

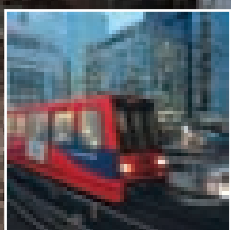
RMT *news*

Essential reading for today's transport worker

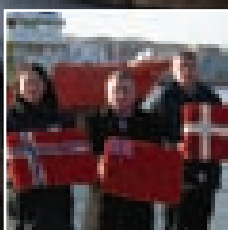
HIGH SPEED TRAINS

RMT's view

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www.rmt.org.uk

NATIONAL UNION OF RAIL, MARITIME & TRANSPORT WORKERS

Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD



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Employer*		Location	
Job Description*		Part Time	YES ☐ NO ☐

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EDITORIAL



HIGH SPEED NOW

A lot has been said about plans for a high speed line between Birmingham and London (HS2), but the fact remains that high speed rail routes would give a massive boost to manufacturing and green jobs on the railways and should be moved forward without delay.

A national high-speed rail network will deliver passengers from city-centre to city-centre, support economic regeneration, create tens of thousands of jobs and tackle environmentally damaging carbon emissions from short-haul flights.

RMT's view is that the high-speed network should extend into Scotland, connecting both Glasgow and Edinburgh, and government should also develop plans for high-speed routes to the south west of England and into Wales.

In order to ensure unnecessary operational interfaces and fragmentation, which have had such a damaging effect on the railways since privatisation, high speed lines should be integrated into a publicly owned, national network.

This government and the European Union clearly do not support such a policy.

That is why RMT will be joining transport workers from across Europe next month in Brussels to protest against EU policies which promote privatisation, fragmentation, social dumping, outsourcing and attacks on collective employment conditions and workers' rights.

There is a growing movement across Europe that is recognising that EU rules demanding endless austerity and privatisation, dreamt up by unaccountable corporate power, is blighting the lives of millions of working people.

European rail bosses are even pointing to the McNulty report as the way forward in order to roll out the disastrous experiment of EU rail

privatisation which has been inflicted on Britain over the last two decades.

Yet it is these very policies to fragment the industry that led to tragedies like Tebay where four members were killed because a contractor kept a track wagon in service despite the fact it was known to have faulty brakes in the relentless drive for profit.

Eight years on and Network Rail has failed to bring in secondary protection for track workers. I have recently written to the company warning that it is their last chance to give a members' one last chance.

EU rules are also openly encouraging social dumping in the maritime and offshore sectors which is undermining the industry and is downright dangerous.

Norwegian workers have shown the way forward by launching a general strike against EU rules which destroy their rights to protection at work at a stroke.

'Legal' loopholes also being used to attempt to break strike action by cleaners in St Pancras as the contractor Initial claims that strike breakers are limited companies in their own right, making them exempt from any protection that UK and EU legislation may provide.

Despite this members are resisting and winning in a number of disputes and pay deals covering the Olympics are still being achieved.

Our Bus workers committee, representing members from across the country met recently at Unity House to draw up a plan of action for this year, dealing with issues from drivers cab, pensions, CCTV, hours and overtime.

All these issues will be discussed at the annual bus conference this year taking place in Croyde, Devon in April and I hope to be there to get my orders.

Best wishes

Bob Crow

RMT News is compiled and originated by National Union of Rail, Maritime & Transport Workers, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD. Tel: 020 7387 4771. Fax: 020 7529 8808. e-mail bdenny@rmt.org.uk The information contained in this publication is believed to be correct but cannot be guaranteed. All rights reserved. RMT News is designed by Bighand Creative and printed by Leycol Printers. General editor: Bob Crow. Managing editor: Brian Denny. No part of this document may be reproduced without prior written approval of RMT. No liability is accepted for any errors or omissions. Copyright RMT 2011

When you have finished with this magazine give it to a workmate who is not in your union. Even better, ask them to join RMT by filling in the application form opposite



ScotRail

BALLOT AT SCOTRAIL AFTER MEMBERS ATTACKED THEN SACKED

RMT is balloting for strike action and action short of a strike on Scotrail after two ticket examiners were sacked for defending themselves from attack by a gang who have waged a two-year campaign of abuse and violence against them.

Not only were RMT members, Darren Brander and Karin McLean, verbally and physically assaulted at work but their assailants continued to harass them when they were off duty and even followed them home.

In June 2010, matters came to

ahead when the gang assaulted and spat on Karin McLean. They also shouted "paedophile" and "child molester" at Darren and threw a bottle at him in front of their two small children.

In the face of extreme aggression and provocation Darren and Karin fought back to defend not only themselves but their children. The British Transport Police brought no charges over the incident but Scotrail decided to dismiss the two members based on the incident.

RMT is demanding their immediate reinstatement and the union is balloting all RMT Ticket Examiners based at Airdrie, Bathgate, Dalmeir, Glasgow Central (Argyle Line), Helensburgh Central, Motherwell and Partick in defence of members who have done a long and sustained campaign of intimidation and violence.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that the dispute was over the most blatant travesty of justice where two members ended up sacked for simply

defending themselves from a gang of thugs who had waged a campaign of violence and intimidation against them both at work and right up to their own front door.

"We are determined to secure justice for Karin and Darren.

"Scotrail has been totally unsympathetic and uncaring during the whole process and their only objective has been to get our members out of the door even though they have been the victims of this crime," he said.



HEATHROW EXPRESS STRIKE AGAINST VICTIMISATION

RMT members at Heathrow Express are taking 24-hour action later this month against the unfair dismissal of a driver member and over a campaign of harassment and victimisation against an RMT representative and further action is planned in March.

Around 80 per cent have voted to strike in a ballot of drivers over the sacking of driver member Zahid Majid and over 80 per cent for strike action in a ballot of all Heathrow Express staff over the continued victimisation of RMT rep Liaquat Ali.

Zahid Majid has been dismissed from employment by HEX after a minor error, which he took full responsibility for, and which has led to the company taking unfair

and disproportionate action in sacking him from his job.

Although Heathrow Express has now returned Liaquat from suspension, and all allegations have been found to be completely unfounded, the company has now taken the deliberately provocative step of pursuing possible disciplinary charges against Liaquat on issues of conduct and confidentiality whilst he was suspended.

This is a blatant attack by Heathrow Express on Liaquat for his trade union activities and an attack on RMT as a union and its ability to represent and support members within Heathrow Express.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that the unfair and disproportionate actions

taken by management in both cases was a total miscarriage of justice and that is reflected in these overwhelming ballot results for action.

"Management's behaviour clearly demonstrates their willingness to victimise staff at the slightest provocation and no doubt they see this as payback for the successful building of a strong and militant union organisation within the company.

"In both ballots members have sent out the clearest possible message to the company and the union remains available for talks in the hope that management will now see sense and take the necessary steps to resolve this dispute," he said.



GROUND BREAKING OLYMPICS DLR PAY DEAL

RMT has secured a groundbreaking Olympics pay deal on Docklands Light Railway worth £2,500 for all staff throughout the Olympics and Paralympics period.

The agreement includes £900 attendance bonus, paid at £100 per week over a nine-week period for all staff in every grade. Time +¾ for any hour worked on overtime throughout the nine-week period with a guaranteed minimum five hours per week, 45 hours over the nine-week period, for all staff in every grade.

The DLR will serve four of the principal Olympic and Paralympic venues - the Olympic Park, ExCeL London, the Royal Artillery Barracks and the equestrian events at Greenwich.

It is expected to transport 57 per cent more passengers and will run additional trains, an extended service and staff 25 instead of four stations.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that it was a truly groundbreaking deal raising the bar in the industry and putting £2,500 in members' pockets as a reward for the extra workload and pressure they will carry throughout the Olympics.

"The deal reflects the hard work of our negotiating team



and shows yet again that the organising strategy of RMT delivers the best pay and conditions time and time again," he said.

Serco Docklands managing director David Stretch said he was pleased he had been able to agree a fair deal with the union.

"It means we can finalise working arrangements for all our employees who will help deliver our enhanced services this summer and welcome an extra 2.28 million passengers on to the DLR network," he said.

As soon as the deal was announced, *BBC London News*

ran an inaccurate report which claimed that the Fire Brigades Union had attacked the deal as 'unfair'.

FBU's London region immediately wrote to the producer of the programme, demanding they broadcast a correction and said that it was also considering legal action against the BBC.

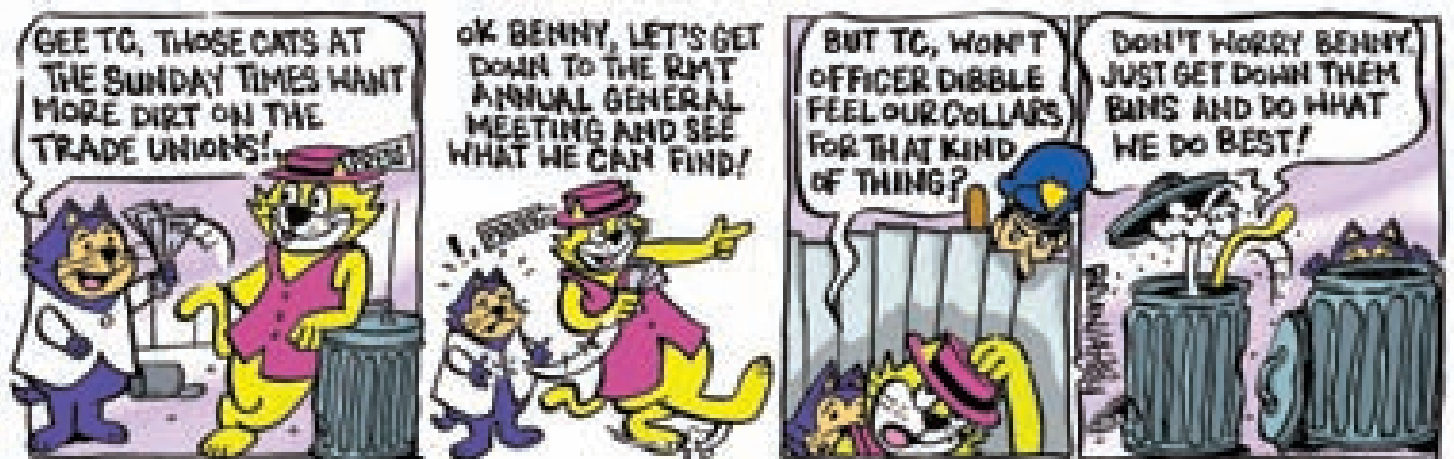
"For the record, the FBU said no such thing, and we are extremely disappointed to have been misrepresented in this way.

"The FBU and RMT enjoy a close working relationship, and we would never criticise the

RMT for securing a decent deal for its members," it said.

RMT has also formally complained to the BBC over the broadcast demanding an apology, a right to reply and assurances that it won't happen again.

The DLR deal is the best struck so far, following agreements of Olympic payments of £500 for Network Rail staff and £600 for London Overground. The union has rejected an offer of a £100 bonus for Tube workers as "derisory".



METRO CLEANERS WIN MPS BACKING



Tyne and Wear Metro cleaners fighting for travel facilities to and from work have received MPs' backing in their battle with transport chiefs.

Around 70 cleaners working on the Churchill contract on the minimum wage of £6.08p an hour lobbied a meeting of the Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority (ITA) in Newcastle hours after nine MPs signed parliamentary motion 2646.

Gateshead MP Ian Mearns, backed by Blythe Valley MP Ronnie Campbell and North Tyneside MP Mary Glindon, tabled the motion calling for free travel passes to be issued to this group of workers.

The motion calls on the ITA to give the same travel rights to

cleaners enjoyed by other staff on the rail network.

RMT regional organiser Craig Johnston said that it was a wrong that needed to be put right.

"It would not cost Nexus a penny to give these workers free travel to and from work," he said.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that the MPs that had signed the EDM should be congratulated for adding their voices to the campaign to end this injustice.

"Tyne and Wear ITA has a moral responsibility to ensure that all workers who help keep the Metro running are treated fairly.

"It is ludicrous that the low-paid staff are expected to pay to

gain access to their own workplace, not least because it wouldn't cost a penny to put right.

"Churchill has no excuses either, and for a company that increased its pre-tax profit by 81 per cent between 2009 and 2010 to expect its minimum-wage employees to pay these fares is simply immoral," he said.

Northern TUC secretary Kevin Rowan also backed the cleaners "100 per cent".

"The Northern TUC, which represents workers across the region, believes it is scandalous that a group of low-paid workers who play a crucial role should have to pay to travel to work on it," he said.

EARLY DAY MOTION 2646 CHURCHILL CLEANERS AND THE TYNE AND WEAR METRO

That this House commends the work undertaken by the cleaners employed by Churchill Contract Services on the Tyne and Wear Metro; notes they are paid minimum wage rates for the vital work they do; believes that their efforts should be rewarded in line with other staff employed on the Metro system; is therefore dismayed that unlike other workers on the Metro they do not receive free travel passes; and calls on the Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority to respond positively to the request made by the cleaners' trade union, the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers, for free travel passes to be issued to this group of workers.

Ian Mearns MP

EUROSTAR CLEANERS PAY VICTORY

RMT has secured a pay victory for cleaners working on the Eurostar contract, bringing the union a step closer to its objective of getting all staff onto a minimum rate of £8 per hour by the end of the year.

A series of incremental increases under the package will mean the minimum rate of pay rise from £7.40 an hour to £8.00 per hour by November - an increase of around eight per cent on the basic rate.

Victory came following a hard fought recruitment and organising campaign among staff led by RMT's EPS branch and

after a ballot of members delivered a resounding mandate for industrial action in pursuit of pay justice.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that the achievement of RMT's interim target of a £8 per hour minimum on OCS Eurostar is a major breakthrough in the fight for justice for cleaners and has come about through the sheer determination and guts of our members and the hard work of the RMT EPS Branch.

"They are a credit to the trade union movement.

"This result comes just weeks after we

secured a 10 per cent increase for cleaners on the West Coast route and shows that fighting, industrial trade unionism can beat the defeatists and win major pay victories even in these days of ConDem austerity," he said.

Bob said that the union was not stopping here.

"Our cleaners across the transport sector deserve far better and we will keep building the organisation and strength on the shop floor to win every single one of them justice on pay and conditions," he said.

OLYMPIC DEAL AT VIRGIN

RMT has secured a £500 Olympics and Paralympics payment for Virgin Trains staff as part of a package which will also see wages and allowances rise by 4.6 per cent or £950 (whichever is the greater) from April this year and a £500 flat rate payment for all staff covered by collective agreements for additional pressures on services throughout the Olympics period.

Staff will also get an extra days leave for the Queens Diamond jubilee.

The latest agreement comes on top of

other Olympic deals agreed by RMT including :

- Network Rail - £500 flat rate
- London Overground - minimum of £600 guaranteed with more for the majority of staff
- Docklands Light Railway - £900 flat rate plus guaranteed overtime at enhanced rates making the deal worth around £2500 while negotiations with

London Underground are continuing.

RMT General Secretary Bob Crow said that it was another deal that protected members' standards of living and rewards them for carrying the extra pressure of the Olympics.

"It is also another victory for the union's industrial campaigning and organising strategy which has delivered the goods for our members once again and is a tribute to the skill and experience of RMT negotiators," he said. ■

ST PANCRAS NETWORK RAIL CLEANERS STRIKE

Striking cleaners at St Pancras International won fantastic support from the public earlier in their fight against poverty.

Around seventy pickets and supporters launched the first of two planned 48-hour strikes with horns and drums, bringing a carnival atmosphere to the London Eurostar terminal.

The workers employed by Initial have not had a pay increase for maintaining the opulent Eurostar terminal in four years and have been offered a pathetic 13p taking them to £ 6.76 an hour, miles short of Boris Johnson's London

living wage of £8.30 an hour.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that it was disgraceful that the cleaners who mopped up in the St Pancras champagne bar suffer poverty pay.

"RMT is appalled that Network Rail, a public body still reeling from its own bonus

scandal, has not lifted a finger to stop this exploitation by its cleaning contractors in the run up to the Olympics," he said.

RMT has written to Network Rail demanding an investigation into allegations that Initial is using an "in house" agency to break the strike which is

employing Bulgarian and Romanian workers registered as self-employed with limited company status to avoid basic UK employment rights and to get round EU agency worker regulations.

Bob warned the company that vulnerable workers were being exploited by Initial to break the strike rather than seeking a negotiated settlement. ■





Thousands of postcards sent to MPs against McNulty proposals to hike fares, slash staff and reduce services and safety

The McNulty review paves the way for massive fare increases, of up to 30 per cent over the next three years, on what is already the most expensive rail service in Europe.

It also calls for the axing of tens of thousands of railway staff, reduced safety standards, and fewer services.

Earlier this month – as part of a second nationwide day of action – hundreds of RMT activists, together with ASLEF and TSSA, gave out postcards during the rush hour at some 50 train stations across Britain.

The postcards, which were also delivered to every member with *RMT News* last month, calls on MPs to sign Early Day Motion 2299, tabled by John McDonnell, urging the government to reject the McNulty report and put the need for a decent rail system above commercial considerations.

McNulty's core proposals include:

- Axing more than 600 ticket offices, de-staffing stations

and turning the network into a criminals paradise.

- Throwing guards off all trains and compromising safety and security on services right across the country
- Jacking up fares, offering train operators even longer "gold-plated" franchises and even more opportunity to mug the travelling public
- Cutting maintenance and lining up infra-structure for a return to the lethal cocktail of conditions under Railtrack that led to Hatfield and Potters Bar.

McNulty ignores lessons from other railways in Europe which have lower costs and fares because they have a more unified structure than exists in

Britain's fragmented, privatised, railways.

In fact McNulty even boasts that the proposals are in line with EU directives and rail packages that demand the break up and fragmentation of rail services across the EU.

The EU's recently-launched 'recast' 1st Railway Package aims to permanently separate wheel from steel and pave the way for the 4th Rail Package on 'liberalising' domestic passenger services and further privatisation of the railways in Europe.

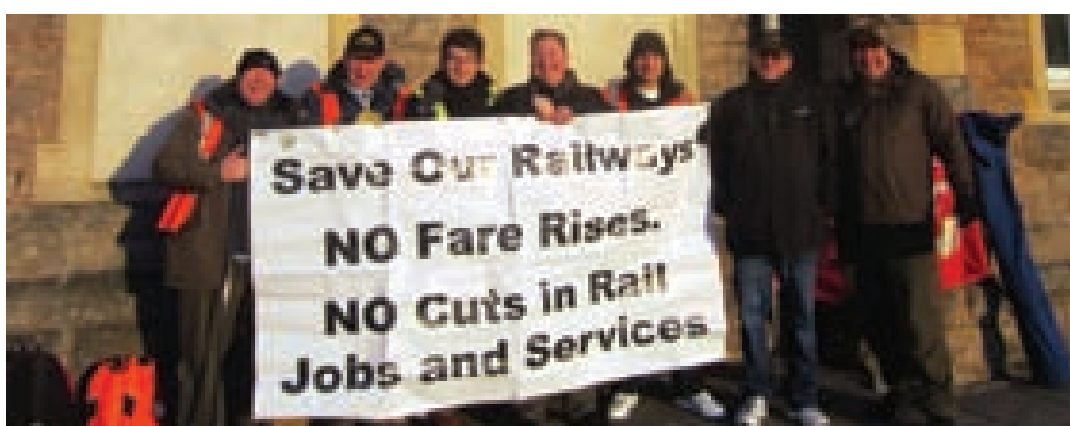
As the campaign builds over 50 MPs have signed EDM 2299, with new members continuing to add their names.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that with the

government pushing back the publication of their Command Paper on McNulty there is no doubt that the campaign to stop this all out assault on rail in the interests of private profit was winning the argument."

In Scotland the day of action saw RMT members hand out postcards at stations to be sent to MSPs opposing the proposed fragmentation of the Scotrail franchise.

The postcards address the Scottish government's public consultation – *Rail 2014* – and call for the retention of a single integrated rail operator for the provision of Scotrail passenger services. It also calls for the Scottish government to retain accountability and control over the railway. ■



The proposals in both McNulty and Rail 2014 mean that both staff and passengers are set to suffer while railway companies are allowed to extract huge profits from the industry. This is in addition to the £11 billion extracted from the industry in England and Wales since privatisation and £74 million in dividends that has been siphoned from Scotland's railways in the last four years.

Together with sister unions, RMT plans to step up the campaign with local meetings across Britain hosted by trades councils. Many trades councils have indicated that they are keen to hold the meetings in response to a recent letter from the union.

A further nationwide day of action is organised for March 21. Contact your branch if you are able to help with handing out postcards on the day. A full list of stations where there will be activity will be published on the RMT website in the run-up to the day.

Get up to date news on the campaign to Save Our Railways at www.rmt.org.uk ■

EARLY DAY MOTION 2299 IMPACT OF THE MCNULTY REVIEW ON RAIL PASSENGERS AND WORKERS

That this House is concerned that the proposals of the Government-commissioned McNulty review of the railways will worsen passenger services through the loss of thousands of frontline workers from trains, stations, ticket offices and safety-critical infrastructure and operational roles; is further concerned that the review proposals for greater commercial freedom for train operating companies will result in higher fares, cuts in services and more crowded trains; believes that proposals to break up Network Rail will increase the complexity and inefficiency of the railways, and ignores lessons from railways in European countries which have generally achieved lower costs and fares through a more unified structure; and urges the government to use its forthcoming rail White Paper to deliver an expanding railway system, with affordable fares and proper staffing levels, operated as a public service which puts the needs of passengers, the economy, manufacturing and the environment before commercial considerations.

John McDonnell MP

Parliamentary column



SAVE OUR SHIPPING

The benefits of a healthy maritime sector to an island country cannot be overestimated.

Unemployment is heading for three million and the government should invest in training opportunities for seafarers which offer a stable and exciting career, especially for those being denied significant career opportunities by a Tory-led coalition that regards youth unemployment as a price worth paying for their kamikaze attack on public spending.

The government is constantly telling us about their success in increasing the number of apprenticeships for young people. There were 457,200 apprenticeships in 2010-11, a welcome 63 per cent increase on the previous year, but the vast majority of these new apprenticeships were in business administration and retail, and a record number of apprentices are over 25 years old.

Whilst the National Apprenticeship Service will target specific sectors in the future, the acute lack of training opportunities in the maritime sector is fuelling a crisis in recruitment. For example, there were 4,000 deck, engine room and general purpose UK ratings in 2011, a 22 per cent drop since 2002.

One of the few training schemes still offering a route into the maritime industry is provided by public sector ferry company Caledonian MacBrayne (CalMac) which operates lifeline services to communities on the Northern Isles and off the West Coast of Scotland.

However, as RMT members will be aware, the SNP government is threatening to privatise the more lucrative CalMac routes. Not only would this be disastrous for communities and CalMac employees, it would also jeopardise one of the few providers of a meaningful training programme for people, particularly the young unemployed, looking for a career at sea.

The Westminster government could do more to make shipping

companies benefiting from the Tonnage Tax train more UK seafarer ratings in return for the tax break they enjoy. In a speech at a recent Chamber of Shipping dinner, the Shipping Minister Mike Penning stated: "We have no intention whatsoever of touching the Tonnage Tax." But he gave the game away when he also said in the same speech that he will "find more money" for the Support for Maritime Training (SMaRT) programme.

The need for a campaigning union in the maritime sector is highlighted in the ongoing campaign to end pay differentials aboard all UK flagged vessels working in UK territorial waters. At present some EU and non-EU nationals can and are paid inferior rates by shipping companies.

Whilst the Tory-led coalition has introduced regulations to ensure that the Race Relations Act 1976 applies on these vessels, they are a pale imitation of the last Labour government's proposals which Penning has chosen to drop. The Parliamentary group will work with the union to highlight where these new regulations are failing to protect vulnerable seafarers and we would welcome testimony of RMT members who witness such exploitation.

The group will also support the union's efforts to apply the National Minimum Wage to UK-flagged vessels working in our territorial waters. A working group was set up at the end of the last Labour government and the Minister is trying to kick this into the long grass. We won't let him and will raise this at the group's meeting with Mike Penning on March 8.

We need more jobs from the maritime sector, not just in Hull but all over the UK. Being part of a fighting, well organised union can make this happen and I am proud to work with RMT to get a better deal from the maritime sector which is over indulged by this government.

Karl Turner MP for Hull East

**ALL THE POWER
IN THE HANDS
OF THE
PEOPLE
RICH
ENOUGH
TO BUY IT...**



RMT press officer Geoff Martin lifts the lid on the dirty tricks campaign against the union by the gutter press which led to RMT general secretary Bob Crow addressing the Leveson inquiry

Last July, a routine enquiry from the deputy news editor of the Sunday Times to the RMT press office kicked off sequence of events which blew the lid off a campaign of blagging, fishing and dirty tricks which ended up adding a new word to the lexicon of the gutter press - binology.

The ST's Dipesh Gadner called late on a Friday with a series of questions relating to internal RMT documents that had only been made available to delegates to the AGM in Fort William. Challenged on where he had obtained his information he ducked and dived and with a rapid left/right combination from the media department and the lawyers at Thompson's the story was scuppered.

By the following Monday the source of his information had been rumbled. CCTV footage from outside the Nevis Centre in Fort William, where RMT AGM had been held, had been uncovered showing an operative from the Sunday Times, known as "Mark", rooting through the bins outside and dumping documents in the back of his car.

As RMT general secretary Bob Crow was later to tell the Leveson Inquiry, not only was the cartoon character Top Cat back in town but he'd been caught on film in glorious technicolour.

Around the same time a number of AGM delegates had been door-stepped by News International reporters and one female delegate had had the frightening experience of a vehicle parked on her driveway by freelancers digging for information.

These developments added a new twist to a decade long campaign by the right wing press against RMT and its senior officers.

Rewind back to 2002, as Leveson was to hear, this is when the true scale of the criminal activity involved in obtaining information for the press first emerged and when the powers that be at the Information Commission were found to be unwilling to do a thing to stop it.

Convicted blagger Steve Whittamore, a private investigator on the payroll of the national press, had used contacts within the police service to obtain information from the national computer to identify the number plate of an RMT member of staff. A trumped up story that Bob Crow had travelled to work on a scooter on the day of derailment on the Central Line duly appeared in the Mail on Sunday.

Whittamore and his cohorts were convicted a part of the Motorman investigation into police corruption with the RMT episode quoted extensively as a prime example of his dark arts and dirty tricks. Leveson heard that when Whittamore's premises were raided they found a "treasure trove" of information on Bob Crow, RMT and others.

Perhaps if the authorities had acted then we would not have had the sickening sequence of events, including the hacking of the phone of a murdered schoolgirl, which led to the Leveson Inquiry.

This union had to fight hard to get Bob Crow on behalf of RMT up in front of the Leveson inquiry despite the fact that the union has been at the eye of the scandal for years and that a whole host of the key players from the dark side of the media who played a starring role at the inquiry have been hacking away at this union.

Take Neville Thurlbeck - former chief reporter at the now defunct News of the World and recipient of the infamous "for Neville" email - who had Bob Crow under surveillance on holiday and printed intrusive and snidey pictures alongside an article. Thurlbeck has been arrested and is out on bail.

Take Derek Webb - head man at surveillance outfit "Silent Shadow" and paid a fortune to trail Bob Crow and others on behalf of Murdoch titles. We are still waiting to see the full contents of Webb's surveillance files.

At the Leveson Inquiry Bob told of the anti-union tactics deployed by the



Sun which have included parking a double decker bus outside his house and pretending to be TV reporters to block him from going about his business. Sun photographer, Lee Thompson, a man often seen lurking in the shadows outside Unity House, admitted in his blog that the intention was to try and stop Bob going about his lawful activities.

There's plenty more. Bob having his bag lifted and the contents offered for sale to Fleet Streets finest. The strange numbers coming up on Bob's phone when he's been called from home which, when checked, need a pin number to access them and the investigations into the vicious attack on Bob in 2002 which never produced any results.

The Times newspaper agreed an out-of-court settlement in 2005 after admitting publishing a defamatory article about the general secretary. The Sun printed an apology in 2010 for making completely unfounded accusations that Bob Crow had a union-subsidised home and luxury car.

And still it goes on. Over Christmas, newspapers tried to push responsibility for the Boxing Day drivers strike onto RMT in the full knowledge it was an ASLEF action - accusing Bob of being like the "Grinch who stole Christmas". That one is now in the hands of the lawyers.

RMT's policy, backed by AGM decision last year, is to use every tool at our disposal to protect the reputation of this union and its members from lies and dirty tricks. That battle won't be ending any time soon. ■



NO SOCIAL DUMPING IN THE NORTH SEA!

Unions unite to demand shipping and offshore employers stop shedding workers in favour of low paid imported labour

Seafarers and offshore workers from across Europe held a ceremony in Aberdeen earlier this month to mourn the decline of local workers employed in the industry and against social dumping in the North Sea.

The International Transport Workers Federation (ITF), representing unions in the UK, Norway and Denmark, said that the increasing number of non-EU registered vessels operating in the North Sea has led to a large number of British and other European fares being thrown out of work.

The ITF event underlined maritime unions' fears over the rising number of vessels registered by owners under flags of convenience (FOC) in countries with little or no labour laws, forcing down pay, long hours and unsafe conditions.

Crew members from countries such as Lithuania, Latvia, Romania and Philippines are increasingly being hired to operate vessels on rock-bottom wages.

RMT national secretary Steve Todd said that the decline of British ratings in the North Sea over the years had been dramatic.

"Companies appear to be practising 'under-the-table

discrimination' by refusing applications for jobs from experienced British seafarers while employing low-cost workers from outside instead.

"We see more and more British workers being put out of work and put on the dole," he said.

Steve Todd said that the union, along with others, was determined to make progress on the issue.

"We have evidence of Indian-flagged vessels employing Indian seafarers on 500 dollars a month.

"That equals around a pound an hour and in some cases less," he said.

He said that other European seafarers were being forced out of the industry because of low pay.

RMT is also calling on the oil and gas industry and Oil and Gas UK to seriously look at the damage being done to the long term skill needs of the industry as there will be a shortage of 15,000 skilled workers over the next five years.

"We have to put pressure on the gas companies to get this stopped - and put pressure on the immigration service in how they issue work permits," he said.

ITF-affiliated unions are

concerned there are an increasing number of FOC and so-called "national" registered vessels operating in the North Sea employing low cost labour.

In addition, vessels registered in the Norwegian 1st registry (NOR) are now being reflagged as a consequence of the unfair competition from other registers whilst continuing regular operation on the Norwegian Continental Shelf, replacing Norwegian seafarers with other nationalities on wage and working conditions far below Norwegian wages and working conditions.

Norwegian Maritime Officers' Association spokesman Captain Hans Sande said that it was a problem facing all unions operating in the region.

"The fact that the ship owner has several national second registers to shop among, creates a situation where the traditional registers cannot compete.

"As long as the policy of UK, Norway and Denmark is to keep the north sea open for "free competition", there is no way that we can maintain sustainable recruitment in the long run," he said .

The ITF insists that employers should uphold traditional seafarers' right to compete for jobs servicing the

petroleum industry on the North Sea Continental Shelf based on acceptable wages and working conditions. ■

NEW RFA CONVENOR



New Royal Fleet Auxiliary convenor Ian Boyle (right) has taken over from Andy Clare who is returning to sea.

There was a delay in Ian starting in his new post servicing RFA members following his election as he was working in the Falklands aboard RFA Black Rover as a Seamen grade 1a.

Andy said that he had enjoyed his five years as a convenor.

"Ian will have his hands full with disciplines, pay and pension issues, recruiting members, ship visits and generally supporting members and dealing with issues that arise," he said. National secretary Steve Todd thanked Andy for his service to the union, "Our RFA membership has grown with Andy's hard work".

RMT WINS PENSIONS VICTORY

RMT has won a pensions victory over the Chamber of Shipping by securing the right of seafarers and offshore workers to be included in the National Employers Saving Trust (NEST) established by the last Labour government in the Pensions Act 2008.

The exclusion of RMT members from the 2008 Act was uncovered by union officials and the Parliamentary group of MPs secured a meeting with the LibDem Pensions Minister in the Coalition government Steve Webb in November 2010.

Following that meeting, the union provided some information to the civil servants in the Department for Work and Pensions and in July 2011 the Minister wrote to Parliamentary group convenor John McDonnell with a commitment to amend the Pensions Act 2008 to automatically enroll seafarers and offshore workers on NEST, and, crucially that "the location of the employer would not be a

key determining factor in deciding whether an individual is ordinarily working in GB, nor would their nationality or place of residence, or indeed the country of registration of the ship".

Towards the end of last year, the Chamber of Shipping made another attempt to de-rail automatic enrolment for seafarers by releasing media stories that seafarers and offshore workers who did not have a UK bank account or were not paid in sterling would create too many problems for shipping companies to be able to comply with NEST.

RMT national officer Steve Todd and John McDonnell met with the Minister to discuss the Chamber's latest effort to use jurisdiction arguments to allow shipping companies to squirm out of their legal responsibilities to provide basic protections for their employees.

During the meeting RMT proved that the Chamber's objections to automatic enrolment were baseless, as

savings contributions to NEST would be paid by the employer, not by the individual employee and shipping companies were well versed in the use of UK bank accounts and the conversion of other currencies into sterling.

The Minister accepted these arguments and confirmed that the government will extend automatic enrolment on NEST to seafarers and offshore workers. The Minister is in the process of drawing up the regulations to amend the Pensions Act 2008 in order to make this happen and the Parliamentary group will be closely monitoring this process.

The government has asked RMT shipping and offshore members to tell their union if their employer is ducking their legal responsibility to automatically include their staff on approved savings schemes such as NEST.

Steve Todd said that it was a significant victory that established a precedent that will assist in other shipping

sector campaigns where the Chamber is using spurious or exaggerated jurisdiction arguments, most notably in the campaign to ensure that the National Minimum Wage is paid to workers on all vessels working in UK territorial waters, an injustice that stains the reputation of the shipping industry.

"We will continue to work to ensure that all seafarers and offshore workers will have a statutory savings scheme to support them in their retirement years, and step in to expose where wealthy shipping companies are attempting to prop up their profits by side stepping the legal responsibility to provide and contribute to an approved employee savings scheme.

"The shipping industry may well have financial and political clout but RMT will always stand up and fight the aggressive lobbying of the Chamber where it infringes on our members' rights and entitlements," he said. ■

NORWEGIANS STRIKE AGAINST SOCIAL DUMPING

Following a general strike in Norway, the country's TUC (LO) voted unanimously against government plans to implement the EU Temporary and Agency Workers Directive which would spark widespread social dumping in the country.

Norwegians trade unionists argue that the directive is being used to deregulate the labour market in order to allow the displacement of local workers on permanent contracts with foreign agency workers.

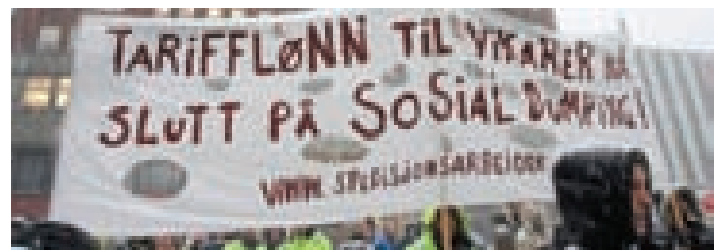
The implementation of the directive will undermine Norwegian Labour laws and introduce the large scale use of temporary and agency workers, forcing out permanent workers,

weaken workers' rights and collective agreements.

The directive also gives final authority over Norwegian employment legislation to the Court of Justice of the European Free Trade Association States (EFTA Court), a supranational judicial body responsible for the three EFTA/EEA members Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

This court is very similar to the EU's European Court of Justice (ECJ) which has already made some draconian judgments striking down trade union collective bargaining rights in nearby Sweden and Finland in the Laval and Viking cases.

The EU court ruled that under



Banner: No to social dumping

the EU treaties business rights to 'establishment' overrule basic trade union rights, rulings that have not gone unnoticed in Norway.

Backing the action, International Transport Workers' Federation general secretary David Cockroft said that Norway's legislation on contract labour and temporary employment was some of the

best there is.

"The directive doesn't just risk taking a good law and making it mediocre, it could also strip the rights currently enjoyed by workers and open the floodgates to their replacement by precariously employed temporary and agency staff – who will themselves get inferior employment protection," he said. ■

RIP-OFF RAIL COMPANIES EXPLOIT EU RULES AND MCNULTY

European rail bosses including British outfit the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) met in Brussels earlier this month to plan out a strategy for bleeding transport services across the continent by exploiting EU rules and its austerity and privatisation drive.

'Britain's Rail Value for Money report - An inspiration for future EU Rail Policy?', hosted by Labour MEP Brian Simpson, heard directly from Sir Roy McNulty on his report's implications for the European Commission's forthcoming proposals.

The meeting comes weeks after the consultative European parliament rubberstamped a

Commission dictat to 'recast' all EU rail directives in order to 'establish a single European railway area'.

This EU privatisation model, first implemented in Britain, demands a split between train operations and infrastructure and 'open access' rules in order to fragment the industry to force market mechanisms into the industry.

European rail bosses are pointing to the British government's McNulty report as the way forward to rolling out the disastrous experiment of rail privatisation across the EU.

The head of the European rail bosses organisation CER, Executive Director Libor Lochman, said that the McNulty

report raised questions that are important for all European countries.

"What steps can be taken to achieve greater cost efficiency? How can one ensure that the incentives of infrastructure managers and operators are effectively aligned so as to improve the efficiency of the rail sector as a whole?"

"The case of Great Britain demonstrates the need for sufficient flexibility to allow member states to develop national rail sector models that truly deliver," he said.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that it was a disgrace that a British Labour MEP was lining up with the rip-off rail companies with the sole

intention of bumping up the profits and dividends of the same corporate welfare scroungers who had bled the British railways dry.

"This gathering also shows that McNulty is nothing less than a trail blazer for the whole EU drive to deregulate, cut jobs and services and ramp up fares in the dash for profits at the expense of public service.

"RMT will be linking up with rail trade unions from across Europe in Brussels on March 28 to unite the fight back against the greed merchants who are using EU policy directives to smash up rail services from the North Sea to the Mediterranean," he said.



PARIS PROTEST AGAINST EU RAIL PRIVATISATION

French and Italian rail unions have taken "symbolic" action in protest at the first privately operated, European Commission-backed international train route between Italy and France, writes Jeff Apter in Paris.

Hundreds of French railway workers led by the CGT and SUD unions and a delegation of Italian rail workers organised a "welcoming committee" at the Gare de Lyon in Paris for the train from Venice.

Thello, a company set up by Trenitalia, Italy's national train operator and France-based Veolia-Transdev, chartered the train.

Grégory Roux of the CGT train workers' union said the venture was "symbolic of the European Union's choice of policies that seek to destroy public services".

He proposed a different model for the rail sector, including co-operation with public service operators of other



countries.

"Privatisation aims at pitching worker against worker and ultimately does not bring down prices for the travelling public", he said, stressing that the demonstrators were equally concerned for safety. He pointed to Britain's sad record since privatisation, citing the Ladbroke Grove tragedy in 1999, the 2000 Hatfield crash and Selby the following year as

examples.

Ramiero Casini representing Italian union CUB called for "unity against European Union directives that promote opening public services to competition through social dumping on the backs of working people".

He said that Thello workers are called on to work up to 16 hours at a stretch and earned 20-40 per cent less than the railway workers employed in

Italy's public service transport operations. Meanwhile, over 800 employees recently had been made redundant by Trenitalia's Wagons Lits subsidiary.

Thello is applying to France's equivalent of Railtrack for slots to operate a Paris-Rome night service and a Lyon-Chambéry-Turin day route from this summer and is considering bidding for a franchise to operate in Britain. ■



FIT FOR LONDON OR FIT FOR CUTS?

RMT executive committee Janine Booth looks at Transport for London for job cuts

Transport for London is getting ready for the Olympic Games – and for cutting jobs and standards afterwards.

TfL is taking all 20,000 plus staff through a three-hour event called 'Fit for London', hoping to prepare them to accept these cuts.

The event starts with a trip around the Olympic park, although for some, this took place in the dark! After coffee and croissants in an exhibition area with models and pictures of the Olympic park, staff were ushered into a large hall for a slick show, featuring video messages from Transport Commissioner Peter Hendy and London Mayor Boris Johnson.

The company's message was "we must change" and "we don't want to fail like Woolworths and Virgin Megastore". Mike Brown, Managing Director of London Underground and London Rail, appeared in person, telling attendees that, "the transformation has only just begun", laced with "we are not immune from the economic slowdown" and "we need to be flexible".

Staff then had a short time to ask questions. Mr Brown would not guarantee that there would be no further cuts, and ominously declared that TfL would "rebalance" its staffing numbers and eliminate "duplication" of work.

He admitted that the Public-Private Partnership was "one of the worst things that's ever happened to London Underground". RMT said that at the time, while LU management implemented it. He also said that he wanted jobs currently carried out by private contractors to be done by directly-employed London Underground staff. RMT will hold him to this.

He admitted that LU had removed too many staff from stations and would restore some of these. Again, we said that at the time, and we will now pressure LU to bring back as many posts as possible.

Answers intended to sound reassuring instead sounded threatening. Mike Brown's assurance that "Any driver who is currently in a cab can remain driving for their whole career" was qualified with "provided

they are flexible about work locations", and he commented approvingly on automatic train operation on the Paris Metro and Docklands Light Railway. London Underground drivers, he said, will be performing different duties than they do now.

Mr Brown promised that stations will remain staffed throughout the traffic day. This overlooks the fact that nearly one-third are already unstaffed for part of the day, and signals LU's intention to remove staff from stations during night-time engineering hours.

Station staff were alarmed to hear that ticket machines will soon be able to perform all transactions that ticket offices can, and that staff should not be "behind glass" or "slumped on a gateline" (chance would be a fine thing!).

The company's claim that "new technology means better reliability and therefore no need for current maintenance regimes to be adhered to" can be translated as "we will use new technology as a pretext to carry out maintenance checks less often, risking cuts in jobs and

safety standards".

Station supervisor at Bank and former RMT president and John Leach said: "It was a surreal experience.

"You turn up for a bus tour to see the Olympic site, you wonder how on earth London Underground/TfL will ever cope with the crowds, and find out that on top of the job cuts they have already made, they will not rule out more," he said.

Bakerloo line driver Jim McDaid added: "from listening to the questions put forward by frontline staff, it appears there is real fear in the workplace for our future job security.

"And from listening to management's answers, it appears that fear is justified," he said.

The 'Fit for London' exercise costs around £30 per head, which totals around £780,000. Lost working hours could add £2,000,000 or more. No wonder RMT stations representative Malcolm Taylor commented that "people I spoke to thought it was not a good use of time and money, and were not 'sold' on Mike Brown's vision for the future." ■

HIGH SPEED RAIL—RMT'S VIEW



Secretary of State for Transport Justine Greening recently confirmed the go-ahead for the London-Birmingham domestic high-speed rail line (HS2).

Other than the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, the new line will be the first major railway line built in Britain since the end of the nineteenth century. Indeed, Britain lags a long way behind other rail networks in high speed rail lines (see table).

Commenting in August 2009 when the then Labour Secretary of State for Transport, Lord Adonis, announced plans to speed up the drive for a high speed network, RMT General Secretary, Bob Crow said: "We welcome this important announcement on the development of high-speed rail which clearly demolishes the case for the environmental disaster which is the planned third runway at Heathrow.

"If high-speed rail is the future we should stop throwing time, money and energy at the planned expansion of Heathrow and concentrate on pushing forward this progressive plan for green transport.

"This plan would give a massive boost to manufacturing and green jobs on the railways and should be moved forward without delay. We would argue strongly for public ownership and a fares policy which actively encourages rail travel," he said.

A national high-speed rail network will deliver passengers from city-centre to city-centre, support economic regeneration, create tens of thousands of jobs and tackle environmentally damaging carbon emissions from domestic and short-haul

flights.

RMT's view is that the high-speed network should extend into Scotland, connecting both Glasgow and Edinburgh, at the earliest possible time and Government should also develop plans for high-speed routes to the south west of England and into Wales.

In order to ensure that unnecessary operational interfaces and fragmentation, which have had such a damaging effect on the railways since privatisation, do not hamper the development of a safe and efficient high speed rail network, HS2 should be integrated into a publicly owned, national network. That means there should be one infrastructure owner/controller across the whole network for both the new high-speed network and the 'classic' routes.

As the June 2008 RMT-commissioned "*Who says there is no alternative*" report on high speed rail and Heathrow Airport expansion explains: "A high-speed rail network has most to offer as part of an integrated transport system, not replacing local and regional rail services, but linked to them. Integration offers the prospect of both train stations and airports becoming coordinated transport hubs. But integration will remain an unattainable goal under the UK current transport set-up: uncoordinated; deregulated; privatised. Government, in conjunction with local and regional authorities, needs to set

out a long-term transport strategy, framed by what it wants transport to achieve for the country's citizens, its environment and its economy".

The economic benefits of a high-speed network are well documented. WS Atkins published research in 2006 which found that high-speed links from London, via Heathrow, to Birmingham and Leeds would cost £31bn to build and deliver benefits £63bn over a sixty year period.

In August 2007, The Northern Way explained that the economic benefits of a high-speed link are substantial; they noted; "Research for the SRA in 2002/03 for example identified total benefits of a new high speed network linking London to the North West and North East and Scotland of £89.9billion giving a benefit ratio of over 2:1.

The benefits comprised £20.6 billion in additional revenue, £64.4billion in non-financial benefits (welfare gains by users and non-users) and £4.8billion in benefits from freeing up

capacity on the existing network".

In terms of creating jobs, the DfT's HS2 London to West Midlands Appraisal of Sustainability documents forecasts that HS2 could attract 30,000 jobs in London and the West Midlands. Furthermore 1,500 operational posts will be created and 9,000 jobs constructing the line.

Research published by KPMG in February 2010 suggests that a national high speed rail network could, as businesses become more productive and offer higher wages due to productivity improvements deliver up to 42,000 additional jobs.

However, important as a high speed network is in the fight against climate change and the renaissance of the rail industry, RMT's view is that to simply invest on 'grand projects', to the detriment of the existing network, runs the risk of repeating some of the mistakes made on the French railway network in recent decades.

The TGV network is rightly

lauded across the world.

However, investment in regional networks has often suffered, the result being inadequate local service provision and old rolling stock. Additionally, the track on the traditional routes has often been subjected to 'maintenance holidays' leading to widespread temporary speed restrictions; a further disincentive for people to make use of the local and regional services.

Finally, manufacturing and maintaining the high speed stock represents an opportunity

to create high skilled employment in the domestic train manufacturing sector, still reeling from losing out on the Thameslink rolling stock contract.

The train building contracts for the high speed fleet have included the kind of social impact clauses that are routinely used in France and Germany as a mechanism to supporting domestic train manufacturing capacity and the impact of the contract award on the wider engineering supply chain. ■

HIGH SPEED RAIL IN EUROPE (KILOMETRES)

Country	In Operation	Under Construction
Belgium	209	0
France	1, 872	234
Germany	1, 285	378
Italy	923	0
The Netherlands	120	0
Spain	1, 604	2,219
Switzerland	35	72
United Kingdom	113	0
Turkey	235	510

THE WORST RAILWAYS IN EUROPE

A report published by the *Just Economics* think tank has found that rail services are less affordable, less comfortable, slower, more inefficient and more expensive here than in other European countries.

The RMT-commissioned report, *A Fare Return*, reveals that two decades of private profiteering and underinvestment in infrastructure which has seen fares go through the roof, has dumped our railways at the bottom of the league compared to other parts of Europe.

The research, a counter-blast to the McNulty rail review and the expected Government Command Paper, shows that on four out of six key indicators - fares, electrification, high speed and passengers to seats - the UK comes bottom or second to

bottom. In other parts of Europe railways, now threatened with the EU privatisation model of fragmentation first implemented in Britain, are thirty to forty per cent cheaper to operate.

Just Economics looked at the relationship between costs and outcomes, emphasising the importance of an expanded concept of value for money that reflects the full spectrum of what passengers are looking for from the railways, and what is good for society and the environment.

It found that British railways are the poorest performer by some distance and figures show that rail services are:

- Less affordable
- Less comfortable
- Slower
- More inefficient

- Less environmentally friendly

"In terms of bang for buck, not only does the UK come bottom of the index of outcomes but it also spends a relatively large amount of money to achieve this woeful result," said report author Eilis Law.

She said that underperforming railways carry a considerable cost both for passengers and for the public purse, whereas a more affordable, more comfortable and faster railway would generate £324 billion in social value - £9.2 billion a year - between now and 2050.

"We also estimate that the social, economic and environmental benefits of achieving a modal shift from road to rail in terms of reduced congestion, accidents and emissions could potentially

reach £154.8 billion by 2050.

"When we combine this estimate with our previous figures showing improved outcomes for passengers we calculate that the total social value of the strategic shift that we propose in this report is in the region of £479 billion," said Eilis Law.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that the latest research showed that the failures of privatisation were costing Britain hundreds of billions of pounds in social value.

"Instead of addressing that issue and looking at the cheaper and socially beneficial alternative of a publicly owned railway, McNulty proposes more cuts and even longer gold-plated franchises for the private train operators" he said. ■



LEGAL

RMT recovers millions of pounds in compensation and other legal victories on behalf of members, below are a few of the latest successful cases

NETWORK RAIL PAYS SUBSTANTIAL DAMAGES TO TRACK WORKER

An RMT member who developed a debilitating condition in his hands from using vibrating tools during 12 hour shifts for Network Rail has received substantial compensation of nearly £70,000.

The track maintenance worker, from Nottingham, has had to give up his work on the railways after developing Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) - a condition which leads to numbness and muscle weakness - in both hands as a result of exposure to excessive levels of vibration.

The dad of three, who had worked on the railways for eight years, has received surgery on both his hands but the condition has caused permanent nerve damage meaning he can no longer work in heavy industry.

He was exposed to vibrating tools whilst working 12 hour shifts for Network Rail from 2006 to 2008. He was working up to 80 hours in overtime a month and had no idea that the excessive vibration in the tools he was using would lead to him being unemployed. His employer failed to warn him and to ensure that simple measures, such as regular rest breaks and rotating the tools used, were taken.

The member noticed pins and needles in his hands which then began to go numb. He asked to see his employer's doctor but never received an appointment. In the end his own GP signed him off sick.

In total he needed 14 months off work while he awaited, and then recovered from, the surgery. But it failed to improve his condition sufficiently and he was deemed medically unfit for the work.

Having left school at 16 to become a labourer, he is now attending college to gain qualifications in order to try to find an alternative career.

He can no longer undertake any type of task with his hands for long. He says it has been particularly hard not being able to play tennis or cricket with his children for longer than ten minutes at a time.

"All I've known is working on the railways and in construction so I'm now struggling to find a job. I've had to go back to school to gain qualifications which I hope will improve my chances of finding alternative work.

"When I was at Network Rail I worked all the overtime I could as it improved my wage. If I had known what the future held I would have turned down that money and taken my health instead," he said.

Following his diagnosis he contacted the union which instructed its lawyers Thompsons Solicitors to investigate a claim for compensation.

Thompsons argued that Network Rail should have monitored its employees use of vibrating tools to ensure it was within a safe level and to take action to protect him if it was not.

Network Rail admitted

liability and settled the claim out of court for £68,000. RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that Carpal Tunnel Syndrome can be a debilitating condition which can have a life changing impact on those who work in manual labour.

"This member is now restricted in the jobs market because his employers didn't do enough to protect him from this hazard," he said.

Jane Toplis from Thompsons Solicitors added that the courts considered that employers should have known the risk workers face when using vibrating tools on a regular basis since 1975.

"There is no excuse for precautions not to have been taken and this member will suffer the rest of his life because Network Rail ignored clear guidelines on this matter," he said.

- While inspecting a train a member fell due to a piece of plywood being placed across the track causing a knee injury. Network Rail insurers refused to negotiate and after court proceedings the member was awarded £130,000 in damages.
- A member was travelling as a passenger on a bus which collided head-on with another vehicle being driven on the wrong side of the road. The member suffered whiplash to the neck and back and following detailed negotiations it was possible to win £3,000 in compensation.
- A train conductor member was injured as the train pulled away when the PIS system above the cab window fell down hitting him on the head causing head, neck and back. The other side's insurers refused to negotiate a settlement and court proceedings commenced leading a satisfactory settlement of £8,000.
- A train conductor slipped off the door step and his leg went between the platform and the train injuring his left leg. The final payment for damages was £1,250.
- A train driver was injured when the automatic doors would not open and the member had to manually open them continually for a number of stops despite being in pain. He suffered injuries to his shoulder and neck and the union's solicitors negotiated a settlement of £2,521.86p.
- A member was involved in a traffic accident leading a hand injury. The union's solicitors negotiated a settlement of £5,500 with no deductions as ever.
- A member working as platform staff was cleaning windows and doors of the station when a metal frame fell and hit the member on the head, causing head injuries and dizziness. Following negotiations it was possible to win £2,600 in compensation.
- A train fitter member was lifting carriages out of bogies

and fitting them into new bogies. He went to close an electrical socket he was using which would not close. He applied pressure and it suddenly shut trapping his finger, causing a hairline fracture to left index finger. The member received £2,000 in compensation settlement without court proceedings.

- A Tube maintenance worker received £2,600 in compensation after suffering an electric shock while inspecting a drivers' cab.
- A member was injured when a faulty door control panel cover fell on their head resulting in a head injury. The

other side's insurers refused to negotiate and it was necessary to commence court proceedings leading to the member receiving £6,750.

- A member was involved with a fatality on the railway and suffered post-traumatic stress disorder. Following correspondence and a submission of evidence the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority awarded the sum of £10,200.
- While carrying out maintenance work in a tunnel removing stalactites a member fell and suffered injury to his back. It was necessary to begin court

proceedings before the member was awarded £21,000 in damages.

- A signaller working for Network Rail was injured when operating defective equipment. Following details negotiations a settlement was made for £3,642.
- A member slipped and fell on a staircase at work covered in dust and debris from a decaying wall causing a back injury. After refusing to negotiate it was necessary to take the other side to court leading to a settlement of £6250.
- A train guard injured a knee after slipping on a very

slippery substance on the platform. The member received damages of £1,600.

- A member received £50,000 in compensation after breaking an ankle while walking the rail tracks during the course of his employment.
- A lorry driver member received £2,200 after his cab and trailer turned onto its side while turning due to the fact that it was overloaded with three rigid axle lorries due for export.
- A member received £6,750 in compensation after being attacked by a dog while delivering a package. ■

DISMISSAL RIGHTS AND HEALTH AND SAFETY

Andrew Hutson of Thompsons Solicitors explains how a recent appeal tribunal ruling sheds more light on the rights of employers to dismiss for staff health and safety reasons.

Employees have the right not to be dismissed unfairly if they have one year's employment (rising to two on April 6 2012). However, that depends on whether the tribunal thinks that the reason the employer relied on for their dismissal was reasonable or not.

This is highly likely if it was for a breach of health and safety rules, but what if another employee had breached the rules and not been sacked in similar circumstances? Would that not be unfair?

Mr Glowacki, an electrician who had worked for his employer for three years, certainly thought so. Part of his job involved repairing production machinery and equipment and on 6 July 2010, he was asked to repair a machine known as a "palletiser". He did so by disabling some of the safety features on it, contrary to the warning notices.

The company took a dim view of this potentially serious breach of health and safety procedure and told him that he would be asked to attend a disciplinary hearing in a few days to decide what action it

would take.

The panel conducting the hearing found that he had been guilty of gross misconduct and dismissed him, a decision which he appealed unsuccessfully. He then brought a claim of unfair dismissal in the tribunal, on the basis that four other employees had also breached health and safety rules in the past, but had not been dismissed.

The tribunal looked at the cases he relied on, but rejected three of them straight away as not being similar enough.

However, it found that the fourth case was comparable and that Mr Glowacki had been treated differently to another employee, Mr Stevens, who had suffered a serious injury when he breached health and safety procedure in 2009. However the company had not dismissed him.

The tribunal held that the dismissal was not fair within the terms of section 98(4) of the Employment Rights Act 1996, as the cases were so similar factually. The company appealed that decision, arguing that the two situations were, in reality, very different.

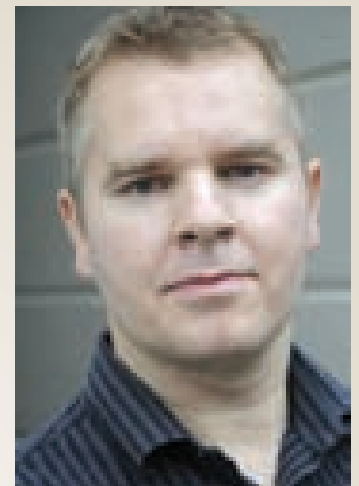
First of all, it pointed out that Mr Stevens had been seriously injured and was unable to work because of ill health. In addition, through his own solicitor, he had asked the company not to proceed with the investigation into what had happened.

Otherwise, the employer said, he would have been subjected to the same disciplinary proceedings as Mr Glowacki and dismissed for gross misconduct for a serious breach of health and safety rules. As it happens, Mr Stevens was subsequently dismissed for incapacity.

The Employment Appeal Tribunal said that it was clear from the judgment that the tribunal had indirectly accepted the reason why Mr Glowacki was treated differently to Mr Stevens (because of his injury).

It had also found that, had he not gone off sick and later been dismissed for incapacity, he would have been subject to disciplinary proceedings and sacked for a breach of health and safety rules.

The EAT held that the question therefore to ask was not whether the tribunal



thought that there was a good enough reason to dismiss Mr Glowacki for gross misconduct, but whether a reasonable employer would have gone ahead and dismissed him.

Given that the tribunal had found that the reason why Mr Stevens had been treated differently was because of his injury, it was inconsistent to then hold that the difference in treatment had not been sufficiently explained by the company.

The EAT therefore overturned the tribunal decision. As the dismissal could not be described as unfair because the two men had been treated differently, there was no other basis on which it could be held to have been an unfair dismissal. ■

RMT STANDS UP FOR ITS MEMBERS

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PROTECTING AND PROMOTING OUR MEMBERS' INTERESTS





LEADING ON SAFETY

The six Network Rail lead health and safety reps, Six RMT Adrian Yates, Julian Thomas, Adrian Fricker, Alan Clews, Steve Swift and Sean McGowan above with Bob Crow, were formally appointed last year and have helped to appoint the relevant local and area safety reps.

Julian Thomas said that

their role was to support and implement of the core elements of health and safety issues to be applied to infrastructure maintenance and operations and assist reps and management in establishing meetings and agendas.

"We also monitor and report on the number of health and safety meetings being held,

monitor the implementation of the new procedure and provide the necessary reports for discussion at the agreed six month review.

"We work with Network Rail and its contractors to promote good practice in the development of joint health safety agendas and the introduction of collaborative

working with infrastructure contractors and others in a two-way exchange of good practice.

"Our joint aim and objective is to improve the health and safety of our workforce," said Julian who is lead health and safety rep for Wales and West Maintenance and Operations.



DISCUSSING SAFETY AT NETWORK RAIL

Over 100 Network Rail trade union health and safety reps attended a conference at the company's Westwood training centre recently to exchange views with safety managers and the six lead union health and safety elected last year.

The six are all RMT members, Adrian Yates, Julian Thomas, Adrian Fricker, Alan Clews, Steve Swift, Sean McGowan and represent areas covering the whole country in both maintenance and operations.

Conference was opened with presentations from Network Rail's head of occupational health and safety Chris Hext and lead health and safety rep and RMT member Adrian Fricker on collaborative working and the need to work

together with the common goal of improving safety.

Director of safety and sustainability Gareth Llewellyn discussed improving safety, risks and vision and the need to work together to get safety right. He described how he spent much of his time liaising with the ORR rather than focussing on improving safety in the workplace.

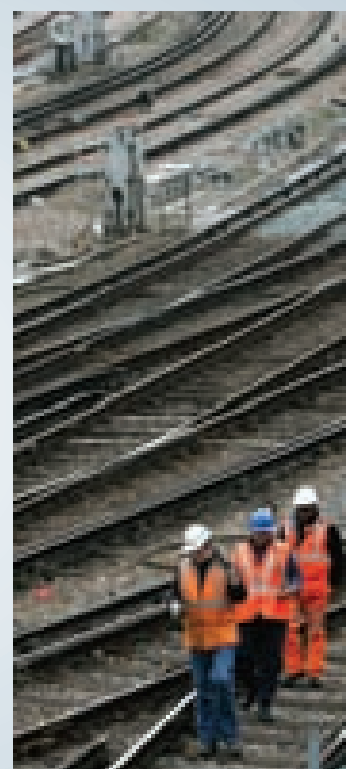
RMT assistant general secretary Mick Cash spoke of how safety reps had rights and managers had responsibilities and both needed to focus on health and well being. He spoke of the challenges contained in the McNulty report and the need for better and improved joint health and safety working.

Delegates broke up into eight groups to discuss the main issues facing the industry. Lead

reps Sean McGowan discussed representation and consultation. Adrian Yates and Alan Clews looked at organising and RMT regional organiser Steve Swift discussed the importance of communication while Julian Thomas dealt with recruitment and retention.

RMT health and safety officer Paul Clyndes went through the results of the questionnaire completed by the Area Safety reps prior to the event which gave a general feel for how the reps are currently achieving in their role, and common issues and what was and wasn't being done throughout Network rail.

Chris Hext closed conference by explaining that it was just the start and that there would be route meetings for health and safety reps. ■



TEBAY

one last chance

Lancaster branch holds memorial for four RMT members killed eight years ago this month by a runaway wagon with a faulty braking system

RMT marked the eighth anniversary of Tebay rail disaster this month with a call for Network Rail to take action prevent a repeat of the tragic safety failure from ever happening again.

In the early hours of February 15 2004 a 16-tonne wagon with a faulty brake system broke free and travelled at speed three miles down Shap Summit, taking the lives of Colin Buckley, Darren Burgess, Chris Waters and Gary Tindall and leaving a further five workers suffering a range of physical and psychological trauma.

Since the incident RMT has pressed Network Rail to developing a secondary protection and warning system aimed at preventing another Tebay.

Eight years on and such a mechanism still hasn't been introduced leaving rail workers out in the safety critical environment at continuing and unnecessary risk.

RMT's Lancaster branch organised a special

commemoration at the Tebay memorial just south of Tebay village.

RMT senior assistant general secretary Mick Cash said: "Today we remember our colleagues who so tragically lost their lives because of the safety failures at Tebay on that dark, early morning eight years ago.

"But remembering those men is not enough, RMT members are rightly angry and disgusted that a secondary protection system, which has been the subject of countless meetings, still hasn't been introduced eight years on," he said.

In the immediate aftermath of the accident Network Rail introduced the temporary use of 'slippers' on all trailers.

Yet this was discontinued following an industry risk assessment which showed that the risk of slippers being left on the track following a possession could result in derailments to passenger or freight trains following the handover of a possession. As a result RMT demands for secondary protection were over ruled by



The Tebay Memorial



industry.

Due to the persistence of the local RMT branch and the active campaigning by some of who were injured, the union pushed for Network Rail's Safe Plant Working Group (SPWG) to set up a group to look at the issue.

The group first met in March 2008 considered an analysis of runaway incidents and sought to establish common causes and possible solutions. The group then considered what the rail industry had done post-Tebay to protect workers.

The group believed that up to 20 per cent of the runaway incidents analysed could have been prevented by some type of secondary protection. Finally a paper was presented on available forms of secondary protection, their design, uses, advantages and associated risks.

Network Rail agreed to source a company that could manufacture an item of equipment that would provide additional secondary protection to workers.

The first trials of the treadle (see picture) demonstrated that it could provide a 12-second warning of runaways to track workers yet a year passed and little progress had been made.

Further trials proved successful but little progress was made. By the end of last year Network Rail finally promised the equipment would be delivered to an agreed timetable.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow has now written to Network Rail to demand that the company stops prevaricating and gives a definitive timetable for the guaranteed introduction of the secondary protection system.

"I know, from press reports, that the money originally allocated for Director's bonuses is being considered for safety projects.

"Perhaps if this money was channelled into this project my members would begin to recognise the absolute commitment to safety which I believe you hold.

"The company's other programmes will not do what secondary protection will do, which is to give track workers one last chance to escape with their lives should all the other systems fail.

"One last chance is all we are asking for; you have it in your power to give them that last chance," he said. ■

President's column



INVEST IN SAFE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

We mark the eighth anniversary of the Tebay rail disaster, where RMT members Colin Buckley, Darren Burgess, Chris Waters and Gary Tindall lost their lives.

On 15 February 2004, a 16-tonne, steel-laden, railway trolley - its hydraulic brakes disabled by a sub-contractor to avoid the expense of maintaining them - ran away into the darkness at Shap summit, the highest point on Britain's railway. Three miles later it ploughed through a work gang killing four men outright and leaving five physically and psychologically traumatised.

Eight years on RMT members are asking, where is the secondary protection and warning systems that could have saved our members that night? Mandatory secondary protection on Network Rail infrastructure is still not a reality.

At a Lancaster Trades Council meeting last year, a retired RMT member told me: "we support NHS staff, council workers and teachers fighting for their pensions, but we have unfinished business with Network Rail over secondary protection that we can't forget".

RMT's Lancaster branch organised a commemoration event at the memorial south of Tebay village attended by assistant general secretary Mick Cash, RMT executive member Kevin Morrison, regional organisers Andy Warnock-Smith, John MacDonald and Craig Johnston and RMT members and their families including Tom Angus who was amongst those on duty at Tebay in 2004.

As Bob Crow has said, Network Rail must stop prevaricating and give us a definitive timetable for the guaranteed introduction of secondary protection.

After Tebay, Network Rail introduced 'slippers' (scotches to inhibit wheel movement on a gradient), which it discontinued due to concerns about passenger train derailments from 'slippers' left on the line.

RMT's 2007 AGM backed the campaign for secondary protection led by Tom Angus and Lancaster Branch. In January 2008, RMT pressure on Network Rail revealed 20% of runaway vehicles are uncontrolled by any secondary protection.

In August 2008 the first 'rear guard' prototype was demonstrated at

Shrewsbury and trials took place in May 2009.

In March 2010 a further trial was commissioned on a South Devon heritage railway and in January 2011 testing on the mainline at Newton Abbot proved the device works.

In November 2011 Network Rail promised deployment before the 8th anniversary of Tebay in February 2012. That promise blatantly wasn't kept and questions are being asked over Network Rail's commitment to the project.

RMT's National Health and Safety Conference this month in Doncaster will hear members' safety concerns with renewed urgency.

This month a Parliamentary group on Occupational Safety and Health described lethal dust fibres in schools as a "national scandal", warning 75 per cent of schools expose children, teachers and other staff to carcinogens. Over 140 teachers died from the rare asbestos-related cancer, mesothelioma in the past 10 years.

The Health and Safety Executive reports asbestos causes 4,000 work-related deaths in the UK every year.

The prevalence of asbestos throughout transport and energy industries is well known. Not only was asbestos the fire retardant of choice in building materials, its use was endemic in train and shipbuilding for lagging and insulation.

As aging structures deteriorate, workers and passengers are increasingly exposed to the risk of inhaling these deadly fibres.

This all demonstrates the need for a National Transport Plan to renew, refurbish and rebuild Britain's transport infrastructure safely and with proper environmental and social planning. This would be an essential tool to create skilled, union jobs of great benefit to society now and in the future.

Unfortunately, the current Con Dem coalition government is making £9 billion of cuts to public transport spending and the Labour opposition confirms that it will keep £6 billion of these.

RMT will continue to put forward the alternative for public investment in a fully renationalised, publicly controlled transport network.

Alex Gordon



BUS WORKERS' LEARNING CENTRE

After a lot of hard work a new learning centre opens in Mansfield in conjunction with Stagecoach East Midlands

RMT Learning has opened a new learning centre at the Mansfield bus maintenance depot with a fully functional IT suite registered as a UK-Online centre with provision for classroom-based learning sessions and all members of staff can access formal and informal learning opportunities.

Bus Driver and RMT lead Union Learning Representative (ULR) Sarah Gill worked tirelessly with her members and management to achieve this remarkable feat.

A disused stores room at the depot was identified as a potential facility and the process of getting a learning agreement in place began.

Detailing the commitment from RMT Learning to support the centre at progressive steering group meetings with senior management, she also identified and negotiated with

preferred education provider, West Nott's College, to provide support. The working partnership of RMT and Stagecoach Eastmidlands has shown that by forward thinking from both parties this impressive facility has become a reality.

Abi Smith of West Notts Vision said that getting that centre up and running has been a fantastic achievement.

"We are looking forward to working in partnership with Stagecoach/RMT to support their members with their learning and development needs.

The opening was well attended by Stagecoach Eastmidlands employees, as well as Managing Director Gary Nolan, and representatives from RMT, Unionlearn and the team from West Nott's Vision.

All attendees sat a Skills for Life quiz to highlight that

learning is for all and to raise the profile of literacy and numeracy skills. Studies have shown that a company employing over 1,000 staff can lose up to £500,000 per year in lost productivity due to basic skills errors.

Stagecoach East Midlands managing director Gary Nolan said that it was a valuable project for both employees and for the company.

"Not only will it give our staff the opportunity to enhance their basic skills to a nationally recognised level, it will also allow them to develop skills in different areas should they wish to.

"The first time I saw Union Learning in action, I was pleasantly surprised by the interest shown and this is why I had no reservations in supporting this initiative.

"We are pleased to be

working together with RMT towards the development of this centre and look forward to it being used to its full potential," he said.

More than 10 per cent of staff have already accessed the centre, demonstrating the enthusiasm of members for learning, with some already thinking about Open University courses, accessible on-line at the centre. With support from Sarah and RMT Learning, these aspirations can be achieved.

Sarah Gill said that working to get the centre up and running had been a long process but it showed what can be achieved.

"I am looking forward to all the different courses we are looking to set up in New Year, everything from languages, literacy and numeracy classes, digital photography and anything else our members have an interest in," she said. ■



BOURNEMOUTH STATION HOSTS PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION

RMT Union Learning Rep Mark Carter organised a successful photography course recently and twelve portraits taken by Mark and five of his colleagues at South West Trains were shown as part of the World at Work Exhibition at Swindon Steam Museum.

The portraits were then shown in an exhibition in the Upper Waiting Hall of the Houses of Parliament, organised by Unions 21 and promoting the positive aspects of being a union member. They have now been moved to Bournemouth rail station after South West Trains paid for them to be reprinted in a larger format to better fit in to the station architecture.

After several of his colleagues showed an interest in photography, Mark approached Daniel Parker from Bournemouth and Poole College to help him organise a course and the tutor, local photographer Richard Jeffery, planned the course itself.

The students learned about light, apertures and composition, practicing on each other before being let loose on



RMT ULR Mark Carter (centre) at opening of exhibition

the travelling public at Bournemouth station. Armed with release forms giving permission for the images to be used, they took around 800 black and white portraits of passengers, which were then whittled down to the final twelve used in the exhibition.

Due to funding issues there have been changes at the college, but Mark is keen to use the success of the Changing Faces exhibition as a springboard to launch another photography course funded by the Workers' Educational Association.

This new course will be available to more learners and will take place away from the station to give them the opportunity to take different types of photos, as well as learning to use picture editing software.

RMT education officer Andy Gilchrist attended the launch of the exhibition along with some of Mark's fellow photographers, colleagues and managers from South West Trains, and gave a short speech on the value of all types of adult learning.

"Without the 'working together' approach of South

West Trains and RMT around the Learning Agenda, this exhibition would never have happened and importantly these five people may never have found this hidden talent they possess.

"We can only wonder what skills, talents, and abilities lay hidden amongst the workforce in South West trains.

"RMT hopes that this example of everything that is good about the Union Learning work encourages all in South West trains to work together to make most of every employee's talents," he said. ■



Mo receives his award from Hilary Benn MP

MO RECEIVES HIS AWARD FROM HILARY BENN MP

A Union Learning Rep (ULR) for Northern Rail in Leeds for the past five and a half years and an RMT member for 33 years, Mo Ilyas has won the regional ULR award at the unionlearn Yorkshire and Humber Regional Conference in recognition for his achievements during the past year.

During 2011 Mo helped more than 30 railworkers to improve their computer skills and gain qualifications in literacy and numeracy and ICT. Railworkers often find it difficult to attend courses outside of work because of their complex shift patterns but he

overcame these barriers by setting up flexible learning programmes in the workplace. The RMT Learning Team provided support, by supplying laptops and organising internet access for the learners.

Courses are still running at Leeds station during 2012, please contact Mo for more information.

If you would like more information about courses running in your area or about the role of Union Learning Representatives, please contact the RMT Learning Team at Head Office 0207 529 8820/l.rutland@rmt.org.uk ■

VULNERABLE WORKERS CONFERENCE



RMT recently held the first ever trade-union organised conference for vulnerable workers at Congress House in London.

Since its launch in April 2010, RMT's Vulnerable Workers project has helped fight against the exploitation and bullying of vulnerable workers. Vulnerable workers are, according to the Trades Union Congress, people working in an environment where the risk of being denied employment rights is high, and who do not have the capacity or means to protect themselves from abuse.

Project manager Alec McFadden spoke about the stories he had encountered of workers being racially abused and instances of assault that had gone unreported due to workers fears of being dismissed from their jobs.

In 2010 RMT conducted a survey to identify where there were vulnerable workers in the transport sector and the problems they face. Although the results were worse than the union expected it allowed RMT to develop regional vulnerable workers training courses for union officials.

RMT has built a dedicated website and produced a DVD on the subject.

RMT assistant general secretary Pat Sikorski said that the union is winning pay victories at MITIE and Carlisle showing how RMT is fighting back and gaining improved conditions for its cleaning, catering and gateline members.

Ronnie Ash, a cleaner working for Carlisle, from Liverpool No. 5 branch spoke of how union membership at his depot had increased from just seven people to 35 after the union was asked to intervene on behalf of cleaning staff.

Clara Osagiede, an RMT rep employed by ISS Facility Services, spoke of how it was a key issue for RMT to convey news of its victories to vulnerable workers so that they can see how important it is for them to join the union. Richard Crane, another ISS worker from Finsbury Park branch, told the conference of a recent incident at Euston station where

management had decided to leave the headless corpse of a suicide victim in the cleaners mess room.

Alan Pottage of RMT's organising unit launched a new Vulnerable Workers DVD aimed at highlighting the issues affecting vulnerable workers in the workplace. Alan hoped that all branches would make this their top priority and said that if you "remove the vulnerable from vulnerable workers they are just workers".

Ivor Riddell from RMT Learning spoke to conference about the difficulties people face in the workplace if they struggle with literacy and numeracy issues. He quoted Nelson Mandela when he said "education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world" and that although people don't want to admit to their educational deficiencies to their employers there were lots of opportunities for people if they engage with their union. Labour MP John

McDonnell spoke about the RMT parliamentary group and how it can help vulnerable workers. The groups' key role is to support members by advocating their positions and by advising members on how they will be affected by changes to employment rights. He said "vulnerable workers have the least representation, the least strength within the workforce and employers know they can be isolated and picked off as they have done historically.

"Through training reps we are now better equipped to tackle these issues and indeed, the strategies employed by the RMT are now filtering through to other unions," he said.

He asked that members supply the Parliamentary group with the "raw materials", evidence of employer exploitation and abuse, so that they can write to employers and threaten to name and shame them on the floor of the house.



MODEST WAR HERO

Bill North, who served the union for over 40 years, has passed away at the age of 89 but he rarely spoke about his bravery and skill during his time at the controls of Lancaster bombers during the war against fascism.

His incredible story would have remained untold if it was not for neighbour Chris Keltie who has written a book about his exploits, including landing a bullet-riddled Lancaster in the pitch black on a French hillside in 1944 and saving his crew following an attack by the Luftwaffe.

Shortly before he died the *Daily Mirror* newspaper caught up with him and re-united him in an emotional meeting with Dennis Bartlett, one of the men he saved that night.

Bill said that he was never scared of flying but had a fear of letting his crew down.

"We had become the firmest of friends as well as comrades and had complete confidence in

each other's abilities.

"It would have been a bitter blow if any one of my crew had been killed," he said.

Bill explained that the attack happened after his bomber took part in a mass raid on a Nazi base in St Leu d'Esserent in France and bullets ripped through the plane, wounding Bill.

"We lost our port inner engine, flaps and one of our petrol tanks.

"I was shot in the left elbow and thigh, my left arm just dropped down useless because the nerve had been severed.

"The aircraft was responding to the controls so I gave the order 'abandon aircraft'.

"But then one of our men said his parachute harness had been shot off and he couldn't jump," he said.

Bill decided that the only option was to crash land as he would not leave anyone behind. He brought the aircraft down



over tree tops and landed tail down to stop the engines exploding on impact.

"My overriding feeling was one of immense relief and satisfaction my crew survived," he said.

Dennis pulled him from the wreckage and the crew were captured by the Nazis, spending the rest of the war in different POW camps, and the pair didn't meet until just before Bill died late last year.

Dennis said that the memories of that night 67 years ago remained with him.

"We all owe our lives to Bill, without a thought for himself and while terribly injured he stayed on board our doomed bomber in order to save us. That

still moves me to this day," he said.

Bill was not decorated but pointed out that no-one knew of the crash-landing.

"I was only too pleased we survived the war, every night we flew in the shadow of death I think about it every day.

Bill commenced employment with the NUR in 1939 as a Junior Clerk before joining the RAF on the outbreak of the war. He went on to hold a variety of posts before retiring as office manager in 1982.

Staff who remember him said that though Bill had a limp the rest of his life, no-one thought to ask him about it and he never spoke about the war. ■



VI REMEMBERED

Mrs Lavinia McPhearson, known as Mrs or Vi, has passed away at the age of 100 in a nursing home in Oxford.

She was the landlady for executive committee members before the union built its own accommodation at Clapham, Slater Mews.

From the mid-1970s to

2004 many EC members based outside of London stayed at Vi's lodgings commonly known in the union as the Highbury Hilton.

At the time lodgings in London were difficult to find at affordable prices as the lodging allowance fell short of hotel prices.

Former EC member Dave Gott said that many union activists will remember Vi and her Dachshund dogs.

"I'm sure all those who stayed there will remember her with thanks for her services to the union over the years.

"She was a real unsung heroine," he said. ■

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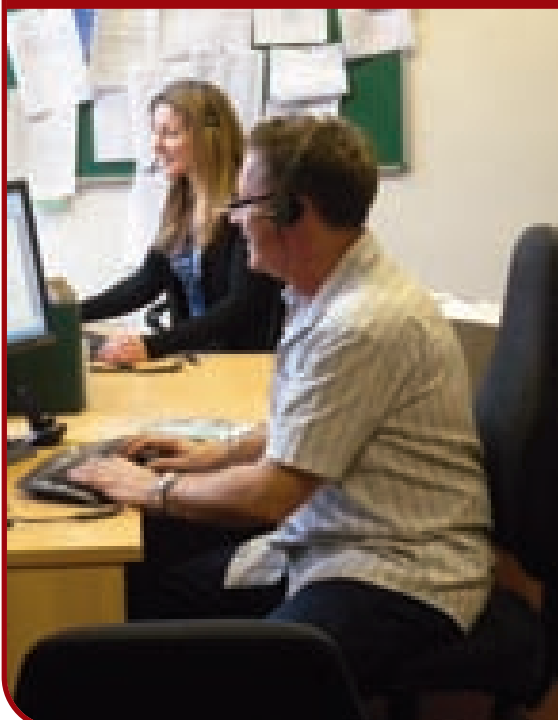
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(Now with two operators)

Keep your RMT membership details up-to-date

In the light of draconian anti-trade union laws that have been used against the union, members should keep their personal data up to date. It is also important to note that in order to keep members informed your union requires your mobile telephone number and email address.

Members can do this via the RMT website, telephone the RMT helpline above, or writing to the membership department at RMT head office, Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD.



LOST WAR GRAVE FOUND

Regional organiser John MacDonald finds grave of merchant seaman ancestor killed shortly after the end of World War One

My paternal grandmother's brother, John McLennon was a merchant seaman throughout the First World War. He came through the entire conflict unscathed, but was tragically killed two months after the armistice.

On January 19, 1919 the SS Northumbria was homeward bound from Baltimore. Off the coast of Middlesbrough she hit a mine and sank. Some of the crew including John made it into a lifeboat. However, the weather was so bad the lifeboat was swamped by heavy seas.

Five bodies were recovered some days later much further up the coast. Although it was believed that John's body was

one of those recovered, his family lived in the Outer Hebrides and in 1919 it was just not possible to travel to the north east of England. As a consequence, the family had no idea of the exact location of John's grave.

After doing some research I discovered that five bodies had been buried in the cemetery at Embleton in Northumberland. However, when I enquired if John was one of those buried there, I was told that he did not appear on the computer records. As not all names had been transferred to computer, it was possible that he was buried there. I decided to take a chance and make the trip.

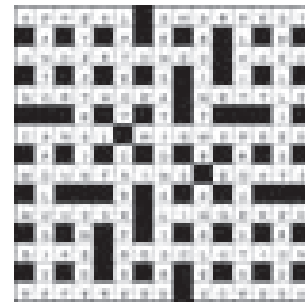
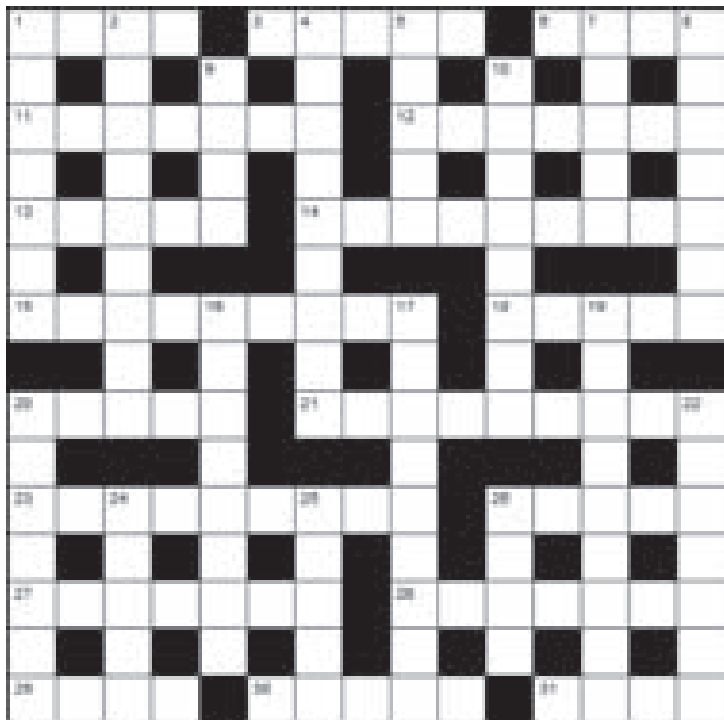
Accompanied by my two great friends Geoff Revell and Bob Potts, I made the trip two days after the 93rd anniversary of John's death. We quickly found a row of five war graves. John's grave was the fifth one. It was a sad, yet satisfying feeling to know I was the first member of the family to visit John's grave, so long after his death. The family now know the exact location of his grave, something we were never sure of.

The five graves are also a sad testimony to the fact that even months after the conflict was officially finished, lives continued to be lost.



£50 PRIZE CROSSWORD

No. 76. Set by Elk



No. 75 solution...

The winner of prize crossword no. 75 is Peter Stubbington, Bournemouth.

Send entries to Prize Crossword, RMT, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD by March 9 with your name and address.

Winner and solution in next issue.

ACROSS

- 1 Floating marker (4)
- 3 Perfect, at least in theory! (5)
- 6 Double-reeded woodwind instrument (4)
- 11 Airline desk, usually with queue attached (5-2)
- 12 System of raised dots read by touch (7)
- 13 Stop (5)
- 14 Space traveller (9)
- 15 Mysterious (9)
- 18 Britain's only venomous snake (5)
- 20 'Ink' used by photocopier (5)
- 21 Cocktail of whisky and Drambuie - oxidised spike (5,4)
- 23 RMT members usually work to one (9)
- 26 Flat cap, French style (5)
- 27, 31 Infrastructure owner that McNulty wants to fragment (7,4)
- 28 Not under a roof (7)
- 29 Oily freshwater fish - with a complaint! (4)

30 'Tooled up' (5)

31 See 27

DOWN

- 1 Two-wheeled conveyance (7)
- 2 Surgical procedure (9)
- 4 Site of RMT's National Education Centre (9)
- 5 Chief monk? (5)
- 7 Lightweight timber, used for modelling (5)
- 8 Voter (7)
- 9 Largest Inner Hebridean island (4)
- 10 Dark hardwood (8)
- 16 Long race (8)
- 17 Slow, oven-cooked dish - or the dish it comes in (9)
- 19 AKA 'the runs' (9)
- 20 Large ship that came to grief a century ago this year (7)
- 22 To be taken as read (7)
- 24 Engine (5)
- 25 Maker of bread and cakes (5)
- 26 Unit of digital information (4)

RMT CHRISTMAS CLUB

SAVE FOR CHRISTMAS THE EASY AND SAFE WAY WITH THE RMT CREDIT UNION

Saving for Christmas can be a real headache. Take some of the stress away by saving over the course of the year with the RMT Christmas Club. We'll add a little extra to your savings and pay out the money ready for your Christmas shopping spree. This account is designed for people who want a secure savings account that helps them to save for their Christmas spending.

It's based on the traditional Christmas Club principle of saving a fixed amount each month that is not accessible until the payout date. Many people like the discipline of a regular savings programme where they are not able to access the cash!

Even a small amount saved each month soon adds up. Saving is made easy by Direct Debit either monthly or 4-weekly to suit your pay cycle.

For our Christmas Club, the maturity date will be November 4 each year. We will add a bonus dividend at the maturity date and pay the money direct to your bank account. There are no vouchers or hampers or anything of that kind – you decide how you want to spend your

money.

The bonus will be added to your savings if you complete all of your regular payments. Last years bonus was 2 per cent*, and we hope to improve this in subsequent years as the Christmas Club grows.

As all of your Christmas Club money will be paid out each year it will be kept separately from your regular credit union savings and cannot be used against credit union loans.

There is also a summer savings club account on the same basis and principle with a payout date of mid-June, so that you can have ready access to summer holiday spending money.

If you want to open a Christmas Club account and are already a credit union member simply complete the form below. If you are not already a credit union member you will have to complete the form below and the credit union membership application opposite.

Completed forms should be returned to our freepost address.

** NB: Past bonus rate is not an indication of future bonus rate*

TERMS & CONDITIONS – IMPORTANT INFORMATION - WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT RMT CHRISTMAS CLUB

- You need to be an RMT Credit Union member to open an RMT Christmas Club Account.
- You have to save at least £5 per month into a regular RMT CU account in addition to your RMT Christmas Club Account.
- You pay a monthly or 4-weekly Direct Debit consisting of your nominated Christmas Club payment (min. £10) plus at least £5 per month to your main RMT CU account.
- Christmas Club accounts have to be opened by the end of April. Late applications commence the following November.
- As an RMT CU member you build up regular savings with a yearly dividend (1.5% in 2011) and you can apply for low interest rate loans.
- Your Christmas Club money is separate from your regular savings account. That means you will have a guaranteed sum available for Christmas maturing every 14th November, plus a savings account growing with time.
- The Christmas Club secures your money so it's there for the Christmas period. This means that your money is locked-in and you can make no withdrawals until 14th November when all of your money, plus dividend will be paid out.
- If you make all of your payments we anticipate a dividend bonus as accrued through the year
- All of your money will be paid to your bank account on the first working day after 14th November.
- If you cancel your payments the 2% dividend is not applied and you cannot withdraw your money until after 14th November. If you think you will need access to your money before 14th November, this account is not suitable for you.
- The Christmas Club will continue year-on-year, so payments after 14th November start the next year's account. Of course if you wish to cancel your payments you are free to do so at any time.

Your savings are fully protected for up to £85,000 by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme

Cut here

RMT CHRISTMAS CLUB APPLICATION

RMT Credit Union Account Number (If known)							
Surname			Address				
Forename(s)							
Home phone							
Mobile							
email			Postcode				
Date of birth			NI Number				
Employer			RMT Branch				

Do you save monthly on 28 th ?		Or 4 -weekly (Fri)?		You can save by calendar month or 4-weekly			
How much do you save in your RMT Credit Union Account ?				£	min. £5 per month		
How much do you wish to save in your Christmas Club Account ?				£	min £10 per month in £5 multiples		
The total each period for both accounts on my Direct Debit is				£	the total month/4-weekly		
This is the total amount you wish to save by Direct Debit monthly on the 28th or 4-weekly							

Remember that if you have a loan with us your regular Direct Debit will also include that repayment

DECLARATION

I understand the Terms & Conditions of the RMT Christmas Club Account and that membership of the RMT Credit Union is a condition of holding an RMT Christmas Club Account. I understand that my monthly savings into the RMT Christmas Club cannot be withdrawn until the maturity date which is on or after 14th November each year.

Your Signature		Date			/		/				
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RMT CREDIT UNION LTD.

Finance Department, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER

RMT CREDIT UNION APPLICATION FORM — please complete your application along with the attached Direct Debit.

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

1 PERSONAL DETAILS.

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

2 **Marital Status** married ☐ partner ☐ single ☐ divorced ☐ **Drivers Licence No.**

3 Your Employment.

Employer		RMT Branch	
Job Description			

4 **Mr** ☐ **Mrs** ☐ **Ms** ☐ **Miss** ☐

5 Membership Status

RMT TU Member ☐ Retired RMT TU Member ☐ RMT Family Member ☐

6 **How much do you wish to save £** This is the amount you wish to save by Direct Debit monthly on the 28th ☐ or date you next get paid weekly ☐ if 4 weekly (Fri) ☐ date here.....

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

8 **Next of Kin**

Address

.....
.....

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

Your signature

Date

We are checking new member identification electronically. To do this, we now carry out searches with credit reference agencies who supply us with relevant detail including information from the Electoral Register. The searches will not be used by other lenders to assess your ability to obtain credit.

I agree to my identity being checked electronically ☐

If we cannot verify your identity and address by this method, we will ask you to provide paper documentation instead. Full details of these can be supplied to you by calling 020 7529 8835.



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



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

Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society

To: The Manager	Bank/Building Society
Address	
	Postcode

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

Bank/Building Society account number

Branch Sort Code

Originator's Identification Number

Reference Number

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

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society.

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

Signature(s)

Date

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

This guarantee should be detached and retained by the Payer.

The Direct Debit Guarantee

- This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits.
- If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit RMT Credit Union Ltd will notify you seven working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed.
- If you request RMT Credit Union Ltd to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request.
- If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit, by RMT Credit Union Ltd or your bank or building society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society.
- — If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when RMT Credit Union Ltd asks you to.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.



NATIONALISATION NOT PRIVATISATION

International demonstration in Brussels March 28, 2012

Transport unions from across Europe are protesting next month against European Union policies which promote privatisation, fragmentation, social dumping, outsourcing and attacks on collective employment conditions and workers' rights.

- On March 28 2011 the European Commission published its Transport White Paper a 'Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area' demanding 'market opening' in all areas of transport
- On November 14 the European parliament rubberstamped a 'recast' of its 1st rail liberalisation package, imposing the EU's rail privatisation model – fragmentation, separation, competition – establishing a 'single European railway area' as a market for monopoly finance capital and to attack rail workers' national collective agreements and social rights
- The catastrophic decline in maritime employment conditions and lifeline ferry services is continuing as a result of EU liberalisation of 'cabotage', EU Treaties governing 'freedom of establishment' and continuing disastrous consequences from 'flags of convenience'
- Enforced privatisation of urban transport networks under the EU Regulation (2007) on public service obligations in local public transport by road and rail
- Abandonment of 'socialised transport' in favour of services run in the interests of corporate monopoly capital, where profit becomes the only criteria
- More expensive, less efficient public transport for citizens and users, where greed, the domination of financial interests and profit are allowed to destroy jobs, public transport services and communities.
- Privatisation of transport and other national assets is a central demand of the IMF/EU/ECB troika to impose austerity and a mass privatisation programme on Greece and Portugal and to transfer assets to Europe's biggest banks.

Attendance on this demonstration is legitimate use of branch funds.

For more details contact your branch secretary or Mick Carty at RMT policy dept Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD
tel: 020 7529 8307 or e-mail: m.carty@rmt.org.uk

