 4XL, black or white t-shirts - printed on back and front.



new MERCHANDISE

Order by calling freephone: 0800 376 3706 (credit/debit card payment) or send cheques payable to 'RMT' to Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London, NW1 1JD. Branch secretary's can order using Goods Order Form. Please allow 14 days delivery (but most orders sent out within 48hrs)



RMT Sunglasses - £3 each



RMT large holdall - £10 each
(black & navy blue)



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badge (limited edition)
£2



RMT Baseball Cap
(navy blue & red)
£5 each



Red star
100% badge
(limited edition)
£2



RMT Radio
green or red
(with batteries and headphones)
£3

ELECTION ADS

Basingstoke no. 2 branch

Says vote

PETE GALE

For regional organiser
Wessex region.

*We ask all members to support this
able and worthy candidate*

Feltham branch

Say vote

PETE GALE

For regional organiser,
Wessex region

*And asks that members support this
candidate*

Fareham 2 branch

Says vote

PETE GALE

For regional organiser,
Wessex region

The best candidate for the job

Southampton 5 branch

Says vote

PETE GALE

For regional organiser,
Wessex region

*Pete has integrity, resolve and
principles and deserves your support*

Winchester 2 branch

Says vote

PETE GALE

For regional organiser,
Wessex region.

*And urges support for this most able
candidate*

Bournemouth 5 branch

Says vote

PETE GALE

For regional organiser,
Wessex region.

Vote for the best

Newport i.o.w. 2 branch

Says vote

PETE GALE

For regional organiser,
Wessex region

He deserves your support

Shipping

Southampton branch

Nominates

MICK TOSH

For regional organiser

Solent Salaried branch

Says vote

PETE GALE

For regional organiser,
Wessex region.

For all members in all grades

Weymouth Bus branch

Says vote

PETE GALE

For regional organiser,
Wessex region.

Always putting members first

Salisbury 3 branch

Says vote

PETE GALE

For regional organiser,
Wessex region

*And asks members in the region to
support him*

Hastings & Tonbridge branch

Nominates

PAUL COX

For Regional Organiser,
South East

The Experienced Candidate

Basingstoke no. 1 branch

Says vote

PETE GALE

For regional organiser,
Wessex region.

The man for the job

Eastleigh workshops

Says vote

PETE GALE

For regional organiser,
Wessex region.

*Urges a vote for this committed and
able candidate*

Andover and Salisbury Rail branch

Says vote

PETE GALE

For regional organiser,
Wessex region

*And urges members to give their
support*

Brighton & Hove City branch

Nominates

PAUL COX

For Regional Organiser ,
South East

The Experienced Choice

LETTERS

Dear editor,

On the way to work, around 15 months ago, I was involved in a car accident through no fault of my own that wrote off my car and I sustained neck, leg and wrist injuries. I was off work for two weeks.

I contacted RMT and I was put in touch with Thompsons solicitors. I must say they have been very professional, keeping me updated and fully informed throughout my claim for compensation, which I have just received.

I would like to thank the union for which I have been a member for over 10 years for the help and professional service I received. I would like to thank Thompsons for the way they pushed for my injury compensation. It is highly appreciated, many thanks again and keep up the hard work.

Best wishes
Mike Turner

Dear editor,

I refer to the letter from Mr Northcott in the last edition of the RMT news in which he claimed that the branch had agreed with his view that Labour has no pretensions of supporting the people and organisations that set it up and gave him overwhelming support.

This statement is not correct.

The minutes of the branch meeting on April 5 2007 said: After a long and heated discussion the following was passed, the branch was willing to sponsor bro northcott but would like it to be shown that we are supporting our member and not the local liberal party or its policies.

This was passed at a majority of 9 to 1 with 1 abstention. At the meeting of the Exeter Rail Branch on September 6 2007 members of the branch were very aggrieved at the comments made by Mr Northcott in his letter and they request that the correct minute is published.

They would also like it to be known that the branch has always been and will always be democratic in its decisions in line with union policy.

Ken Battishill
Branch Secretary

Liverpool national seamen's reunion

£5

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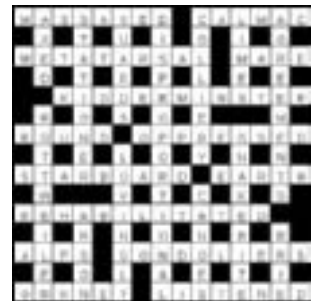
Correction

Last month sharp-eyed readers may have noticed a typographical error in the editorial that appeared to suggest RMT supported slavery. This, of course, is not the case and the union opposes slavery in all its forms. Another edition was printed which corrected this error and is available from head office. Sorry for any distress this may have caused.

RMT £25 PRIZECROSSWORD

No. 38. Set by Elk

Last month's
solution...



The winner of prize
crossword no. 37 is
Norman King of Eastleigh.

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

Winner and solution in next issue.

CLASSIFIED ADS

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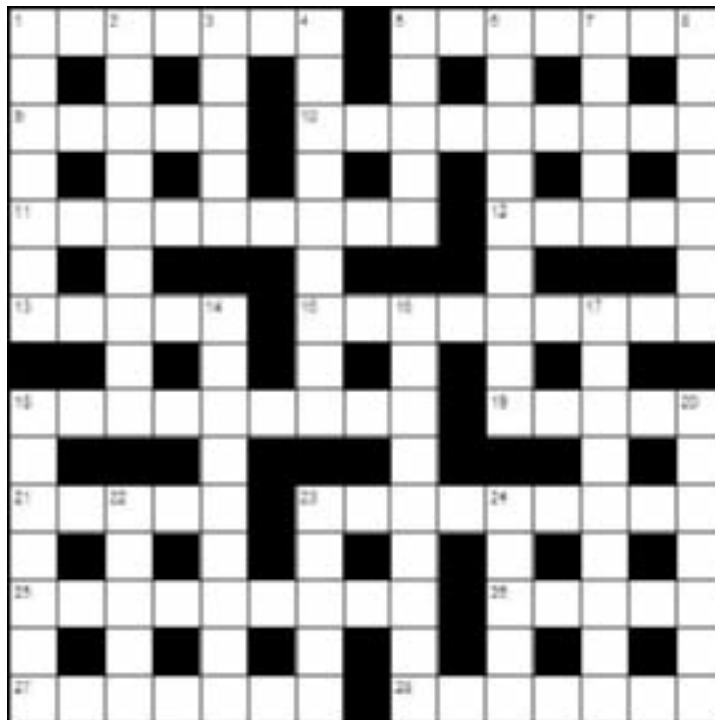
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ACROSS

- 1 Small, orange-yellow fruit (7)
- 5 Sugar contained in milk (7)
- 9, 12, 20 Rally for this on October 18 (5, 5, 7)
- 10 Preparation that delays fire taking hold (9)
- 11 Footwear for very wintry weather (9)
- 12 See 9
- 13 Hit these with a hammer - but make sure
they're the right ones! (5)
- 15 Type of society envisaged in our 12 rules (9)
- 18 Boxers (9)
- 19 Type of small boat (5)
- 21 Three-dimensional (measure) (5)
- 23 Large tropical amphibious reptile (9)
- 25 Turn from liquid to vapour (9)
- 26 Played, on stage or screen (5)
- 27 They enjoy giving pain (7)
- 28 Those who have 26 might achieve it (7)

DOWN

- 1 Skilled craft worker (7)
- 2 Logical thought or steps behind proposition
(9)
- 3 22 game representing warfare (5)
- 4 Reptiles - much slower than 23s! (9)
- 5 Asian or north African water lily with large
pink or white flowers (5)
- 6 Messages from head office (doing the
rounds?) (9)
- 7 African ruminant mammal, with giraffe-like
head and zebra-like body (5)
- 8 Died out; no longer alive or burning (7)
- 14 Those who choose (the team?) (9)
- 16 We call them passengers! (9)
- 17 Introduced or inducted (by ceremony?) (9)
- 18 They're posted to stop people working who
shouldn't be (7)
- 20 See 9 (7)
- 22 Thinly cut timber; card; goes with lodging
(5)
- 23 disorder and confusion (5)
- 24 Largest city in Nebraska; code-name for D-
Day landing beach (5)

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 **10.9 per cent APR**, equivalent to **0.908 per cent per month** on the declining balance. See our great rates below.

Loan term (months) 10.9% APR (0.908% per month)

Amount	12	24	36	48	60
500	44.17	23.28	16.35	12.90	10.85
1000	88.34	45.46	32.69	25.80	21.61
1500	132.50	69.84	49.04	38.70	32.54
2000	176.67	93.12	65.38	51.59	43.39
3000	265.01	139.68	98.07	77.39	65.08
4000	353.34	186.25	130.77	103.19	86.77
5000	441.68	232.81	163.46	128.98	108.46
7500	662.51	349.21	245.19	193.48	162.69

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.



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Surname		Address	
Forename(s)			
Home phone			
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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



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To: The Manager	Bank/Building Society
Address	
Postcode	

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Bank/Building Society account number

Branch Sort Code

Originator's Identification Number

Reference Number

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