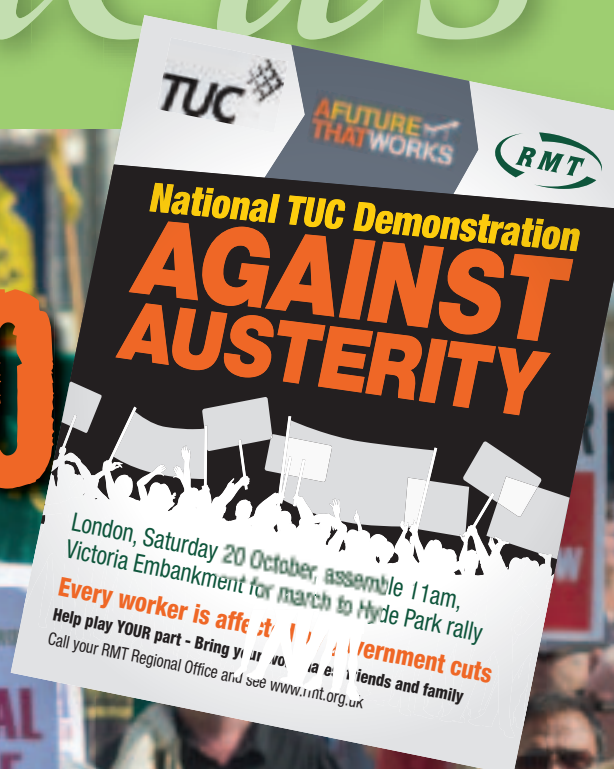


RMT

Essential reading for today's transport worker

news

MARCH ON OCTOBER 20 AGAINST THE CUTS



**VICTORIES
INSIDE
THIS ISSUE**



**CALMAC TENDER
DITCHED
PAGE 6**



**JUSTICE FOR
JARVIS WORKERS
PAGE 22**



**BUS WORKERS
VINDICATED
PAGE 22**



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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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contents

Page 4

CITYLINK ATTACK PAY AND CONDITIONS

Page 5

WHY RMT IS MARCHING

Page 6

RENATIONALISE WEST COAST ROUTE

Page 7

ISS CLEANERS STRIKE

Page 8

EU DEMANDS RAIL 'COMPETITION'

Page 9

PARLIAMENTARY COLUMN

Page 10

BUSES IN THE SOUTH WEST

Page 11

BUS RESEARCH WARNS OF REDUCED QUALITY OF LIFE

Page 12

TUC BACKS STRIKE ACTION

Page 15

RAILCARE COMPUTER COURSE

Page 16

ORGANISING AN RMT AGM

Page 18

THE RAILWAY BENEFIT FUND

Page 19

NO RETURN TO CUTS AGENDA AFTER OLYMPICS

Page 20

BURSTON RALLY STRIKES HOME

Page 22

LANDMARK LEGAL VICTORY AGAINST VICTIMISATION

Page 23

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Page 25

LEGAL VICTORIES

Page 27

BRANCH NEWS

Page 28

ELECTION ADS

Page 30

CREDIT UNION

EDITORIAL



MARCH ON OCTOBER 20

This rotten Con Dem government has used its two years in office to launch the biggest attack on jobs and public services in a generation yet 90 per cent of the cuts are yet to come.

That is why we need to march together on October 20 and show that there is an alternative.

The transport and energy sector is in the frontline of these cuts with planned Tube cuts, the McNulty report slash-and-burn strategy for rail, cuts in bus subsidies and widespread social dumping at sea, offshore and in the road freight sector.

Last year saw the first annual increase in the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads since 2003. These accidents cost the economy £28 billion every year as well as a catastrophic effect on the families of the victims involved.

Yet this government is pricing people off the railways in the drive for profits and into their cars.

A report even warns that more than one million people in England are at "serious risk" of being cut off from work and healthcare because of the rising costs of travel.

Yet the government is making things worse. Lib Dem minister Norman Baker is now admitting that he has caved in to demands from the greedy train operators to abolish paper tickets and doing away with ticket offices altogether.

The abandoned tendering of the West Coast franchise has left neither staff nor passengers knowing who will be running the service. Not surprisingly the latest opinion polls show that over 70 per cent of voters now support rail renationalisation.

Yet this government is so ideologically opposed to nationalisation – unless it's for

their friends failing banks – it will not step in and take these essential services into public ownership.

The Con Dem's friends in the European Union not only support this madness but are demanding that this failed rail privatisation experiment is rolled out across Europe.

More and more people are calling for an end to 25 years of bus privatisation. At the moment, private bus companies decide where buses run, how often and how much they cost to the detriment of passengers and those who work in the industry.

Yet councillors in the Tyne and Wear area are backing plans to claw back control over routes, timetables and fares. But the private bus companies immediately threatened legal action, describing the moves as 'blackmail'. That's rich coming from private bus operators that have been allowed to hold the country to ransom for over quarter of a century.

The union successfully secured assurances at a meeting with Scottish government ministers that there will be no unbundling of Caledonian MacBrayne ferry routes in order to fatten them up for privatisation.

But RMT members at Cal Mac have decisively in favour of strike action over the outstanding issue of pension protection. The union has already won assurances on pensions at Northlink Ferries following another successful strike ballot and I am confident Cal Mac can give the assurances we are seeking.

I look forward to seeing you on October 20 with your banners to defend your job and your public services.

Kind regards

Bob Crow

CITY LINK ATTACK PAY AND CONDITIONS

RMT members at global distribution, transport and delivery company Initial City Link took their protest over attacks on pay and conditions to Coventry City's home game against Carlisle recently.

City Link is a sponsor of Coventry City and at the City Link "hub" depot in Coventry there are more than 400 employees.

But while City Link are signed up to a £1 million sponsorship deal with the football club the story for the employees is one of repeated attacks on pay and working conditions.

City Link workers have not had a pay rise in four years which means hundreds of workers in Coventry, and thousands throughout the City Link empire have taken a massive hit on their standards of living.

The company has cut bonuses and overtime payments for directly employed staff and threatened its permanent staff with replacement by casual "self-employed" drivers to limit working conditions and cut the wage bill.

Yet City Link bosses, enjoying the corporate



hospitality at Coventry City, have enjoyed a doubling of their salaries since 2006.

RMT London Anglia and Midland Transport branch also launched a recruit campaign within City Link, targeting depots overnight and speaking to City Link lorry drivers from all over the country.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that it was about time that City Link showed the same

generosity to its workforce that it has shown in its corporate sponsorship deals.

"It's RMT members in the warehouses, on the vehicles and in the offices who generate the company profits and they are rightfully demanding a fair share rather than the constant attacks meted out by the company on their pay, jobs and working conditions," he said.

BALLOT AT DHL NEASDEN

RMT is organising a strike ballot of lorry driver members at DHL Neasden over the fact that despite being on the same terms and conditions as Enfield Depot members they are on lower pay scales.

Assistant general secretary Mick Cash said that it was an issue that needed urgent attention before the pay gap

between the two depots increases.

"Members clearly feel that their workload, which is 75 per cent from within the M25 area, carries a heavier burden and should form part of their pay claim," he said.

The union has written to the managing director of Marks and Spencer explaining the fact that

RMT is in dispute with DHL Services Ltd based on the fact that they stated at the pay negotiations that their contract with M&S does not allow them to meet union demands.

RMT is holding a meeting of members affected before the strike ballot closes on October 10.

LONDON OVERGROUND STRIKE BALLOT OVER BULLYING

Security and safety staff employed by STM Security Group on London Overground services are being balloted for strike action and action short of a strike in a dispute over bullying and an attempt to impose new terms and conditions.

STM are contracted to provide safety and security services on London Overground stations.

Despite several warnings from the union, management at STM Security Group has continued to bully and intimidate members and union representatives.

Furthermore, the company is now making changes to contracts of employment and terms and conditions without any consultation or agreement with RMT.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that the bullying and intimidation of reps was utterly deplorable and represented a pre-meditated assault on the union in a desperate attempt to try and undermine RMT's growing strength on the contract.

"The attempted imposition of new terms and conditions is just another element contributing to the picture of a company that is hell bent on confrontation with its workforce and their union," he said.

The union is urging members to return an overwhelming 'YES' vote in favour of strike action and industrial action short of a strike in the ballot that closes later this month.

The union remains available for any talks aimed at resolving this dispute.

WHY RMT IS MARCHING!

RMT members should join the demonstrations in London, Glasgow and Belfast on October 20 to stop the attacks on their industry in the name of austerity

RMT members should join the demonstrations in London, Glasgow and Belfast on October 20 to stop the attacks on their industry in the name of austerity

The Con Dem government has launched the biggest attack on jobs and public spending for a generation which has sent the economy into a double dip recession with 2.59 million unemployed.

This strategy has meant cuts to public services and the privatisation of the NHS and education, benefits slashed and the value of pensions cut.

This has been accompanied by more anti trade union legislation, fees for Employment Tribunal applications, weaker health and safety rules and a massive cut in health and safety inspectors.

On London Underground thousands of jobs have already

been lost as the government cuts funding, which will lead to even more cuts, and more attacks on safety, pay and conditions

London's mayor and the government want to re-privatise tube infrastructure at the earliest opportunity and to drive all this through without resistance they are considering plans to ban strikes on the underground.

The government also wants to slash billions of pounds for funding of the railway, leading to the loss of 20,000 rail jobs and attacks on safety, pay and conditions, and massive fare increases. The Tory-led government wants to see the break up and sell off Network Rail, creating what government consultants have called 'Mini Railtracks' and they have proposed new 'super-franchises' which will give the train operating companies even more

freedom to cut services, de-staff stations and ticket offices and extend Driver-only operation.

Local authorities are also slashing bus budgets and cutting all their supported bus services, leaving many parts of the country without any form of public transport.

The government is refusing to close legal loopholes which allow shipping and offshore companies to pay seafarers below the national minimum wage, encouraging widespread social dumping.

Hundreds of jobs and future UK maritime skills are under threat through cuts in funding to Royal Fleet Auxiliary and potential privatisation of essential Scottish ferry services.

Say NO to government cuts. There is an alternative.

The London demonstration assembles from 11am at Embankment for a march to Hyde Park. The Glasgow demonstration assembles at 11am for a march to Glasgow Green. The Belfast demonstration assembles at 11am at UA Art College on York Street for a march to Custom House Square.



CALMAC FERRIES TENDER DITCHED

RMT secured a massive victory in the fight to defend Scottish Ferry services after it was confirmed that the planned tendering of the Cal Mac Western routes has been pushed back for three years.

The confirmation of the three year delay followed assurances given in direct meetings between the Scottish transport minister Keith Brown and the union that there would be no unbundling of the routes, limiting their attraction to predatory private companies.

The minister announced that Cal Mac's contract for Clyde and Hebrides ferry services (CHFS) would be extended to 2015 and that the tendering process for the next six year contract would begin in autumn 2014.

As a result, lifeline ferry services to the west coast of Scotland will be delivered under a single contract until 2021 at least and will be less attractive to carpet baggers.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that it was a massive victory for the RMT campaign against privatisation and in defence of jobs and working conditions and for the users of these lifeline services.

"There is no question that our campaign of political and public pressure, alongside a massive mandate for strike action from our members, has helped force the pace on this momentous decision.

"There is now no excuse for ministers' not to sign off the long term assurances on pensions and workplace rights and conditions that are still outstanding and which remain at the heart of our current dispute," he said.

RMT will also continue to campaign for the expensive and disruptive tendering of services demanded by EU directives to be scrapped for good in order to allow the delivery of essential lifeline ferry services long into the future.

RENATIONALISE WEST COAST ROUTE...ALONG WITH THE OTHERS

RMT is demanding the renationalisation of the West Coast mainline route after transport secretary Patrick McLoughlin cancelled the competition for the 15-year franchise following the admission of significant flaws in the process.

The process of awarding franchises for the Great Western, Essex Thameside and Thameslink services has also been suspended and bidders will have to be reimbursed in full, humiliating the Con Dem government and throwing the whole industry into chaos.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that the whole expensive shambles of rail privatisation had been dragged into the spotlight and called for ministers who presided over the fiasco to be called to account.

"Instead of re-running this expensive circus, the West Coast route should be renationalised on a permanent basis.

"Over £60 million that could have been invested in services will be blown on reimbursing the bidders as the government admit they cannot add up.

"With a mass of other franchises coming up over the next few years the whole process has to be called to a halt and taken in-house to clear up this mess, just as they have successfully done on the East Coast.

"The same basic mistakes made on the West Coast tender is occurring on other franchises as well as on the Thameslink train-building contract – which threatens the future of Bombardier – as the

private sector lie through their teeth with the sole intention of robbing us blind," he said.

As polls show over 70 per cent in favour of public ownership of rail, Bob Crow called on the Labour Party to adopt a policy of renationalisation or risk alienating millions of voters.

"The publicly run East Coast is more reliable and is pumping millions in surpluses into improving services while private operators are soaking up corporate welfare payments under "cap and collar" to prop up their profits and dividends.

"Against this backdrop, it would be electoral suicide for Labour not to come out with a clear and decisive position in favour of renationalising rail," he said.



PROTEST: RMT activists held a protest against rail cuts and for renationalisation outside a conference organised by the profiteering train companies last month in Manchester at the very heart of the West Coast route.



ISS CLEANERS' STRIKE



Low-paid cleaners on the prestigious East Coast mainline and the key London Midland service, working for contractors ISS stepped up their fight for pay justice with 24-hour strike action last month.

Picket lines were mounted at Kings Cross and other key locations including Newcastle and Nottingham with the cleaners and their supporters urging the travelling public to pile pressure on ISS, East Coast and London Midland to end the scandal of poverty pay.

The strikes were launched after RMT members voted by a massive 98 per cent margin for action against an employer that has offered no pay rise for three years and follows rock solid action by ISS cleaners working out of London Midland's Bletchley, Northampton and King's Heath depots.

The union also mounted a lobby of a "Living Wage Event" held at Newcastle Civic Centre as East Coast and Tyne and Wear Metro cleaners took their respective pay justice campaigns to the event.

In both the East Coast and London Midland disputes ISS has chosen to ignore calls for a living wage for workers who play a key role in providing a safe and clean travelling environment for passengers and who are an essential part of the transport team.

Speaking at the TUC Congress being held in Brighton, RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that rail cleaners' were at the cutting edge of the UK battle

for pay justice against corporate greed and they deserved support from across the labour movement.

"The scandal of low pay on two of the country's busiest and most prestigious rail routes continues with ISS assuming that they can get away with exploiting workers who are key to delivering high quality services.

"ISS are plainly wrong and they now have a workforce that is organised, angry and determined to win this fight for pay justice.

"ISS boasts on its website about how fairly it treats its workers but their employees know only too well that it is a pack of lies.

"Behind the corporate claims is the sordid reality of effective pay cuts and attacks on standards of living being imposed year-on-year on cleaners already on rock-bottom rates," he said.

The union has made clear that rail companies East Coast and London Midland had a moral responsibility to ensure that the people who work on their contracts were treated decently and should not be hiding behind the shabby excuse that cleaners' pay is a matter for the contracting companies.

"We will be targeting ISS and the rail companies as we ramp up this fight for a living wage.

"RMT remains available for talks aimed at achieving a fair and just settlement to these disputes," said Bob.

EU DEMANDS RAIL 'COMPETITION'

Brussels demands national rail networks open up to private sector

EU transport commissioner Siim Kallas last month called for a single European rail network based on the privatised franchising model trialled in Britain over the last 20 years.

"There must be a genuine single market," he said.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that the EU obsession with the open access business model for rail would create chaos across the continent.

"As in Britain already, the only winners are the corporate carpet baggers and their shareholders and the losers are the concept of a social railway, passengers and those who work in the industry," he said.

At the opening of Innotrans, one of Europe's largest transport conventions, in Berlin Mr Kallas complained that not enough other EU states had truly opened up their markets to competition, despite previous EU directives, with continuing protection for domestic operators, particularly where train companies still operated the track.

In Germany and France state firms Deutsche Bahn and SNCF still dominate and are exploiting EU rail directives to take over networks in other member states.

Under various EU directives member states must split infrastructure and operations

and introduce market mechanisms as the Tories did when they privatised the rail industry in 1994.

However the German transport minister Peter Ramsauer said that he did not believe that Britain's experience had provided a good model for the deregulation of the network.

"In Britain, they took it to excess and failed.

"We will not make that mistake, we will keep a government role," he said.

However he went on to accuse the French of resisting opening up to competition.

"If we want to travel by ICE (the German fast train) from Frankfurt to London, we need France to open up and so we absolutely have to do the same in Germany," he said.

Deutsche Bahn chairman Rüdiger Grube also welcomed



LIBERALISATION: EU transport commissioner Siim Kallas demands rail 'competition' across the EU

the idea of more competition to allow Germany to continue to expand its growing rail interests abroad.

"So we can show how good we are," he said.

The huge convention in Berlin includes global exhibitors ranging from Bombardier and Siemens to Network Rail with its new, deregulated private consulting arm designed to win business abroad. ■

TRANSPENNINE EXPRESS CLEANERS' STRIKE FOR PAY JUSTICE

Cleaners on Transpennine Express services working for contractor's Carlisle took a third wave of industrial action earlier this month in a long standing battle for pay and workplace justice.

As a result of the total failure of the company to make a reasonable offer, and their refusal to engage in talks through the independent body ACAS, the latest phase of action cleaners took 24-hour strike action with an overtime ban until October 15.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that it was a scandal that Carlisle continued to refuse to make any kind of reasonable offer to tackle the issue of poverty pay and poor working

conditions of this group of key transport workers on Transpennine services run by FirstGroup.

"The point-blank refusal to even engage in ACAS talks shows that this company has no interest in making progress with negotiations and it is that pig-headed attitude that has forced this latest phase of industrial action.

"RMT is taking the message to both TPE and their service users that Carlisle must be forced to face up to their obligations to the staff who deliver their profits.

"RMT remains available for talks and the ball is now firmly in the companies court," he said. ■



TRANSPORT POVERTY

Millions of people risk being plunged into debt because of the high cost of travel which is worsening the work prospects of the unemployed, according to a new report.

Cycling charity Sustrans warned that more than one and a half million people in England are at "serious risk" of being cut off from work and healthcare because of the rising costs of owning a car, and the lack of alternatives.

The report revealed that a growing number of people are suffering from 'transport poverty', often forced to run a car they cannot afford because of soaring rail fares or cuts to bus services.

Sustrans chief executive Malcolm Shepherd said: "For many people owning a car is a source of debt and poverty, and this is unlikely to change in the long term with fuel prices going up and up.

"For decades ministers have made decisions based on everyone having easy access to a car, forcing many of us into car ownership we can barely afford and leaving others stranded.

"We need a transport system that works for everyone - not one designed to best suit those who can afford a car," he said.

Rail passengers face "eye watering" increases in the new year, while bus services are being cut across the country, said Sustrans.

Two-thirds of jobseekers do not have access to a car, making it harder for them to find work, the report added.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that "this timely and important" piece of research revealed that the failure of government policy had left millions cut off from vital transport lifelines that many take for granted.

"The poisonous combination of fare increases, cuts to bus services and the relentless attack on household budgets has conspired to leave some of the most vulnerable isolated and unable to access basic services.

"This report will be important ammunition in the fight for a wholesale change in transport policy," he said. ■

Parliamentary column



FIGHTING TO WIN

If we fight we can win, that's the message of recent victories for RMT and wider trade union movement.

Last month the Con Dem coalition was forced into a retreat over their plans to introduce a regulation that would remove almost half of injuries completely from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme and reduced the compensation for most other injuries.

If these proposals had been enacted it would have meant rail workers who have suffered psychological injuries for example by witnessing suicides would no longer be entitled to compensation while victims of violent crime at work would also have had their ability to claim compensation weakened.

As you would expect the proposals met strong resistance from the unions and Labour MPs including from the RMT Parliamentary group with my colleague Kelvin Hopkins MP being particularly active in his opposition.

The strength of opposition was such that when I attended the parliamentary committee to oppose the changes, armed with examples why these protections are so important to transport workers, it soon became apparent that there was also opposition from even the government's backbenchers. The government did not have the numbers and pulled back from putting the regulation to the vote.

We will have to fight again of course. The government will be seeking shortly to reintroduce the regulation and for now ministers have only confined themselves to saying: "We have listened to the views expressed in Parliament and will now

consider our next steps".

Some overdue listening also seems to be taking place in the Scottish government who for some time have been threatening to break up and tender the Cal Mac Clyde and Hebridean Ferry routes. This would directly affect the welfare of many of my constituents with both the Largs to Cumbrae and Ardrossan to Brodick routes in my constituency being separately hived off to the private sector.

Now campaigning by local communities and the unions seems has paid dividends with the Scottish government confirming that there will be no break up of Cal Mac services and the tendering of the service has been put back for three years. This creates space for a renewed campaign to put the privatisation of Cal Mac services permanently on the back burner.

These are just a few of perhaps the more high profile examples that demonstrate that we can turn the tide. But of course everyday up and down the country activists and trade union reps are fighting back and in many cases achieving significant victories that make all the difference to a work place or community. And they all have the same lesson. If we fight we can win, there is hope and there is an alternative.

The October 20 demonstrations against austerity in London, Glasgow and Belfast present an historic opportunity for all those who are fighting back and all those want an alternative to come together to say we will carry on the fight and we will win.

Katy Clark
Labour MP for North Ayrshire and Arran and a member of the RMT Parliamentary Group



BUSES IN THE SOUTH WEST

Organisation is the key for RMT bus members in the South West of England

FirstGroup's shock decision to pull out of the bus industry in North Devon last month with the loss of around 100 jobs has put the spotlight on bus services in the region.

However rival bus operator Stagecoach South West has since stepped in to run some of the routes abandoned by First, set up new routes and even re-employed many workers cast off in September.

In fact the picture is much more positive in other parts of Devon particularly around the historic city of Exeter which boasts the largest bus branch in the country with around 500 members.

Exeter 2 branch secretary Keith Saunders-Hole gives an indication of why the union has successfully kept a high density of membership with his knowledge of the industry and an attention to detail.

"The Exeter depot operates 24/7 - 24 hours a day, seven days a week - and our membership covers admin staff, drivers, fitters and cleaners," he explains.

He reports that there is a healthy relationship between

management and staff based on respect for the union built up over many years.

"Of course we sometimes agree to disagree but, ultimately, we come to an understanding and it is not about management unilaterally imposing deals onto us," he says.

Keith works on the Mega bus inter-city routes on five 12 hour shifts a week with a week off every four weeks. But the depot also runs city routes, rural routes, school routes and some tendered routes run for local councils.

Exeter depot also has out-stations in Exmouth, Sidmouth and Dawlish while Barnstaple depot is covered by North Devon branch which will need re-organising after First pulled out.

Exeter's sister branch, South Devon Bus, covers the Torbay area down the road and while the branch may be smaller, with around 125 members, branch secretary Dave Gileby is quick to point out that the membership density is even higher than in Exeter.

"Nearly 100 per cent of the workforce in RMT membership, I

rest my case," laughs Dave, highlighting a friendly rivalry with their neighbouring big city brothers.

The Torbay depots operates '18/7' and Dave points out that both branches struggled long and hard to ensure that all members working for Stagecoach South West had the same conditions to ensure that one set of workers could not be played off against the other.

South Devon Bus branch can also be proud of hosting this year's RMT annual general meeting in Torquay, no mean feat for a relatively small branch.

As chair of the reception committee Dave says that he and the lads were still recovering. He has described his experience in this edition of *RMT News* (see page 16).

Local RMT regional organiser Phil Bialyk understands the camaraderie and banter between the branches and within the region, after all he has been a member of Exeter No2 branch for 38 years.

He explains that his father was a bus driver and, finding himself at a loose end back in

1974, he signed on as a conductor and never looked back.

The level of organisation at the branch is reflected in the fact that it has produced three executive committee members and two regional organisers.

"The secret of the success of Exeter bus branch is still organisation.

"We ensure that we have reps in place at all levels and we regularly send branch members on courses at the union's education facility at Doncaster and to regional councils and conferences.

"If you have strong branch organisation things start to look after themselves," he said.

Phil has seen many changes particularly since privatisation back in the 1980s and the ConDem attacks are making things worse.

He said that FirstGroup pulling out of North Devon could be 'the tip of the iceberg'.

"Ultimately, letting the market run the industry has been a disaster and now the government has lifted the 'ringfencing' of funds for bus services and local authorities are



ORGANISATION: RMT regional organiser Phil Bialyk, South Devon Bus branch secretary Dave Gileby, RMT lead rep Ian Hodges and Exeter No2 branch secretary Keith Saunders-Hole

always looking to make cuts.

"Pensioners that vote may think that they have still got their concessionary fares but it's a bus pass to nowhere with this axe hanging over services," he warned.

Returning to the issue of organisation, Keith Saunders-Hole points out that bus members also take part in the wider life of the union through the union's regional council.

"It is a myth that bus

workers never mix with rail and maritime workers, we all meet together and share ideas at RMT regional council," he says.

The message coming out of the South West is that

organising at the workplace, engaging with members issues and representing their interests is an approach that pays off.

BUS RESEARCH WARNS OF REDUCED QUALITY OF LIFE

Research by Passenger Focus has found that bus services are vital to many people and removing them can reduce people's quality of life.

The research identifies the impact passengers experienced from reductions to their publicly-supported bus services.

It found there were four main types of impact which reduced people's quality of life and their lifestyles:

- Passengers could not travel like they used to
- Their dependency on others increased
- Sometimes passengers paid more to travel another way
- People can no longer travel spontaneously

The full report identifies some key things which operators and authorities should consider

when making difficult decisions about reducing services.

It also includes many real life examples and quotes from people affected by service changes.

The government's Comprehensive Spending Review reduced the budgets available for local councils and as a consequence also for local transport authorities. To meet the budgetary challenges, publicly-supported tendered bus services (i.e. those not operated on a full commercial basis), have been removed, reduced, or the network altered.

Passenger Focus commissioned the research to provide an evidence base of the impact on passengers of changes and reductions to their publicly-supported bus services.

It found there were four main

types of impact on people's quality of life and lifestyle. The research identifies some key things which operators and authorities should consider when making difficult decisions about reducing services. The report also includes many real life examples and quotes from people affected by service changes.

The four main impacts are that passengers could not travel like they used to and passengers made less discretionary trips.

"It has made it a bit of a nuisance. You don't want to be somewhere three hours before you come back. You're just killing time."

1. Dependency on others increased and an awkwardness to ask for lifts and their travel plans now being contingent on others

"Got to rely on people to go shopping, that's a lifestyle change to rely on other people."

2. Sometimes passenger paid more by using taxis or other paid means of transport
"It's cost me a lot more money in taxis, about £7 each way, £14 for the whole fare. It's a big difference from £2.70 or £3."
3. Lack of spontaneity as fewer services on fewer days reduced the opportunity to decide on the day to go out
"I have to plan more carefully. I can't decide to go out at the last minute."

You can download the report by visiting www.passengerfocus.org.uk

TUC BACKS STRIKE ACTION



RMT press officer Geoff Martin reviews RMT's week at the TUC Congress in Brighton last month

The 2012 Trade Union Congress kicked off in Brighton with a lively march and rally on a blistering hot Sunday afternoon to demand action against the Con Dem cuts.

Up to a thousand trade unionists, including a sizable RMT contingent, had travelled from all over the country to rally in support of the Prison Officers Association motion calling for consideration of the practicalities of organising a general strike to unite the millions of trade unionists facing attacks on jobs, pay and pensions.

At the packed rally in the Metropole Hotel, RMT general secretary Bob Crow set out the importance of united and co-ordinated action in the words of the immortal 1930's Unemployed Workers leader Wal Hannington: "If you spit on your own they will ignore you – but if we all spit together we

can drown the bastards," he said to applause.

An overexcited *Daily Mail* hack, standing out like a sore thumb in the front row amongst the ranks of workers, scribbled the words down and next day they were wheeled out in an apoplectic Mail leader column, spluttering about the nerve of trade unionists having the effrontery to stand up for their members jobs and working conditions.

As Congress got underway it was becoming clear that support for the POA's motion was growing as a raft of key union delegations fell in behind the call to begin examining the route map to co-ordinated action.

RMT speakers were to the fore in a wide range of the congress debates.

EC member Daren Ireland spoke on the main composite motion on austerity, pointing

out that the cuts affect both public and private sectors which was why RMT members working for ISS Cleaning on the East Coast were taking strike action on the Monday of conference.

Daren told Congress that RMT believed we needed a political party to take a principled stand against austerity, which is why our union supported some anti-cuts candidates in the local elections in May.

Shipping EC member Darren Proctor waded in to support a Nautilus motion on the UK maritime industry.

Although RMT's emergency motion on the scandal of social dumping and exploitation by the company Condor Ferries operating out the south coast had been ruled out of order, Darren used the opportunity of the general shipping debate to make the point.

To rapturous applause, he

highlighted the success of the RMT campaign turning the spotlight on Condor and their ilk getting away with paying little more than two pounds an hour amidst shocking and insecure working conditions.

Shadow Chancellor Ed Balls didn't escape RMT interrogation either. After a speech in which he appeared to be sending out the message that workers should be grateful to have any kind of job at all, and where he intimated that a future Labour government would continue the public sector pay freeze, he agreed to take some questions from the floor.

Delegates spoke for the trade union movement and the travelling public by demanding the renationalisation of the railways and asked if the Labour Party would now come out and back us.

Ed Balls came up with some of the worst politician-speak



Bob Crow

President
Alex GordonOwen
HerbertGlenroy
WatsonTsiaples Anastasios
with Bob

you could imagine, claiming, wrongly of course, that it “would cost billions” and that what he wanted was for the existing franchises to run “more efficiently”.

Ed also gave a hopeless response to a question from Daren Ireland on whether a Labour government would repeal the anti-union laws – in a convoluted and long-winded way he basically said no.

You could tell what the big news was as the TV cameras were wheeled in to cover the eagerly-awaited debate on the POA motion with its general strike reference. With Bob Crow seconding for RMT, it sailed through with a sizeable majority.

RMT also proposed a motion exposing EU plans to further attack workers’ rights and demanding a referendum on EU membership.

The EU’s latest plans, known as Monti II, enshrine the anti-union position already adopted by the Euro courts that trumps business rights to ‘economic freedom’ over trade union rights and extending the ability of the

courts to outlaw strike action on the grounds of “proportionality”.

Alongside explaining the anti-worker and pro-business nature of the EU, RMT called for a referendum on British membership, which polls show the majority of voters want, as well as the case for EU withdrawal.

Bob Crow said that the proposals combined with the mass privatisation and austerity policies of the unelected European Commission revealed that the EU was operating fundamentally against the interests of working people.

Seconded by the Bakers Food and Allied Workers Union president Ronnie Draper, Bob explained before the motion was defeated: “I’ve been in a minority all my life, but often you find that over a period of time the minority becomes a majority and someone has to stand up and kick start a debate”.

The motion was defeated, but around conference it was clear that the RMT move to bring the issue to the table was sparking

off a discussion in delegations that otherwise would not have happened.

At the end of conference it was announced that the controversial ‘Monti 11’ EU proposals had been abandoned but the anti-trade union stance of the EU and its courts remain the same.

RMT president Alex Gordon moved a motion on the government’s sinister proposals for secret courts, undermining the centuries-old principle of open and transparent justice. Seconded by the GMB it won widespread support.

The final main business of the conference was an emergency motion from ASLEF, seconded by RMT, on the renationalisation of the West Coast main line in the wake of the Virgin/First Group legal bust up and the franchising fiasco.

Debated just at the point that new research showed that 70 per cent of the British people now support rail renationalisation, it was passed unanimously. Unfortunately, Ed Balls had left by that point.



DELEGATES HEAR HOW THE EU ATTACKS WORKERS

RMT hosted a packed TUC fringe meeting on the key subject of EU attacks on public services and workers’ rights.

The meeting highlighted the integral anti-union and pro-boss nature of the EU and its courts, president Alex Gordon opened up with an introduction on the links and solidarity that RMT has built up with in Greece and workers from other parts of the Eurozone in the front-line of the EU attacks and the fight back.

The Greek speaker Tsiaples Anastasios from PAME (All Workers Militant Front) reported how workers were engaged in the campaign of strikes and direct resistance against the all-out assault on the Greek people from the Troika of the EU, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Tsiaples explained how the full machinery of the euro super-state, and their allies in the media, was ranged against Greek workers.

Taking us through a sharp history lesson he set out how the EU crisis had started with the Maastricht treaty which enshrined undemocratic corporate capitalist control across Europe, bringing us to the current confrontation between the big business-led EU and working people.

“Not one working person has benefitted from involvement in the EU which is nothing more than a guardian of profit and exploitation,” he said.

Tsiaples called for united action across Europe in the face the current attacks and called for the building of working class alliances – a call picked up and welcomed by speaker after speaker in the debate from the floor.

Closing the meeting, Bob Crow nailed down the core message: “If you are anti-capitalism and anti-austerity you have to be anti-EU.

“It really is as black and white as that,” he said. ■

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RAILCARE COMPUTER COURSE

RMT Learning Development Worker John Dougherty reports how members at Railcare gain computer skills through the union's learning team



Long serving member and branch secretary Yashventrai Makwana identified the need for computer skills training for his colleagues at Railcare in Wolverton as they entered into the new world of tablet technology for access to information and drawings.

Within weeks the IT development needs of staff at Railcare were being supported by the RMT learning team. They engaged with the employer to look at how they could develop members' functional IT skills both in the workplace and at home.

Yashventrai spoke with his local trade union education provider, South Bedfordshire College, and they committed their teaching resources to come

on site and deliver a 30 hour functional IT skills training course over 15 weeks in the old boardroom at the workshop.

Importantly, paid release was given by a very forward thinking managing director and, with the support of the training manager, they facilitated the release and cover planning that has made this programme so successful.

Incentives were agreed with the company to encourage staff to take advantage of this exciting opportunity and over 80 employees are going through the training as we speak.

Yashventrai and the RMT Learning development worker, John Dougherty, worked together with the other reps to set the whole programme up.

Resources were provided in the form of 10 laptops from RMT Learning so that the training could begin on-time.

All this happened in a very short space of time and proves that by working and communicating effectively together we can achieve so much.

Yashventrai said that the IT course had been a recruiting tool because it is run by the union.

"Its success will help me to run more courses in the future and this course only happened with joint union effort and company cooperation," he said.

He said there had been some great feedback from those attending the course including David Phillips who said: The

group has gelled extremely well and all members are enjoying every aspect of the training - we are all looking forward to progressing further!".

"An excellent learning experience, the two hour sessions fly past," said David Toogood.

Everyone involved seemed very excited about the prospect of being able to access learning and development opportunities within the workplace to ensure the sustainability of their jobs and to help them with the ever changing challenges presented in the workplace.

RMT Learning continuously supports members and union learning representatives (ULRs) in their learning endeavours.

ORGANISING AN RMT AGM

Organising committee chair Dave Gileby recounts the hard graft and satisfaction of hosting the union's 2012 annual general meeting in Torquay

A couple of years ago a meeting of the Southwest Regional Council discussed whether we would be capable of submitting an application to the union to host the 2012 AGM in the Southwest of England.

Regional council secretary Bob Marles had been involved in organising an AGM in Exeter several years ago and Paul Rossiter and myself had experience in organising a couple of busworkers conferences here in Torquay.

So we had the knowledge and capability, but where would be the best area to hold the Parliament of our union that had all the facilities a conference of this importance could offer?

Southwest regional council covers 21 branches from Penzance to Exeter and Plymouth to Barnstaple. After a lot of deliberation Torquay was agreed on. The application was formally tendered to the executive committee for approval. Now the hard work began.

Myself, Paul Rossiter, Bob Marles and Dave Avery formed the organising committee as we all had different skills, experiences and qualities. We had attended a total of nine different AGMs, so we knew what was required and with Dave's knowledge of the hotel business in the bay we believed we had the qualifications to organise and facilitate an AGM

to remember.

Bob volunteered to be treasurer. I was nominated as chair with Paul in charge of fund raising and Dave the legs of the team. With all of us having shift patterns, it was decided who was ever available would do what was necessary in pairs.

A venue was needed that offered conference facilities and rooms for fringe meetings, the standing orders committee, for office staff for the running of the union while away from Unity House, a press office and an area for RMTv. Several venues were investigated and quotes were passed on to Scott Perkins and Yvonne Sawford at head office. They came down for a site visit and took back recommendations to the EC for consideration.

In the meantime the four of us had to come up with ideas for social events in the evenings. With Dave Avery's contacts he found a hotel that could cater for the general secretary's dinner while the rest of us visited locations of local interest that could facilitate 120 delegates and staff with a bar and offer food which was easier said than done.

Finally, with a lot of time and effort we secured Kents Caverns for a Monday night to include a trip through the caves, local wine and beer tasting followed by a carvery and a cabaret. Next up was a trip on





the river Dart, to include bar and buffet, and horse racing at Torquay Rugby Club. These were all organised a year in advance and nothing was left to chance. Even the cabaret acts were all viewed and booked backed in 2010 following a visit to a promotion evening being held at Exmouth Theatre showcasing local acts.

While all this was going on Paul found time to work with Jeff Hiscoke on a web site offering links to the bay, hotels, taxis and every need a delegate may want. Finally the phone call we had all been waiting for from head office to tell us The

Riviera Centre, our choice, had been accepted.

No time to rest as there was the annual football match to organise while it was out of season. Luckily my daughter's local gym has an all-weather pitch and the Torquay Squash Club provided a bar.

Then head office called, what can you do for the international guests? Paul went down to the harbour and booked a Mackerel fishing trip, a favourite holiday expedition.

There was bound to be another phone call and sure enough it came from my mate Andy Gilchrist, the union's

education officer: "I need 14 rooms for the young members any chance of sorting it?" No bother.

So with a lot of hard work, spread over nearly two years, we were almost there. We worried constantly about the cost, but with Paul running his football cards and donations from members and branches, the money raised from the horse racing nights and with thanks to Becky, her brother and Caroline (the three amigos, who could forget those Stone Age outfits, sailor dresses and the riding gear?) Without their efforts we would not have been able to

present the general secretary with a cheque for £1,700 for his chosen charity and cover all the costs.

Each day of conference threw up its own problems, but they were all dealt with immediately by Rivera centre manager Rachel who oversaw the smooth running of everything from 8am to 6pm each day. Nothing was too much bother and everything was done with a smile, which made our job easier. It wasn't until it was all over on the Friday that we could all relax and say to ourselves, a job well done!



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THE RAILWAY BENEFIT FUND

Each year the Railway Benefit Fund charity (RBF) helps up to 600 people, typically giving out between £500,000 and £1 million in financial support.

The Railway Benefit Fund charity (RBF) is the UK's only charity dedicated to providing help and support to members of the railway family in need.

Since it was set up in 1858, it has worked to one purpose: To provide care and financial aid to railway personnel in need.

Like the rail industry, the charity has changed with the times but the objectives remain the same: being there for members of the railway community when they are in need. Today it reflects the needs and concerns of those working in this rapidly changing industry, offering wide-ranging assistance to active and retired railway people and their dependents.

It relies entirely on the generosity of supporters to continue providing this help. Railway workers like you can make a real difference to the lives of your colleagues when they face unprecedented hardship.

Grant amounts vary, and are

carefully assessed to ensure not only that appropriate assistance is provided where needed, but also that supporters' contributions are put to the best possible use.

The charity now receives more requests than ever for help with domestic crises, financial difficulties and unexpected hardships. Among the help recently provided was funds given to a guard who was struggling to pay for his mother's funeral.

The RBF granted him enough to cover the shortfall and, in his own words: "When I received the call to tell me I was to be helped I was reduced to tears and could not speak. The professional manner, compassion and sincerity I received from all of your staff will stay in my mind for the rest of my life. Your help means so much that I cannot express how much of a relief it is for me and how much stress you have taken from my shoulders".

Of course, nobody thinks that the worst will happen to them,



but all too often circumstances can change without warning. That's why the RBF is appealing to you, as members to the railway family, to ensure we can continue providing help wherever it is needed.

Like many of the people helped by the RBF, James Graham, a conductor, found himself in need of assistance when his life was changed without warning.

James and his partner have two sons, aged 12 and seven. In February 2011, their youngest son, Noah, was taken to hospital with what was thought to be asthma related problems. The hospital was unable to help and he was referred to another hospital in Liverpool. While there, it was discovered his heart was in serious difficulty. There were only two hospitals that could treat Noah and both were many miles from the family's home – Great Ormond Street in London, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

The family opted for Newcastle and it was there they learned that Noah needed a replacement heart, and would have to stay in hospital. Noah's

mother gave up her job straight away so she could stay with him in Newcastle while James divided his time between Preston and Newcastle.

The RBF was able to provide a £600 Single Benevolent Grant plus a £400 Child Care Grant to help with the extra costs the family faced, and to make a contribution towards Noah's welfare.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow is clear about how vital the RBF is to current railway workers: "Today there is as much need for the RBF as ever.

"It's an excellent organisation that brings often desperately needed help to colleagues experiencing financial hardship. I would urge all RMT members to give the RBF all the support they can," he said.

There are many ways in which you can help the RBF to continue providing vital assistance. Become a member, a supporter or make a one-off or regular donation. For more information, visit the RBF website:

www.railwaybenefitfund.org.uk.



NO RETURN TO CUTS AGENDA AFTER OLYMPICS

RMT paid tribute to the thousands of public transport staff in London and beyond who were central to the delivery of the successful Olympics and Paralympics which drew to a close last month.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that it had been a fantastic summer of sport and as well as the success in the medals tables transport workers had delivered too.

"This exercise was a testament to the skill and dedication of the workforce and has been achieved through

increasing staffing levels and through ensuring a proper recognition and reward for the extra pressure carried by the transport team over the past two months.

"The lesson that has been learnt is that where staff are given the opportunity and the resources, in a spirit of co-operation rather than confrontation, they can deliver gold-standard services that are the envy of the world," he said.

Bob said that it would now be a travesty if TfL and the train operators were allowed to slide back to their old position of

hacking away at jobs and standards in the drive for cuts and with the Games now successfully delivered.

"RMT is demanding that

there is no return to the bad old ways that undermined transport services prior to the Olympics and Paralympics," he said.



CD OFFER TO RMT MEMBERS

***We're All In It Together* is a stunning, overtly political 33 track double CD featuring some of Britain's most renowned and respected artists, including Eddi Reader, Thea Gilmore, Paul Heaton (Beautiful South) and Show of Hands, who have come together to 'protest and survive'.**

This benefit album for the Morning Star newspaper – named after the spurious term uttered at the 2010 Tory Party conference by David Cameron – explodes the myth that culture is no longer political.

With an introduction by veteran campaigner Tony Benn, these songs support peace and democracy, oppose corporate power, support freedom of speech, expose the harm caused by greedy banks and highlight their effects on ordinary people. All artists donated their tracks.

We're All In It Together is available to RMT members for just £12. Send cheques made payable to Red Planet Records to c/o Unity House, 39 Chalton Street London NW1 1JD.





A video of the Burston Rally can be viewed at rmtv.org.uk

BURSTON RALLY STRIKES HOME

RMT general secretary Bob Crow called for a mass mobilisation of working people, including a general strike, against Con Dem cuts at this year's annual Burston strike school rally last month.

Over 1,000 people, including many children, marched through the little Norfolk village of Burston to commemorate the longest strike in British history.

Trade unionists and their families from all over the country marched along the rural roads of Burston, near Diss, to remember when teachers Tom and Kitty Higdon were unfairly sacked from the local school nearly one hundred years ago in April 1914.

The brave young pupils

walked out in support of their much-loved teachers. Inspired by their actions, the Higdens and the villagers set up an alternative known as The Strike School which ran until 1939 when Tom died.

Today the school building is a museum as well as a national symbol for trade union solidarity. There are around 120 carved bricks on the building, naming the donors from around the world who helped make the school house possible. Many are from RMT's predecessor, the National Union of Railwaymen which contributed 20 per cent of the cost of the school.

TUC regional secretary Megan Dobney said that there had been a fantastic turnout for

the annual event which takes place on the first Sunday every September.

"The reason Tom and Kitty were sacked was because they stood up for farm labourers so they started the school for the children and they expanded the education on offer.

"It is a reminder of the solidarity of the labour movement as assistance for the Higdens and their school flooded in from around the world," she said.

Bob Crow addressed the crowd, calling for militant action against Tory/Lib Dem cuts.

"We are here today to celebrate what the Higdens achieved and the people who

continue to fight for trade union rights, working class education, democracy in the countryside and international solidarity.

"We need to get rid of this rotten ConDem government that doesn't want working people to have access to education, pensions or healthcare.

"We are fighting the same vested interests as the Higdens did a hundred years ago.

"We are here to say there is an alternative to cuts and austerity and it's called socialism.

"Socialism may have failed in the Soviet Union but capitalism has failed humanity everywhere," he said to loud applause.





THE STORY OF THE BURSTON STRIKE

The Burston Strike School Trustees have produced to booklets about the strike, one is a fascinating re-print of a pamphlet written a year into the strike in 1915 and a new publication featuring the memories of the Potter Family.

At aged 13 Violet Potter led the strike and these events had a lasting impact on many members of the family. In *A Striking Village Memories of Burston*, Anne May, niece of Violet and compiled and edited these compelling memories for prosperity and for future generations of trade unionists to read and learn from.

A copy of the 1915 pamphlet only re-appeared recently and has been lovingly reproduced in its original form. Dedicated to the 'brave women of Burston who since April, 1914, nobly struggled against tyranny of the countryside', it is an important historical document. The pair are being sold for £7. ■

Both pamphlets are available from:
 Burston Strike School
 Crown Green,
 Burston, Nr Diss
 IP22 5TP
 Phone: 01379 677211



LANDMARK LEGAL VICTORY AGAINST VICTIMISATION

Employment tribunal rules that company unlawfully discriminated against two workers because of their RMT membership

Two bus drivers threatened with the sack for being RMT union reps have won £16,000 in compensation in from transport privateer Arriva.

Marcus Farr and Len Graves were harassed, disciplined and threatened with the sack by Arriva because they wore high visibility vests with the union logo on.

However other drivers had worn their own high visibility vests while on duty without complaint, including one with a "Himmler" on the back and one with his initials shaped into a swastika on his vest.

The men wore the RMT vests rather than the company ones to ensure that members knew who they were and could come to them for advice.

The tribunal ordered Arriva to pay the men compensation, including aggravated damages to Mr Graves, and to pay the union its legal costs.

RMT officials always considered that Arriva singled them out because they were union representatives. London South Employment Tribunal agreed, ruling that the reason the firm did this was to penalise them for being RMT members and to deter them from taking part in RMT activities.

The members, who are based at South Croydon garage, were repeatedly pulled up by their managers for wearing orange vests with the RMT logo on the back instead of the Arriva branded yellow ones on the basis that this was unauthorised

uniform.

Mr Graves was suspended for wearing the vest and the stress of this resulted in him becoming ill. Arriva managers ordered that he be paid only statutory sick pay while he was off sick. When he complained he was told the issue could only be resolved if he agreed to an immediate fact finding interview about the vest and agree not to wear one again which he reluctantly agreed to and he was subsequently issued with a disciplinary sanction as was also the case with Mr Farr.

The members pursued their claim against Arriva for subjecting them to detriment on grounds of trade union activities, which is against the law. The tribunal agreed unanimously that Arriva had



acted unlawfully.

It said: "The purpose of the acts complained of was to penalise the claimants for being members of the RMT and/or to deter them from taking part in the activities of the RMT" and ordered that Mr Farr be paid £7,000 compensation and Mr Grave £9,000. An award for costs was also made against

JUSTICE FOR SACKED JARVIS RAIL



RMT secured a key milestone victory in the fight for justice for sacked Jarvis rail workers with an Employment Tribunal finding that there was a transfer of part of the Jarvis renewals work on the London North East work to Babcock Rail under a contract with Network Rail.

Jarvis PLC went into administration on March 25. Jarvis Rail Ltd and Fastline Ltd went into administration on March 29. The administrators sacked about 1,100 Jarvis/Fastline employees on 31 March, including over 400 RMT members.

The ET hearing in Leeds has been deciding on whether or not there was a transfer of that part

of Jarvis Rail Ltd dealing with the LNE contract renewals work for Network Rail.

RMT argued that the work transferred to Network Rail or Babcock Rail. Babcock Rail signed a deal with Network Rail to carry out all of LNE contract renewals work in May 2010.

The Employment Tribunal found in RMT's favour and there will now be further discussions and hearings as the union and its lawyers pursue a fair and just settlement for the sacked Jarvis workers.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that the union had secured an important landmark victory for the sacked Jarvis workers.

Arriva.

Marcus Farr said: "I am incredibly relieved that the employment tribunal has confirmed what I had felt all along, that I was being purposefully targeted by controllers who appeared to have a set campaign against me for no other reason than the fact that I wore a vest with the words RMT on it and they sought to limit the influence of my union".

Len Graves added: "The whole issue has been a great ordeal which caused me to become ill with stress and high blood pressure.

"I tried to challenge the charges brought against me at each stage of the process but Arriva refused to act reasonably or properly investigate my points.

"I can only hope that this decision puts an end to their unreasonable and unlawful behaviour," he said.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that Arriva had no problem in tolerating bigotry and fascist messages but was not able to tolerate the three letters 'RMT'.

"This decision should send a clear message to employers that we will not tolerate our members being singled out because of their trade union membership," he said. ■

WORKERS

"We will now pursue a full settlement that recognises the disgraceful treatment of this group of essential rail staff who found themselves caught in the middle of this corporate collapse.

"Jarvis boss and former Tory Minister Steve Norris should be hanging his head in shame as he continues to live the high life while those workers his company dumped on the stones have been left with a long legal fight for justice.

"This campaign, which is an object lesson in all that is wrong with rail privatisation and the behaviour of big business, will continue," he said. ■

President's column



FIGHTING FOR CLEANERS

At TUC conference last month RMT's delegation reported to delegates that RMT members employed as railway cleaners on the East Coast Trains contract were taking strike action against their employer ISS Cleaning Services in their fight for a living wage. This month Labour leader Ed Miliband told delegates at his party's conference that a Labour government will "put jobs in the public sector ahead of pay rises". Meanwhile RMT members working for another cleaning contractor Carlisle Cleaning Services on Trans Pennine Express services took a third day of strike action against poverty pay and poor working conditions.

'Red Ed' also promised: "Yes, there would be cuts if we were in government but if you make the pace of those cuts slower, if you take less money out of the economy now it would be better for the economy, better for growth". That is growth that is fed through to line the pockets of skinflint private contractors, not into the wages of their low-paid workers. Low-paid workers employed by sub-contractors to London Underground, Network Rail and train operators as Cleaners, Caterers and Security staff, are rail workers.

Before our railways were privatised in the mid-90s these jobs were carried out by British Rail staff in so-called 'conciliation grades'. Since privatisation a deliberate process of outsourcing has meant that these jobs are now carried out by workers with extremely precarious contracts, with companies that hide their 'minimum wage, maximum profit' business model behind a smart website.

Last year 300 cleaners employed by Carlisle on the Virgin West Coast Mainline contract won a 10 per cent pay increase along with improvements in benefits by taking strike action. In February cleaners on three contracts run by OCS and Initial voted for coordinated strike action at Channel tunnel locations. OCS cleaners

working on the Eurostar contract also secured a minimum rate of £8 per hour after a long fight.

Meanwhile Initial utilised an 'in-house' agency to organise strike-breaking using Bulgarian and Romanian workers – registered as self-employed with a bogus limited company status to avoid basic UK employment rights and to get round pathetic agency worker regulations.

In May RMT members employed as cleaners by Churchill's Cleaning Services on Tyne and Wear Metro also took strike action after a 100 per cent Yes vote in a dispute over pay and conditions and victimisation.

RMT has set out a strategy to coordinate union campaigns for a living wage among cleaners working for railway sub-contractors. Two lessons can be drawn from these experiences.

Firstly, as an industrial union RMT believes that the strong should help the weak. This means we must develop a strategy where members employed by LUL, Network Rail and train operators can assist their brothers and sisters working for skinflint sub-contractors to win union recognition, decent pay and conditions at work.

The second lesson is that the only way to ensure we stamp out abusive practices and low pay is to renationalise the lot of them and win national rates of pay conditions.

Our union achieved its long-held policy of rail nationalisation in 1948 when the post-war Labour government brought railways, canals, docks and road freight under state ownership and central planning to rebuild a Britain devastated by six years of war.

If Ed Miliband wants to 'rebuild Britain', he should stop appeasing private rail companies with Labour's current policy of 'devolving' transport to local government and renationalise our railways. Low paid workers and highly taxed commuters would thank him for it.

Alex Gordon

RMT STANDS UP FOR ITS MEMBERS

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

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

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

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0800 587 7516 (0800 328 1014 in Scotland). Lines open 8.00am-8.00pm Mon-Fri (except public holidays) and 9.00am-5.00pm Sat and Sun. For the 24 hour criminal law line call 0800 587 7530 (0800 328 1014 in Scotland)

 **THOMPSONS**
SOLICITORS

 **Drummond Miller**
Solicitors and Estate Agents

PROTECTING AND PROMOTING OUR MEMBERS' INTERESTS





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

INJURED CLEANER COMPENSATED

A cleaner who fractured her foot when she slipped on debris from building works as she walked to work along an unlit pathway has received compensation after help from her trade union.

The RMT member was walking to a train depot where she was due to begin a night shift cleaning trains when she suddenly fell.

Lights usually present on the walkway had been disconnected for building works being carried out close by. Debris from the works' site was scattered across the designated walkway but since it was dark she wasn't able to see it.

She turned her ankle and fell to her knees, causing a stress fracture to her right foot.

Despite in a lot of pain, the cleaner of 11 years continued with her 12 hour shift by walking on her heel. Having finished work the pain became so bad she went to accident and emergency where she was told that she'd broken her foot.

She was put in plaster for 13 weeks and was unable to return to work for seven months due to the nature of the injury and concerns by medical professionals about the impact of her walking on ballast around the tracks.

She eventually returned to work part time for a period of weeks before finally returning to her regular role.

Following the accident she contacted the RMT which instructed Thompsons Solicitors to investigate a claim for compensation.

Thompsons argued that the path should have had adequate lighting and that the debris should have been removed to make the area safe. Arriva admitted liability and settled the

claim out of court.

In addition to her compensation Thompsons arranged for the member to get specialist medical advice where she was provided with insoles which resulted in a dramatic reduction in the level of pain she experiences.

"Even after I was back at work I was in a great deal of pain.

"As the week wore on I was having to take more and more painkillers to get through my shift.

"The insoles I was provided with have made a huge difference and over time the pain has gradually eased," she said.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that it was a classic example of an employer failing to use common sense when there was an obvious health and safety hazard.

"Building works' debris combined with an unlit recognised pathway was a recipe for disaster," he said.

Clare Nash from Thompsons Solicitors said that it the case showed not only how Thompsons can help union members to claim compensation but also how they can look at the circumstances and see that whatever is possible is done to ease the injured persons pain.

- A member was awarded £35,000 following an injury when she slipped on the steps of a coach. She had picked up spilt diesel on the soles of her shoes, causing her to lose her footing when attempting to board the vehicle. Negotiation was refused and so the union's legal representatives commenced court proceedings for the injuries to her ribs and right arm.

- A driver member was injured while exiting the cab of his train when he fell between a large gap between the train and the platform as, unbeknownst to the driver, at that particular point the gap was much larger than usual. A shoulder injury was sustained, resulting in £132,500 compensation.
- RMT were forced to initiate legal proceedings after the other side's insurers refused to negotiate in an assault case. An RMT member was driving his bus when, at a standstill in traffic, a man pressed the emergency button thereby gaining access to the bus. Once on the bus, the man proceeded to attack the driver who suffered multiple injuries both physical and psychological. After court proceedings the member was awarded £13,000.
- An overhead line man was tasked with removing icicles from a tunnel, and whilst using a pole to do so he slipped and fell due to the slippery surface underfoot. The member fell onto the pole, which struck him below the chin forcing his teeth through his tongue. £4,500 was awarded in compensation.
- A member won £2,500 following an injury sustained when he tripped over two sections of plastic grating which had been left unsecured on the deck of a ship. The member injured both his knees as well as the palms of his hands, and was diagnosed with high blood pressure two days after the incident. Correspondence with the other side's insurers proved futile and the matter went to court, where RMT's legal partners were successful.
- A London Underground booking office clerk suffered a back injury whilst she was carrying a cash vault between her office and the cash counting machine. This task had been made unnecessarily difficult due to the cash counting machine having recently been moved out of the office, as well as the removal of a table which had previously been used to make the process easier. After negotiations the member was awarded £3,500 compensation.
- A member was awarded £4,942 following an accident at work in which he sustained ligament damage when a fellow employee barred a 65 foot rail onto the member's foot. The workers were attempting to transport the rails manually due to the unavailability of a road railier, and after negotiations a satisfactory settlement was agreed.
- A member suffered a back injury during a routine brake test whilst cleaning a bus. The member stopped cleaning and sat down whilst an apprentice engineer carried out the test, but the engineer braked with such force that the member fell from his seat injuring his back. The member won £2,263.29 in compensation.
- A needlestick injury was sustained by a member as he tied his shoe laces at track side. As the member got to his feet, he pushed himself up with his hands whereupon he felt the used needle enter his left hand. The other side's insurers refused to negotiate settlement and after court proceedings the member was awarded £4,300. ■

MERSEY BADGE

Central and North Mersey RMT branch chair Peter Creaby was presented with his 40 year badge by regional organiser Andy Warnock Smith recently.

Peter is a local rep for station staff at Merseyrail and over the years has represented members at disciplinary and grievance hearings helping to keep many members in work.

Branch secretary Billy Laing said that he had the same enthusiasm today and continues to represent members at Merseyrail and other companies.



NEWCASTLE AWARDS

Newcastle Rail and Catering branch recently awarded Northern Rail conductor John Lauder with 25-year membership badge. (Left to Right) Branch chairman Martin Bullock, regional organiser Micky Thompson, John Lauder and branch secretary Alan Andros.



CAMDEN KENDO

The Hizen Kendo club in Camden, London welcomed RMT general secretary Bob Crow and assistant general secretary Steve Hedley as the union made a donation to the charity.

Kendo students and teachers took time out to speak to Bob and Steve to explain the aim of the club in getting young people involved with the ancient art in which the Japanese Samurai warriors

practiced hundreds of years ago.

They explained the benefits in helping people to develop some aspects of the art both physically and mentally to help to improve their wellbeing.

A PLYMOUTH FAREWELL

Graham Hughes (below with Bob Crow) has sadly passed away just months after retiring.

Graham was a guard for First Great Western and he had been in the union for many years and a well-known branch activist.





South Devon Bus branch invited RMT president Alex Gordon to present Paul Rossiter with an RMT engraved tankard as a token of thanks for 25 years as secretary of the branch.

Paul has been a loyal member for over 30 years,

serving the union and his members as delegate to three AGMs, president of the Bus Workers Conference and South West regional council as well as an EC member on the regional council.

Paul will still be heavily

involved with the branch and regional council as well as still sitting on the bus workers consultative committee meeting at Unity House a number of times each year.

Paul is stepping down to mentor Peter Simmons, as the

new branch secretary. Peter has already been to the education centre in Doncaster taking branch officials Courses 1 and 2 and is well prepared to take on the most important position within the structure of the branch. ■

PERTH CELEBRATES

Duncan Guthrie started railway service in August 1972 acting as a RDR signaller working many boxes around the Perth area, retiring on August 4 2012 after 40 years and three days service.

Dunc also served two terms of office as an LLC rep for

signallers in the Perth area representing members and disciplines etc. He was always willing to stand up and say if things were wrong and was always an active RMT member. Dunc retires with the best wishes of all members of Perth no 1 branch. ■



ASHFORD BRANCH

NOMINATES

PAUL COX

FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER

FOR ALL MEMBERS

DARTFORD & DISTRICT BRANCH

NOMINATES

PAUL COX

FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER

ALREADY PROVEN IN THE JOB

EAST SUSSEX COASTWAY BRANCH

NOMINATES

PAUL COX

FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER

FOR ALL OUR INTERESTS

ORPINGTON BRANCH

NOMINATES

PAUL COX

FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER

FOR A MEMBER-LED RMT

CHILTERN BRANCH

NOMINATES

PAUL COX

FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER

ALWAYS PUTTING MEMBERS FIRST

DEPTFORD BRANCH

NOMINATES

PAUL COX

FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER

PUTTING MEMBERS INTERESTS FIRST

GILLINGHAM BRANCH

NOMINATES

PAUL COX

FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER

A CANDIDATE YOU CAN TRUST

RAMSGATE WORKSHOPS BRANCH

NOMINATES

PAUL COX

FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER

FIGHTING FOR OUR RIGHTS



Charles Watkins' Memorial Lecture

27 November 6pm

Speaker:

Labour movement academic
Professor Roger Seifert

"Strikers, communists, tramps, and detectives – lessons from the 1966 seafarers' dispute."

Venue:

NUT, Hamilton House, Mabledon Place,
London, WC1H 9BD

Refreshments will also be provided

SOUTH LONDON RAIL BRANCH NOMINATES PAUL COX FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER THE SENSIBLE OPTION	HEATHROW EXPRESS BRANCH NOMINATES STEVEN SKELLY FOR THE COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVES	TWIGAN BRANCH NOMINATES PETER PINKNEY FOR PRESIDENT	SALISBURY NO. 3 BRANCH NOMINATE PETE GALE FOR WESSEX REGIONAL ORGANISER AND ASKS ALL OTHER BRANCHES TO SUPPORT HIM
THREE BRIDGES BRANCH NOMINATES PAUL COX FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER WHY CHANGE WHAT WORKS?	HEATHROW EXPRESS BRANCH NOMINATES PETER PINKNEY FOR RMT PRESIDENT	PADDINGTON NO 1 NOMINATES MICK LYNCH FOR PRESIDENT	BOURNEMOUTH NO3 BRANCH NOMINATED PETE GALE FOR REGIONAL ORGANISER- WESSEX REGION SUPPORT THIS CANDIDATE
FAREHAM NO. 2 BRANCH NOMINATE PETER GALE FOR REGIONAL ORGANISER FOR THE WESSX REGION AND URGE ALL MEMBERS TO GIVE HIM THEIR VOTE	EAST KENT BRANCH NOMINATE GARRY HASSELL FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER	THREE BRIDGES BRANCH NOMINATES PETER PINKNEY FOR PRESIDENT	BASINGSTOKE NO.2 BRANCH NOMINATE PETE GALE REGIONAL ORGANISER, WESSEX SUPPORT THIS ABLE AND PROVEN CANDIDATE
RMT OFFSHORE ENERGY BRANCH NOMINATES MICK LYNCH FOR PRESIDENT	EAST KENT BRANCH NOMINATES PETER PINKNEY FOR RMT PRESIDENT	PORTSMOUTH BRANCH NOMINATES PETER PINKNEY FOR NATIONAL PRESIDENT	WINCHESTER BUS BRANCH NOMINATE PETE GALE AS REGIONAL ORGANISER- WESSEX REGION AND ASKS THAT ALL OTHER BRANCHES GIVE HIM THEIR SUPPORT
HULL RAIL BRANCH SUPPORTS MICK LYNCH FOR RMT PRESIDENT	EUSTON NO1 BRANCH NOMINATE MICK LYNCH FOR RMT PRESIDENT AN EXPERIENCED CANDIDATE	PORTSMOUTH BRANCH NOMINATES MICK TOSH FOR WESSEX REGIONAL ORGANISER AND URGES SUPPORT	NEWPORT ISLE OF WIGHT NO. 2 BRANCH NOMINATES PETE GALE FOR REGIONAL ORGANISER-WESSEX REGION AND ASKS FOR THE SUPPORT TO ENSURE THAT HE IS RETURNED
AYR BRANCH SUPPORTS MICK LYNCH FOR PRESIDENT	BRIDGEND, LLANTRISANT & DISTRICT BRANCH NOMINATE MICK LYNCH FOR RMT PRESIDENT AN ABLE AND EXPERIENCED CANDIDATE	CROYDON NO1 BRANCH NOMINATES GARY HASSELL FOR REGIONAL ORGHANISER AND SEEKS SUPPORTS FOR THIS ABLE CANDIDATE	SOUTHAMPTON NO.5 BRANCH NOMINATES PETE GALE FOR REGIONAL ORGANISER- WESSEX REGION AND ASKS ALL OTHER BRANCHES TO GIVE HIM THEIR SUPPORT
DORSET RAIL BRANCH NOMINATE MICK TOSH FOR WESSEX REGIONAL ORGANISER A PROVEN AND ABLE CANDIDATE	BRIDGEND, LLANTRISANT & DISTRICT BRANCH NOMINATE STEVEN SKELLY FOR COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVE SOUTH WALES & WEST REGION	POOLE AND DISTRICT BRANCH NOMINATES PETE GALE FOR WESSEX REGIONAL ORGANISER AND ASKS FOR A SUPPORTING NOMINATIONS	ANDOVER AND SALISBURY RAIL BRANCH NOMINATES PETE GALE FOR THE POSITION OF REGIONAL ORGANISER WESSEX PLEASE GIVE HIM YOUR SUPPORT
UPPER RHYMNEY VALLEY BRANCH NOMINATES STEVE SKELLY FOR COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVES, SOUTH WALES AND WEST REGION	JUBILEE SOUTH BRANCH NOMINATES PETER PINKNEY FOR PRESIDENT	WEYMOUTH BUS BRANCH NOMINATE PETE GALE FOR REGIONAL ORGANISER WESSEX REGION A TRIED AND TESTED CANDIDATE	EASTLEIGH WORKHOPS BRANCH NOMINATES PETE GALE FOR WESSEX REGIONAL ORGANISER PLEASE GIVE HIM YOUR SUPPORT

EIRE SHIPPING BRANCH NOMINATES PETER PINKNEY FOR NATIONAL PRESIDENT	WIMBLEDON BRANCH NOMINATES PETER PINKNEY FOR PRESIDENT	MID CORNWALL RAIL BRANCH NOMINATES MICK LYNCH FOR RMT PRESIDENT	LEEDS GOODS AND CARTAGE BRANCH NOMINATES DEREK ENGLAND FOR COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVES
BRIGHTON AND HOVE CITY NOMINATE GARRY HASSELL FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER	WILLESDEN RAIL SUPPORT MICK LYNCH FOR RMT PRESIDENT	SURREY HANTS BRANCH NOMINATES PETER PINKNEY FOR RMT PRESIDENT	DONCASTER BRANCH NOMINATES SEAN MCGOWAN FOR THE YORKSHIRE AND LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVES SEAT
DOVER DISTRICT GENERAL GRADES NOMINATES PAUL COX FOR REGIONAL ORGANISER	POOLE AND DISTRICT BUS BRANCH NOMINATE PETER PINKNEY FOR NATIONAL PRESIDENT	SOUTH HANTS BRANCH NOMINATES MICK TOSH FOR WESSEX REGIONAL ORGANISER	HULL RAIL SUPPORTS SEAN MCGOWAN FOR COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVES MEMBER REGION 5
DOVER DISTRICT GENERAL GRADES SUPPORT MICHAEL LYNCH FOR PRESIDENT	WIMBLEDON BRANCH NOMINATES MICK TOSH WESSEX REGIONAL ORGANISER	SURREY HANTS BRANCH NOMINATES MICK TOSH FOR WESSEX REGIONAL ORGANISER	NEWCASTLE AND GATESHEAD BRANCH NOMINATES PETER PINKNEY FOR PRESIDENT
PRESTON BRANCH SUPPORTS MICK LYNCH FOR RMT PRESIDENT	EAST HAM BRANCH NOMINATES PETER PINKNEY FOR PRESIDENT	WATERLOO BRANCH NOMINATES MICK TOSH FOR WESSEX REGIONAL ORGANISER	HEMSWORTH AND SOUTH ELMSALL BRANCH NOMINATES SEAN MCGOWAN FOR COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVES REGION NO 5
PICCADILLY AND DISTRICT WEST SUPPORT MICK LYNCH FOR RMT PRESIDENT	SOUTH EAST ESSEX NOMINATES MICK LYNCH FOR PRESIDENT	SOUTHAMPTON SHIPPING BRANCH "PROUDLY NOMINATES AND SUPPORTS" MICK TOSH FOR WESSEX REGIONAL ORGANISER	WAKEFIELD BRANCH NOMINATES SEAN MCGOWAN FOR COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVES REGION NO 5
DOVER SHIPPING SUPPORTS PETER PINKNEY FOR RMT PRESIDENT	COLCHESTER AND DISTRICT BRANCH SUPPORTS MICK LYNCH FOR PRESIDENT	LEEDS GOODS AND CARTAGE BRANCH NOMINATES PETER PINKNEY FOR PRESIDENT	HASTINGS BRANCH NOMINATES PAUL COX FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER
DOVER SHIPPING BRANCH SUPPORTS GARY HASSELL FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER	BIRMINGHAM ENGINEERING BRANCH SUPPORTS MICK LYNCH FOR PRESIDENT	The winner of last months Crossword is Zoe Lloyd of Pendeford, Wolverhampton The RMT crossword will return in the near future.	

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Join the RMT Credit Union before Christmas and you could win an iPad! The names of RMT members that join between now and December 20 will be entered into a prize draw to win the iPad.

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FRN No. 228612



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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.

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To: The Manager	Bank/Building Society
Address	
	Postcode

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

--

Bank/Building Society account number

--

Branch Sort Code

--

Originator's Identification Number

9	7	4	2	8	1
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Reference Number

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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.

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- 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.
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- 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.
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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.

