

RMT *news*

Essential reading for today's transport worker

STOP NORTHERN AND TPE CARVE UP

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JOIN AND WIN AN IPAD PAGE 10**



www.rmt.org.uk

NATIONAL UNION OF RAIL, MARITIME & TRANSPORT WORKERS

Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD



APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP – please complete your application along with either the attached Direct Debit or a separate paybill mandate form.

Please use **BLOCK CAPITALS** and **black ink**. * Information that must be provided.

BRANCH NUMBER

1 PERSONAL DETAILS.

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

2 Your Employment. Employer*	Location
Job Description*	Part Time YES NO

3 Sex. Male Female

4 Ethnic Group. (Please specify. This information is used as part of our equal opportunities policy)

A. White	English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	Irish	Gypsy or Irish Traveller	Any other White background	
B. Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	White and Black Caribbean	White and Black African	White and Asian	Other mixed/multiple ethnic background	
C. Asian/Asian British	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Chinese	Other Asian background
D. Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	African	Caribbean	Other Black/African/Caribbean background		
E. Other ethnic group	Arab	Other ethnic group, please specify			

5 Sexual orientation (This information will be used for monitoring purposes as part of our equal opportunities policy)

Sexuality	Heterosexual	Homosexual	Bisexual	Prefer not to say
Do you identify as transgender?	Yes	No	If you wish to be contacted with information about union activities for lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender members please tick here	

6 How do you wish to pay.	Your Pay Number
Direct Debit (you must complete form below)	Paybill Deduction (complete separate form)
I confirm my paybill mandate has been sent to my pay office. Phone Freephone 0800 376 3706 to confirm your company offers paybill facility.	

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

Your signature	Date
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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, 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

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Branch Sort Code

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Normally your payments are made once a month to RMT. If you prefer to pay 4 weekly instead please tick

Originator's Identification Number

9	7	1	7	4	5
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Reference Number

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Your National Insurance Number

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

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society. Please pay RMT 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, 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.



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CROSSWORD

EDITORIAL



YOUR VOICE AT WORK

The fact that over 96 per cent of those members taking part voted to retain the RMT Political Fund is an endorsement of our political and industrial strategy.

The result means that we can continue to campaign in the political arena on the issues that matter to our members including public ownership, a safe and secure job, pay, pensions and employment rights.

It is this sort of campaigning that is required in order to defend jobs on the new Intercity Express Programme (IEP) trains on East Coast Mainline and First Great Western franchises.

The IEP plans currently includes no buffet car facilities, no guards' accommodation, Driver Only Operation as well as the outsourcing of maintenance work to Hitachi.

There are also no arrangements to facilitate the transfer of engineering grades and no protection of jobs.

This is on top of the insane plans to re-privatise East Coast Mainline services which have proved so successful in the public sector.

It is simply ludicrous to even contemplate re-privatisation when not only have there been two previous private sector failures on the East Coast route but when the public-sector rescue operation has been such a stunning success.

Under Directly Operated Railways, East Coast has paid around £1 billion to the British people since it took over in 2009 when the National Express franchise collapsed into chaos.

As you can see from the front page, RMT members also rallied outside parliament to demand an end to the Northern and Trans-Pennine Express franchise carve-up.

RMT is exposing the rank hypocrisy of government ministers talking up plans for a vague proposal for a northern 'HS3' service while their current franchise plans on existing routes would rip apart services, jobs and safety.

News of two more rail runaways, which came close to a repeat of the Tebay disaster in Cumbria in 2004, shows that not enough is being done to

stop them.

We are demanding immediate action from Network Rail and its contractors to make sure that there is no repeat.

Ten years after the Tebay disaster we are still awaiting the full roll-out of the warning device that we have been promised for years.

This government is also refusing to conduct an independent inquiry into North Sea helicopter safety demanded by The House of Commons Transport Committee.

The Transport Committee report asked for an inquiry to look at the impact of commercial pressure on helicopter safety following five helicopter accidents since 2009. Yet the government has now dismissed the report.

Our parliamentary group is working hard in many areas including on bus drivers' working hours.

Over 30 MPs have signed Early Day Motion 497 calling on the government to ensure that bus drivers are legally entitled to a break after 4.5 hours of continuous driving with no reduction in pay.

We need to end the culture of excessive working hours for low pay that has taken root since deregulation of the bus industry in 1985 when bus drivers' pay was seven per cent above the average weekly wage.

News that there are not enough suitably qualified lorry drivers in the run-up to the busy Christmas period is further evidence of the long-term damage caused by the free market.

These companies have hammered jobs and pay to maximise profits combined with a government that refuses to take integrated transport services seriously and which has allowed a casual approach to dominate.

Finally, happy tenth birthday to the RMT Credit Union which has proved to be an important service to members and a good reason to join the union, well done to everyone involved.

Best wishes

Mick Cash

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

A large red offshore helicopter is shown from a low angle, looking up at its cockpit and rotors. The helicopter is parked on a platform, and its rotors are visible in the background.

GOVERNMENT RULES OUT NORTH SEA HELICOPTER SAFETY INQUIRY

Tory/Lib Dem coalition block investigation into commercial pressures affecting safety in offshore sector

RMT has slammed the government for refusing to conduct a "full and independent" inquiry into North Sea helicopter safety demanded by The House of Commons Transport Committee earlier this year.

The Transport Committee report published in July had said that a recent review into offshore helicopter safety by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) had not looked at the impact of commercial pressure on helicopter safety.

It had looked into helicopter safety after four people died in a Super Puma crash near Sumburgh airport in Shetland in August last year.

It was the fifth helicopter accident involving the transfer of oil and gas industry personnel in the North Sea since 2009.

The government has now dismissed the report and said that it "does not support" the call for a public inquiry.

"It is true that competition for contracts, particularly where contracts are offered at short notice or awarded at a lower price, may impact on the ability of the operator to recruit and train for a new commitment but there is no evidence to suggest this is the case," a statement said.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the union was appalled that the government had point blank refused to hold the full independent and public inquiry into helicopter safety that has been an absolute core demand from the workforce.

"An inquiry would have gone some way toward dispelling

existing concerns which continue to undermine workforce confidence.

"The failure to agree to a public inquiry leads to the obvious question, "what have you got to hide?"

"This response from the government to the Transport Committee represents a complete failure to get to grips with the safety issue in the offshore industry and will send out a wholly negative signal.

"RMT will continue to fight for a public inquiry and will continue to support the families of those who have lost loved-ones in our industry. The fight for the safety of offshore workers goes on," he said.

Transport committee chair Louise Ellman said that she was deeply disappointed that

ministers had rejected their recommendations.

"This is a regrettable decision for the loved ones and relatives of people killed in offshore helicopter accidents.

"It sends the wrong signal to people who continue to work in the offshore industry," she said.

The transport committee had learned that offshore workers who raise concerns about helicopter safety had been told they should leave the oil and gas industry and that there was a "macho bullying culture".

A further call in the transport committee's report for the CAA to conduct a joint review with the Norwegian offshore industry into safety has been agreed to along with meetings with helicopter crash survivors.



BATTLE AGAINST INTERSERVE BULLYING STARTS AT WATERLOO

Interserve staff across London Underground are being balloted for both strike action and action short of a strike over a complete refusal by the company to treat the staff with dignity.

The ballot was launched as cleaners employed by Interserve at Waterloo station in London took 24-hour strike action against the victimisation and dismissal of RMT members, failure to follow agreed procedures, underpayment of

wage and the bullying and harassment of staff.

RMT has also received reports of shocking racism by local Interserve managers that the company has refused point blank to address, including one manager telling a member of staff that Interserve "should not employ black people".

The union is also angry at a repeated refusal by Interserve to deal directly with the union over the staff grievances which

has led to a breakdown in trust and normal industrial relations.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that it was clear that Interserve was not prepared to treat their workforce with even the most basic levels of human dignity.

"RMT's executive has seen the reports on the appalling way that our members and representatives are being treated by Interserve, through the constant placing of barriers in

the path of union representatives and through the dreadful mismanagement of wages.

"The majority of these issues appear to affect the whole of this company as the situation on London Underground mirrors that experienced by Interserve members at Waterloo.

"As a result we are now moving to a ballot of Interserve staff on London Underground for industrial action," he said. ■





TRANSPORT FOR LONDON STAFF LOBBY CITY HALL OVER PAY AND PENSIONS

RMT joined a lobby of the Transport for London board meeting at City Hall in early November over an all-out attack on pay and pensions that would condemn to staff to a life of poverty in retirement.

TfL has refused to engage in serious negotiations over their plans for what amounts to a performance-related pay freeze and savage cuts to pension rights.

The savage attacks that TfL are looking to bulldoze through pay rises that are one-off lump sums that would not count towards pensionable pay and an

immediate pay freeze over the next five years for most staff.

The annual pay award would also be at the discretion of managers and no longer fully negotiated with the recognised trade unions.

Also pay rises would be determined by punitive and discriminatory 'individual performance' processes which will leave staff at the risk of bullying and harassment.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that these cash-led cuts would become worse over the forthcoming years as there are further reductions in TfL's

grant and the expectation that further assaults on jobs, pay and pensions are being lined up for the future.

"The current TfL pension proposals are nothing less than a concerted attack on terms and conditions and would have a major effect on the future of the entire TfL Pension Fund.

"TfL has refused to budge on this important issue despite the clear rejection of their proposals by staff," he said.

All the unions involved have demanded that TfL immediately withdraw the toxic 'Pay For Performance' plans and get back

round the table.

"This attack on TfL pay and pensions has to be seen in the wider context of government austerity cuts to TfL's funding and once again it is the staff who are being lined up to take a hit.

"The pension and pay assault also has to be seen against the backdrop of the continuing threat to jobs, services and safety on London Underground which are driven by the same multi-billion plans for cuts," Mick Cash said.



NORTHERN LINE DRIVERS STRIKE AGAINST VICTIMISATION

RMT tube drivers operating out of the Northern Line's Morden train crew depot are to take strike action following the dismissal of a colleague in what the union says is a "blatant and clear cut case of victimisation and abuse of procedures".

The decision to move to a strike comes after a massive "Yes" vote amongst the members concerned.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that RMT had been pointing out that a new culture of harassment and misuse of procedures is rife on London Underground and the union would not stand back while individuals were picked off.

"RMT members are well aware that the only defence that they have in these circumstances, when the

internal machinery has been exhausted, is the unity and solidarity in the workplace.

"The unattributed briefings to the media that our member had been sacked for "drinking on duty" are totally untrue.

"Our member has a specific medical condition and the union maintains that it was the failure to follow agreed procedures that have led to this unwarranted

dismissal and the subsequent strike action.

"The London Underground director who reviewed the case has accepted that the management side have not followed their own procedures," he said.

RMT had been approached by ACAS to hold talks through their offices but LU management have refused that offer. ■

LORRY DRIVER SHORTAGES

Employers are becoming increasingly worried about hiring enough suitably qualified drivers in the run-up to the busy Christmas period, according to a new report.

Research by the Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC) showed that one in five companies looking to take on drivers and distribution workers is expecting shortages.

The problem is raising fears over whether firms will be able to meet additional demand for their goods and services in November and December.

Ninety per cent of the 600 employers polled said that they had little or no capacity to take on more work.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the industry was paying the price for years of attacks on jobs and working conditions.

"This onslaught has clearly casualised and undermined the status of workers in the road freight industry to the point that we now face the prospect of empty shelves in the run-up to Christmas.

"The blame for this crisis lies with the companies who have hammered jobs and pay to maximise profits and with a government that refuses to take integrated transport services seriously and which has allowed an ad hoc and casual approach to dominate," he said.

REC chief executive Kevin Green said that drivers were particularly hard to find.

"People are put off entering the sector by the high costs of things like training and insurance, with the new Certificate of Professional Competence requirements compounding the difficulties.

"With peak time for deliveries coming up in November and December, shortages are an immediate problem and one that will only get worse in the longer term.

"We need to see more employers offering driver training and accreditation. The Government could help by providing some pump-priming

funds," he said.

"The UK's workforce is lean, with minimal spare capacity and growing shortages of workers with the skills to fill the jobs that are currently available.

"As employers compete more intensely in the jobs market for the skills they need to grow, there will be upward pressure on salaries in the months ahead," he said.

The survey also showed that nine out of 10 firms plan to increase their permanent staff in the next three months, while almost half will take on more temporary workers.



MEMBERS ENDORSE POLITICAL FUND

RMT members have voted by over 96 per cent in favour of retaining the RMT Political Fund.

On a turnout of 31 per cent, 21,435 (96.5 per cent) voted to retain the fund with 768 against. In the previous ballot ten years ago RMT members voted by 88 per cent to retain the Political Fund.

This is the fourth time members have voted to keep their Political Fund since the Tory government in the 1980s introduced legislation requiring trade unions to hold a postal ballot of members every ten years.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the result meant that the RMT could continue to campaign in the political arena on the issues that matter to members including public ownership, a safe and secure job, pay, pensions and employment rights.

"I would like to thank all members who have voted to continue the RMT's Political voice and campaigned to achieve this fantastic result," he said. ■





RMT LOBBIES OVER NEW FRANCHISE CUTS IN THE NORTH

Members rally outside parliament to demand end to Northern and Trans-Pennine Express franchise carve-up

RMT members from services threatened by the new Northern and Trans-Pennine Express (TPE) rail franchises descended on parliament recently for a lively lobby to halt the planned carve up.

RMT blasted the franchise moves as “a kick in the teeth” for the travelling public and staff alike, reinforcing the importance of the community standing alongside rail workers in the fight to stop the destruction of rail services right across the North.

RMT has also exposed the rank hypocrisy of government ministers talking up plans for an un-costed and vague proposal for a northern “HS3” service, light years off in the future, while at the same time their current franchise plans on existing routes would rip apart services, jobs and safety.

Supported by Labour MPs at the lobby including Kelvin Hopkins (right), RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the fight to stop the Northern and TPE franchise cuts was gathering pace, sending out the clearest possible message to the government and Rail North that

they need to scrap this attack on transport services.

“The core of government plans is to axe jobs, restrict services, throw the guards off the trains and jack up fares while capacity to meet surging rail demand in the area is left to stagnate.

“That attack on the fare-paying public has already begun with the abolition of a wide range of off-peak fares and only an all-out and coordinated fight can stop the savage assault on rail in the North,” he said.

RMT members had also tried to lobby rail minister Claire Perry in York during a proposed visit to the National Rail Museum in the City. However she cancelled the visit at the last minute

Claire Perry would have had an embarrassing conflict with Northern boss Alex Hynes who has publicly contradicted the plans to remove the guards and conductors;

“We’ve got no plans to do DOO [Driver Only Operation]”, he told the influential Rail Business Intelligence magazine, pointing out that the Class 319s transferring to the route from

Thameslink in the south and which are set up for DOO “will be modified for conductors to open and close doors”.

RMT also welcomed news that Sheffield has become the

latest big city to publicly pass a motion opposing the Northern and TPE franchise plans, heaping further pressure on the government.



Labour MP Kelvin Hopkins





FIGHTING TRANSPORT PRIVATISATION

As a Labour MEP who is also on the European Parliament Transport Committee, I am working closely with RMT and other unions to fight the European Commission's "Fourth Railway Package."

If enacted in the form put forward by the European Commission, the proposals could bring about mass liberalisation of rail passenger services all over Europe and force the separation of train operations from infrastructure management.

The Commission's ideological push is based on the bizarre notion that privatisation and fragmentation in the UK has been a success and should be rolled out across Europe. But success for whom? Certainly not for railway workers who see their working terms and conditions constantly under attack.

Certainly not for the passengers who pay the highest fares in Europe. And certainly not for the UK taxpayers who contribute two to three times more in real terms than they did under public ownership and pay for 99 per cent for all rail investment compared to the private sector's one per cent.

Even the much vaunted increase in passenger numbers is nothing to do with privatisation and instead a result of economic and population growth.

But privatisation has, of course, been a success for the private

train companies that have extracted hundreds of millions in dividends on the back of lucrative contracts. Not surprisingly it is many of the UK Train Operating companies and their allies in the British government who are pushing an aggressive corporate agenda in Brussels.

We need to resist this agenda and I am glad that Labour voted in the UK Parliament to oppose the Fourth Rail Package. In the form proposed by the Commission, it would clearly restrict the options of any future Labour government to take the railways back into public ownership, which is a policy that I enthusiastically support.

And campaigning in the European Parliament can make a difference. Earlier in the year, following lobbying by the rail unions, including members contacting their MEPs, the European Commission's proposals for the Fourth Railway Package were amended by the majority of MEPs who voted to reject the forced opening up of passenger rail travel in the single market - a vote the then Transport Commissioner criticised as "yet another demonstration of the tenacity of the vested national interests ...". Well precisely!

But the proposals are still very much on the agenda with a complex legislative process ahead. The European Council, made up of ministers from the

member states is due to discuss a revised version of the legislation, which could threaten to remove many of our hard fought victories on market opening, operator governance, and health and safety. So it is vital that we keep up the pressure and join with rail campaigners across Europe to oppose rail privatisation and fragmentation.

And it is not just in the area of rail that we need to challenge the Commission's agenda. RMT members in Scotland will be aware that under current EU regulations the Scottish government is arguing that the Clyde and Hebrides ferry network must be put out to tender. I want to work with the maritime unions and Scottish Labour colleagues to explore how this can be opposed, or at the very least mitigated against.

And fighting for public transport in the public sector has to be part of a wider campaign for progressive policies such as strong trade union and employment rights and challenging the EU-wide austerity agenda. I am grateful and excited to have the opportunity in the months and years ahead to work with RMT and other unions on this shared agenda.

Lucy Anderson was elected as a London Labour MEP in May 2014 and is a member of the European Parliament Transport Committee.

GROWING SUPPORT FOR LOWER BUS DRIVER HOURS

Early Day Motion 497 calling on the government to ensure that bus drivers are legally entitled to a break after 4.5 hours of continuous driving with no reduction in pay is winning cross-party support with over 30 MPs signing up.

The EDM notes that bus drivers work four hours more

but are paid 14 per cent less a week than the average UK worker.

Currently two different sets of regulations applying to bus drivers, domestic and European, limit driving to 5.5 hours and 4.5 hours respectively before legal entitlement to a break

"This mix of bus drivers'

hours regulations prevents effective enforcement and forces bus drivers to work longer than is either safe or healthy," the EDM says.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash called for regulations on drivers' hours to cover all commercial journeys by passenger carrying vehicles in

the UK.

"This would be a significant step toward ending the culture of excessive working hours for low pay that has taken root since deregulation of the UK bus industry in 1985 when bus drivers' pay was seven per cent above the average weekly wage," he said. ■

RMT CREDIT UNION: THE FIRST TEN YEARS!

To celebrate our tenth birthday you could win an iPad mini if you join the RMT Credit Union!

This December RMT's Credit Union reaches its tenth anniversary and to celebrate it is offering an iPad to anyone who joins between now and February.

If you are an RMT member all you have to do to join is fill out the application form at the back of this magazine or contact the Credit Union direct and start an account from as little as £5 a month.

You will be joining a growing number of members that can avail themselves to the services of the union's very own bank.

The Credit Union was set up following a decision of the union's Annual General Meeting in 2004.

The Council of Executives immediately formulated a plan, starting with an inaugural meeting to elect trustees and directors from amongst the volunteers involved.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow was an enthusiastic supporter of the Credit Union and the union found space at Unity House for it to operate from and paid for an administration worker.

From these humble beginnings grew a vibrant and much loved institution. It is very much a part of the union in its ethos and culture being a fully democratic operation, driven and run by the members and for the members.

Over the last ten years it has

continued to grow and today it has around 2,500 members and holds over four million pounds in its portfolio.

Credit Union president Mick Lynch said that the principles behind the Credit Union are sound and fit in very comfortably with the union's ethos.

"As our membership has grown so have the services we can offer."

This shows just how ambitious we are and we plan to grow and develop further.

"Ultimately why would you invest your hard earned cash in the profit grabbing bankers and their mates when you could put it into a credit union that offers ethical saving with competitive interest rates?"

"Then the money you put in is used to offer low cost loans to support your work and union sisters and brothers at times of greatest needs," he said.

RMT Credit Union members are able to save as little or as much as they can afford, knowing that the money they put in will benefit RMT members, their families and not the big financial institutions.

As well as standard savings accounts RMT members and their families can save for their child or grandchild's future with a Junior Deposit Account or save short-term for Christmas or the expensive Summer Holiday period.

All the directors of the RMT

Prize donated
by UIA



**RMT CREDIT
UNION LTD**
Annual General
Meeting

December 10 2014
Unity House
1300hrs
*Open to all Credit Union
Ltd Members*
**39 Chalton Sreet London
NW1 1JD**



Gabriel Leke



Credit Union president Mick Lynch and administrator Nicky Hoarau

Credit Union are unpaid volunteers and savers with the Credit Union too. So they have a real stake in making sure that the members get a fair deal at all times.

Credit Union member Gabriel Leke said that he has many colleagues who are on very low wages and when an emergency comes along they think their only alternative is to go to a pay-day loan company, or loan shark.

"Having benefited from being in the RMT Credit Union myself I am able to encourage them to join and find real support and advice when they need it the most," he said

Credit Union member Emily King said that as a hard working mother to two girls, the RMT Credit Union had been brilliant in meeting those additional costs that always come at the wrong time "including as new school uniforms in September or Christmas presents".

But it's not just a bank for people who struggle with their pay levels. We have also had members take out loans for

foreign holidays, new cars or motor bikes, an extension to their home and even a holiday flat abroad.

The RMT Credit Union's Annual General Meeting is on Wednesday December 10 at Unity House in London at 13.00.

Credit Union manager Nicola Hoarau encouraged members to attend and get involved.

"We are looking for good people to stand as Directors or volunteers."

"The RMT Credit Union is run by its members and all the profit, once bills are paid, goes back into the interest you gain on your savings.

"So come and join us in building a better and more secure future for all of us together," she said.

To find out more about the Credit Union or how you can get involved visit us on www.rmt.org.uk/creditunion. Or visit us on

facebook.com/Rmtc.union

Or you can contact Steven or Nicola directly Telephone 02075 298835 or email: c.union@rmt.org.uk ■



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*Up to 40% off is available if you have been claim-free for 5 years or more. Other discounts are available if you have been claim-free between one and four years and depend on your circumstances. 67% of new customers who purchased between 21.01.14 and 31.03.14 received a 40% discount. Minimum premiums apply. This offer is subject to our usual acceptance criteria and is only available when the reference RMT114 is quoted. Certain postcode restrictions apply. To be eligible for this offer, a quote must be requested before 27.01.15. **Research carried out by UAA (Insurance) Ltd, Aug. 2014. We exchange information with other insurance companies and the police to prevent fraud. RMT is an Introducing Representative of UAA (Insurance) Ltd, which is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority.

uia
&
RMT

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with the RMT Prepaid Plus MasterCard® card

Use the RMT Prepaid Plus card at over **40 big brand retail partners** this festive season and you'll earn between **2.5% to 6% cashback**. Retail partners include Sainsbury's, ASDA, Argos, Boots, Debenhams, B&Q and **many more**.¹

This card is different to a credit or debit card because you load it with money before you spend, rather than paying for it afterwards. So there's less chance of going over your budget.

There's **no limit** to how much cashback you can earn, **no application fee** and no credit checks – all this for just £1.95 per month!²

It's a great way to cover the costs of the festive season!

Apply TODAY for your chance to **WIN £500**³

www.RMTprepaid.com



WIN £500!

Simply apply for the RMT Prepaid Plus card **before 31 March 2015** to be automatically entered into our prize draw to WIN £500!³

Previous Winner: Graham (Prenton)

Here's what he had to say about his card: "I enjoy the discounts and it helps me manage my money."



¹Range of retail partners and cashback rates are subject to change. Some retailer exclusions apply. ²The RMT Prepaid Plus MasterCard® card is free to apply for. There is a monthly fee of £1.95, which is charged within 30 days of successful application. You must be a RMT member to apply, some identity checks will be made, but there are no credit checks. ³Full prize draw rules at www.RMTprepaid.com/prizedrawrules. To be entered into the prize draw you must successfully apply for a RMT Prepaid Plus card or be a RMT Prepaid Plus cardholder before 31st March 2015 (no cash alternative).

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RMT STEPS UP CAMPAIGN TO END SEWAGE DUMPING

Union tells rail privateers across the country stop dumping raw human waste onto rail tracks

RMT has put rail privateers across Britain on notice that it will not tolerate the filthy and disgusting practice of dumping raw sewage onto railway tracks after it was revealed that vegetables are growing on tracks in this fertile environment.

As part of the nationwide campaign the union held a protest at Transport Scotland to demand for a new timetable for ending the practice which is putting the health of track workers at risk.

RMT has told Transport Scotland and Network Rail to put pressure on Scotrail's new operators, Abellio, to bring

forward the proposed date for the fitting of retention tanks across the fleet from December 2017 to April 2016 to eradicate this scandal.

The franchise documentation talked of 2020 as the target date for ending the dumping of effluent.

Since then, following the RMT campaign, the Transport Minister has moved that date to December 2017 but RMT believes that April 2016 is an achievable target and would represent significant further progress.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that Abellio were set to make a fortune out of the

Scotrail franchise and the very least they should be forced to do is to dip in their pockets and retro-fit the retention tanks.

"This union intends to keep the pressure on Transport Scotland for the earliest possible end to this scandal on Scotland's railways and that is why we are taking our case right to their doorstep on Tuesday.

"If it was wealthy bankers getting sprayed with sewage rather than rail workers then this scandal would be ended overnight. RMT's campaign goes on," he said.

Abellio is also under

pressure on its Essex/ Greater Anglia franchise after tomatoes were found to be growing on tracks at stations around Southend and Norwich.

In a recent article in the *Daily Mirror* highlighting the problem the union said that the Southend to London line had become known for discharged human excrement and workers carrying out maintenance on the tracks were at risk of being sprayed with human waste.

Mick Cash said that the tomatoes were a clear indication of just how bad the problem was, particularly on Greater Anglia.

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STEAMER TRAINS

So much human waste on tracks workers find tomato plant growing

EXCLUSIVE
by MARK ELLIS
Transport Correspondent



has been flashed on the route between Southend in Essex and London's Liverpool Street station, that it has acted like fertiliser to the undigested seeds within it.

One of the workers said: "We spotted this at Rochford in Essex. It just shows what a c*** line it is with these tomatoes thriving on fertiliser from the trains."

Most modern trains are fitted with toilet tanks which are pumped out at depots but older rolling stock vehicles do not have the same system.

Ministers admit it could take years to eradicate the problem as they await for the trains to be taken out of service.

The RMT rail union said it highlighted a serious problem as track workers are exposed to raw sewage from passing trains. Mick Cash, of RMT, said: "It shames Britain's railways that tons of human excrement is dumped on the train tracks."

"Rail staff are often sprayed with this waste. It also shows that the government is prepared to tolerate such Dickensian conditions."

m.ellis@mirror.co.uk

TIPS FOR TOMS
DIARMUID GAVIN
GARDENING EXPERT



I TAKE that train from Southend airport to London and throughout the summer I had no idea that I had been rolling over ripening tomatoes. Am I surprised? Yes and no. Tomatoes need certain conditions but they do grow easily from seed.

They need heat to germinate and there has been plenty of that outdoors this year.

When seedlings emerge they need good light, so an open railway line is ideal.

Tomato plants are hungry creatures and need feeding and watering regularly. They must have loved all the poo and wee.

Cordon tomatoes need to be trained up a cane or stem while bush tomatoes grow best in containers or hanging baskets. It's quirky to see them growing on the tracks but it's probably best to keep them in the garden.

MORE RUNAWAYS

RMT calls for review of the use of the 'Iron Man' after runaway comes close to repeat of Tebay disaster

RMT has demanded a review of the use of the 'Iron Man' transporter on Britain's railways following a runaway in Wales which came close to a repeat of the Tebay disaster in Cumbria in 2004.

The Rail Accident Investigation Board (RAIB) is also investigating a near-miss incident involving a group of nine track workers who were working on the West Coast Main Line, south of Hest Bank between Carnforth and Lancaster in September.

The group comprised of contract staff and a controller of site safety employed by Network Rail. A lookout operated warning system (LOWS) was being used to give warning of approaching trains because the gang's view was restricted by curvature of the line. But it failed to warn the gang but the train was spotted just in time.

In the Welsh incident,

workers narrowly escaped injury when the railway transporters ran free for six miles along the south Wales line between Pantyffynnon Junction and Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen, Neath Port Talbot.

Two workers applied the brakes but the trailers failed to stop and they were forced to jump out of its way.

A Network Rail report into the incident said that two sets of trolleys were transporting a 52-foot section of rail when they began to run away.

"After being unable to physically stop the trolleys the staff jumped clear, with one member of staff sustaining a graze to the head after falling on to the ballast," it said.

As a result of pressure from the union, Network Rail has confirmed that it has put in place a process in Wales that ensures all Iron Men get checked and approved before



use and they are also banning its use on gradients over 1/150 unless specifically authorised.

However, this protocol is only being applied in Wales and RMT is demanding that it be applied nationally.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the incident had sent shock waves through the railways.

"RMT members are demanding immediate action from Network Rail and its contractors to make sure that there is no repeat.

"It is pure luck that no one was killed or injured and we are not prepared to leave the safety of our members to luck.

"The Iron Man is a cheap option for transportation of track and clearly there are now serious questions about their

safety and particularly the safety of their brakes.

"There should be an immediate review into their continued use, we will not tolerate the use of faulty equipment.

"Ten years after the Tebay disaster, where four RMT members lost their lives, we are still awaiting the full roll-out of the warning device that we have been promised for years.

"It's all very well talking big about track worker safety but what RMT is demanding is delivery of that safety regime without any further delays," he said.

The Rail Accident Investigation Branch is carrying out preliminary inquiries.

BURSTON STRIKE TEACHERS HONoured



RMT member and painter and sculptor Kanwal Dhaliwal recently displayed his portraits of Tom and Annie Higdon, the heroic teachers at a Burston school famous for the longest strike in history.

The socialist teachers were sacked on trumped-up charges by the authorities one hundred years ago, sparking the strike by the children which is celebrated every year in the Norfolk village.

"I was invited to the Burston School rally for the centenary celebrations and to display the

portrait in the Burston School museum in September," Kanwal said.

This year Burston saw the biggest crowds ever as trade unionists celebrated the centenary of the strike which lasted from 1914 to 1936.

A school house was built for the children, paid for by donations from trade unionists from across the country including many NUR branches, forerunner of RMT. Today it is a museum which tells the story of the strike.

BUSWORKERS' HANDBOOK LAUNCHED

RMT has launched a new busworkers' handbook drawn up by the union's advisory committee dealing with the industry.

The easy-to-read A5 pamphlet deals with drivers hours and rest breaks, Highway Code vehicle safety, tachographs, driver licensing and training, enforcement and fines as well as RMT services and benefits.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that every working day RMT bus members had to

contend with government regulation, rules and guidance, as well as directives from the employer in delivering what remains the most used form of public transport.

"In 2013-14, there were over 4.7 billion passenger journeys on buses in England but not one of them would have taken place without a licensed, professional bus driver behind the wheel or a skilled maintenance team back at the depot.

"That is why RMT bus members asked their union to

produce a handbook to provide a comprehensive guide to the rules, regulations and guidance that govern their work in the bus industry.

"It is also important to remember that different employers have different procedures for complying with the law and you should be sure to obtain any internal documents your employer produces for bus workers.

"As well as informing you of your basic rights, entitlements and responsibilities, this



handbook underlines the importance of belonging to a dynamic trade union, fighting for the rights of bus members working in a privatised network and the instability that this brings to the industry," he said.

Busworker members will be receiving the booklet in the near future and copies are available at head office. ■

TYNE AND WEAR TO TAKE BACK BUSES

Tyne and Wear is pressing ahead with taking back bus services under public control for the first time outside London since privatisation.

After more than a year of debate with bus operators, which are fiercely opposed to the moves, the regional authority will counter the deregulation brought in by the Thatcher government in the 1980s, and franchise services while setting routes, timetables and fares.

The local subsidy for buses in Newcastle has reached £55.2 million this year while the operators – mainly Stagecoach, Arriva and Go-Ahead – have been making large profits.

The local authority hopes the

new provisions, called quality contract schemes, can help balance the books, while also keeping fares down.

The local passenger transport executive Nexus pays operators to run certain routes but it is not permitted to compete on the big, profitable routes. Nexus argues that 80 per cent of the bus companies' profits leave the region as payments to shareholders, rather than being reinvested in the local network.

It believes the move will money and provide better services, which Nexus claims could provide a £272 million economic boost to Tyne and Wear.

Stagecoach, which operates about 40 per cent of buses

around Tyne and Wear, made profits in 2014 at a margin of 14.6 per cent on its £1 billion bus revenues outside London. On the regulated services in the capital it generated a lower 9.8 per cent margin.

The decision will be contested by the big transport firms. Stagecoach has threatened legal action and its chairman, Brian Souter, said that he would "drink poison" rather than accept a quality contract.

The bus contracts proposal needs the approval of an independent board chaired by a traffic commissioner, which will rule if the plans pass five key public interest tests. Bus operators said they will be

petitioning the board to argue that the plans fail on legal and economic grounds.

Labour legislated back in 2000 to allow cities to restore bus operations to public control, but with enough hoops to deter most authorities from going ahead – until recent broader cuts to local budgets made Tyne and Wear consider how to manage its transport bills and reverse declining bus usage.

Fares have risen each year since 1995 by an average of three per cent above RPI inflation, while the statutory obligation to fund senior citizens' bus passes costs the region £36 million a year. ■



RMT ON THE MARCH

RMT members hit the streets of London and Glasgow in October to call for an economy that works for the people.

RMT banners flooded the huge march from the Thames Embankment to Hyde Park which united trade unionists, students, housing campaigners, anti-nuclear activists and many others at the TUC's Britain Needs a Pay Rise march and rally.

A sister march and rally took place in Glasgow under the banner A Just Scotland: Decent Work, Dignified Lives.

TUC research has found the average worker is now £50 a week worse off than in 2007. ■





RMT STEPS UP FIGHT ON INTERCITY EXPRESS

Union launches fight to defend jobs on new Intercity Express trains

RMT has launched a campaign to defend members' jobs on new Intercity Express Programme (IEP) trains on East Coast Mainline and First Great Western franchises.

The union is developing a strategy to fight the attacks that all grades will be facing with the implementation of the new IEP trains.

The IEP plans currently includes no buffet car facilities, no guards' accommodation, Driver Only Operation as well as the outsourcing of maintenance work to Hitachi.

There are also no arrangements to facilitate the transfer of engineering grades and no protection of jobs.

RMT recently exposed secret plans recently that would lead

to the axing of buffet cars on First Great Western and East Coast Intercity services.

Union negotiators uncovered this shock move buried in the detail of the plans for the new fleet of Intercity rolling stock for both FGW and the East Coast. Under the proposals for the new trains there will be no buffet car available to standard class, with the service replaced by a trolley operation.

FGW has already removed the Traveling Chef services this year, clearly in preparation for the plan to reduce services to passengers even further with the new IEP trains. The new Pullman food service that has just been introduced from Swansea to Paddington is also threatened as a result.

RMT will be campaigning to defend the buffet car service on First Great Western and on the East Coast Mainline and the jobs that go with the current catering operations.

The campaign will target service users and politicians the length of FGW and East Coast's Intercity service.

The union believes that we are seeing an attempt to smuggle in the axing of the buffet cars under the cloak of the new Intercity fleet replacement programme.

From the outset RMT has warned that both catering staff and guards would be in the firing line from the introduction of these new trains and those fears have unfortunately proven to be well founded.

Passengers, paying massive fares, will be disgusted at this attack on the standard of service and the union will be taking our campaign out to those customers and to the politicians along the length of the lines affected.

This move is solely about profits, profits for First Group on Great Western and profits for whoever picks up the new, private, East Coast franchise.

The key issues we are fighting for on IEP are:

- To keep a safety competent guard on every train
- To keep buffet car facilities
- To keep safety critical station dispatch staff
- No job losses

The failure of TOCs and

shortlisted companies competing for these franchises to agree to these elements will lead to an immediate dispute situation with the union.

WHAT WE ARE FIGHTING FOR ON THE INTERCITY EXPRESS PROGRAMME

RMT sets out its demands grade by grade while expressing concern over the lack of consultation about the physical characteristics of the Intercity Express Programme's new rolling stock

ON-BOARD CATERING

It is essential for on-board catering to have full catering provision including:

- full kitchen
- restaurant service
- at seat first class service with meals cooked on board
- re-generated meals served at-seat
- a full buffet car
- trolley service

Both the restaurant and buffet service must be accessible to all passengers.

GUARDS

RMT believes that guards' accommodation with drop-down

windows and all relevant safety devices should be included in any new rolling stock, and is fully opposed to Driver Only Operation.

It is essential for the guard to have complete control of both the opening and the closing of the power operated doors, including selective door operation. All doors must have drop down windows for the guard to observe during train dispatch.

ENGINEERING

Engineering grades are particularly at risk "as Hitachi have been chosen as the company to build, supply and maintain the new rolling stocks with depots being planned for building.

This will have potential consequences for our engineering members that are currently employed in-house at FGW and East Coast".

RMT is seeking legal advice concerning TUPE; initial advice received is unclear at this stage. The protection of the terms and conditions of existing staff is a high priority.

RMT is to seek recognition rights with Hitachi on the IEP.

CLEANING

It is essential that all cleaning workers are in-house on all services.

This includes on-board, depot and turn-around cleaners.

DRIVERS

Drivers should only need to focus on driving the train.

RMT believes that the opening and closing of doors is not the responsibility of drivers.

For well documented safety reasons doors need to be controlled separately by a guard.

The union is asking to be consulted on the layout of drivers' cab. ■

Proposed Early Day Motion to be put down in the House of Commons

CUTS TO STAFFING ON EAST COAST AND GREAT WESTERN RAIL SERVICES

That this House notes with concern that Government and train operating company plans for implementing the multibillion pound Intercity Express rolling stock programme which will ultimately be funded by the tax payer and fare payer could see significant staffing cuts on East Coast and Great Western services; is dismayed that new rolling stock being introduced from 2017 could have the buffet car removed, meaning hot food and meals will only be available in first class whilst other passengers will be forced to rely on a trolley only service for long, often crowded journeys so more seats can be crammed onto inter-city services, and perturbed that this upstairs-downstairs catering service is under consideration when passengers already pay the highest rail fares in Europe; is alarmed that Driver Only Operation is also proposed for this rolling stock which would downgrade the train guard's safety operational role and increase risks to passengers by restricting responsibility for safe operation of the train to the driver; notes that passenger safety and service will be further jeopardised if the new rolling stock is used as cover for de-staffing stations, particularly train despatch staff; further notes the threat to skilled maintenance workers' jobs in these proposals which would further impact on passenger safety and service and exacerbate the rail industry skills crisis; and calls on the Government to reject any contracts for East Coast and Great Western services which propose any such cuts to rail staff.

RMT SLAMS RE-PRIVATISATION OF EAST COAST MAINLINE

RMT has slammed the government for bulldozing through the re-privatisation of the East Coast Main Line and handing the franchise to Virgin/Stagecoach.

Under public ownership East Coast has paid £1 billion to the British people since it took over in 2009 when the National Express franchise collapsed into chaos.

The Perth-based transport group Stagecoach and its partner Virgin beat rivals FirstGroup and Keolis, a subsidiary of French state railways SNCF that has been active in the UK for almost a decade, and Eurostar, the

operator of cross-Channel trains, which is majority owned by SNCF.

The East Coast rail franchise is now to be called Inter City Railways.

Stagecoach also has a 45 per cent stake in the Virgin Trains joint venture, controlled by Sir Richard Branson's Virgin Group, which runs the West Coast franchise until 2017.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the government was ignoring the financial and operational success of Directly Operated Railways and the catastrophic impact of two previous private sector failures on the line.

"The decision to hand this profitable and successful public rail operation back to the vultures from Virgin/Stagecoach is based purely on hard-right political ideology and RMT is committed to continuing the fight to block this betrayal right up to polling day and beyond.

"While public ownership puts money back into the coffers that can be reinvested in our railways the private operators suck out colossal sums in subsidies and profits - that's what privatisation means," he said.

Rail franchising was thrown into disarray after the 2012

West Coast rail fiasco, which saw the government reverse its decision to award FirstGroup the lucrative franchise after incumbent Virgin Trains, challenged the decision and uncovered huge irregularities in the way the bid process had been run.

The failure to secure the East Coast franchise will come as another blow to FirstGroup, which has seen its position as the UK's largest rail operator undermined as it has lost two of its rail contracts - Thameslink and Scotrail - since rail franchising restarted, and failed to win a third - Essex Thameside.

REPRESENTING SCOTTISH WOMEN

RMT member Ann Joss had a very busy year as Scottish TUC Women's Committee chair

RMT member Ann Joss held the position of Scottish TUC Women's Committee chair in a year dominated by the independence referendum.

The 2013 STUC Women's conference had hosted a panel discussion with guest speakers reflecting different views on Scottish independence and the STUC held 'A Just Scotland' events throughout the year placing the rights of workers and equality at the heart of the debates.

Ann attended a Scottish Women's convention consultative event in Skye, and worked with the women's committee to promote the

'Women's Voices, Women's Votes' campaign, encouraging voter registration and participation.

With 97 per cent of the eligible population in Scotland registered to vote by September, the STUC had certainly played a part.

"As we drew closer to the independence referendum women became more engaged and politicised, many registering to vote for the first time and starting asking questions about how this was going to affect them.

"Childcare, pensions, equality, jobs, communities, health care, carers in the

community - it was all there and questions needed answering and we were given a once in a lifetime opportunity to vote.

"Whichever way we all voted, we can be proud of the part that we played in the process and we must continue to harness that energy and make our communities and our workplaces an equal society," she said.

With concerns on women's employment, inequality in public life, deteriorating health and safety conditions and budget cuts leading to further cuts in essential public services, the STUC women's committee also worked to build confidence

amongst reps including weekend training schools.

Ann welcomed delegates to the 2014 STUC women's conference in Perth which was well attended with 125 delegates and over 100 visitors and many stalls.

"It has been a great privilege and honour to have chaired the committee this year," Ann told delegates.

She said that the struggle against gender inequality, poor pay, zero hours contracts and human trafficking remained high on the STUC agenda.

"The fight against discrimination, pay gaps, childcare, bullying and





harassment in male dominated industries goes on and that fight should have been won long ago - there should be no discrimination in the workplace or society and we shouldn't have to fight for what should be a given right," she said.

Ann paid tribute to people who had been a great loss to the trade union movement. The first was Professor Ailsa McKay who was passionate about women's rights and a big contributor to the work of the women's committee.

"Just a few days later we were dealt the devastating blow that our general secretary Bob Crow had suddenly passed away.

"Bob was a huge inspiration to his members and the wider trade union movement and a big supporter of the work of the STUC and the women's committee," she said.

Ann also addressed STUC Congress on behalf of the women's committee outlining their work plan for the year.

"We set ourselves ambitious targets and if I had gone through the whole work plan I would still be standing there but I was given ten minutes and hopefully I did some justice to the hard work of the women on the committee," she said. ■

President's column



CARRYING ON

This is my final column of the year and what a year it's been.

Nobody could have predicted the trauma and massive changes that we have had to undergo following the loss of Bob and EC member Brian Munro, both tragically young. Obviously the union's suffering is nothing compared to what the families have had to go through and our thoughts should always be for them before our own.

We have had to make sure that the union still functioned and I think we have all managed to achieve that. Our constitution has made sure that we have managed to carry on, with heavy hearts, but nevertheless carry on and continue to do what we do best, serve the members to the best of our ability.

We owe a huge debt to past and present members for this. We have to remember that our rule book was written by rank and file members, and it has evolved to cover new issues and challenges. The rule book was not written by faceless bureaucrats but by you the membership. I am proud of the way our union is run and you should be as well.

I would like to thank you all for holding everything together and I hope that we will continue to win battles against the capitalist system.

Next year will bring its usual challenges and a general election. We need to be very aware of the rise of UKIP and the increasing activities of far right parties such as BNP, EDL, and now Britain First, who may well turn out to be the worst of the lot of them. We need to be vigilant against these people and should be really worried if UKIP hold the balance of power.

Take away their appalling immigration policies, and you have still got views that are to the right of the Tory Party. I can guess what their attitude to trade unions will be. We should be out there

campaigning and opposing them now.

This year's AGM decision regarding the Labour Party means that we no longer automatically support their candidates. In my opinion this is no great loss because, apart from a few notable exceptions, when was the last time they represented the views of the workers and poor in this country? There are millions of people out there who feel they have no representation, so where do we turn?

There are a lot of smaller left wing groups, but they would have to put their differences behind them and find some common ground so that they could work together. We have TUSC, which is a good idea in theory but needs to expand. We need proper input from other trade unions which at this time we haven't got.

In my opinion, the party that we should get behind is the Green Party. We have already agreed to back Caroline Lucas in Brighton and maybe we should be looking to give them support in other areas. They have one of the most radical agendas going.

They want to repeal the anti-trade union laws, renationalise the railways and power companies and do it in a proper way with profits going back into the industry and not to the state. If they can say it, why can't Labour? The public consistently demand public ownership of the railways, so it isn't exactly a vote loser. I am not saying that the Greens are perfect but they are no worse and far better than what we have.

Finally, I want to wish you all a peaceful and happy Christmas and New Year and I hope the New Year is a better one than this one.

Peter Pinkney ■

ARGUS

FIGHTING EBOLA

RFA supply ship Argus docks in Freetown, Sierra Leone bringing essential supplies and equipment

Royal Fleet Auxiliary ship Argus was dispatched from Falmouth, Cornwall recently carrying helicopters, medical equipment and vehicles as part of the 'all-out war' on the deadly Ebola virus threatening the African state of Sierra Leone.

The 380 personnel aboard Argus form part of Operation Gritrock designed to support the Sierra Leone government which has been overwhelmed by the disease and providing training in the treatment of victims.

RFA RMT convenor Ian Boyle (above left) visited Argus before it left Cornwall and attended the medical brief that was given by the military medics who explained what the mission would entail and the precautions and safeguards that would be put in place to protect RFA personnel.

Both RMT and Nautilus unions expressed concerns and were given reassurances that everything possible would be done to protect our members' well-being.

Ian said that RFA crew included many RMT members including the deck department who load and discharge essential stores and equipment required and assist in the safe navigation of the ship.

Engineering department members ensure that the

propulsion, electrical and sanitary systems are operational, the communication department ensure that everybody embarked can contact family and friends back home.

RMT members also work in the catering and stores department where cooks and stewards provide meals per day and keep everything in a high state of cleanliness.

"Without these vital personnel then the ship would not be able to carry out its humanitarian mission," he said.

Ian will remain in contact with the on-board rep on a weekly basis and any concerns will be minuted by the on-board health and safety committee.

Ian said that members were also briefed on the union's position in relation to future development work which is currently at the referendum stage with a recommendation to reject the company's offer.

"The vessel is expected to remain off the Sierra Leone coast for up to six months so I raised the issue of how RMT members would be relieved after their four month trip, how the vessel would be re supplied with fresh provisions and how members would be compensated," he said.



UFTON NERVET- TEN YEARS AFTER

No action taken ten years since fatal crash at Ufton Nervet level crossings which killed seven people

RMT renewed its call for the acceleration of the phasing out of level crossings on the tenth anniversary of the crash on the Ufton Nervet crossing where a train crashed into a car killing seven people and seriously injuring 37 passengers.

Since that crash 11 more people have died at the crossing with the latest fatality occurring just last month.

In September 2011 there was also a major near-miss at Ufton Nervet when a train narrowly avoided a collision with a car.

On November 6 2004 local chef Brian Drysdale parked his car on the Ufton Nervet level crossing in the path of an intercity train. Train driver Stan Martin was among the dead and 120 others suffered minor injuries.

Despite reports and recommendations from the Rail Accident Investigation Branch the crossing at Ufton Nervet remains in place and plans by Network Rail to replace it with a bridge have not been implemented.



Network Rail said has said that a bridge design had been completed but it would cost "significantly more than anticipated" and unless funding was found it would only make changes to the existing crossing.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that it was almost impossible to believe that action required to make this particularly dangerous crossing safe had not been implemented and that the death toll

continued to rise.

"RMT continues to press both Network Rail and the local council to take the measures that have been talked about and promised for years to protect both the public and staff alike.

"There should be no more delays.

"Ufton Nervet serves as a constant reminder of the ever-present danger of mixing road

with rail and RMT will continue to campaign for the speed-up of the phasing out of level crossings and their replacement with modern solutions that put the safety of both rail staff and the public as an absolute priority.

"Cost and planning rows should not be the deciding factors when lives are at risk on a daily basis," he said.

Level crossings remain by far the highest area of risk on the railway and Network Rail has closed 800 in the past five years and plans to close 500 more. ■



RMT STANDS UP FOR ITS MEMBERS

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PROTECTING AND PROMOTING OUR MEMBERS' INTERESTS



REMEMBERING FALLEN SEAFARERS

RMT general secretary Mick Cash and national secretary Steve Todd represented the union at the remembrance service at the Merchant Seamen's War Memorial garden at Tower Hill, London on November 9.

Both laid wreaths in memory of those seafarers that lost their lives in both world wars and other conflicts, over 35,000 men were lost in World War Two alone.



HEROES

Don't speak to me of heroes until you've heard the tale
Of Britain's merchant seamen who sailed through storm and gale
To keep those lifelines open in our hour of need
When a tyrant cast a shadow across our Island breed
Captains, greasers, cabin boys mates and engineers
Heard the call to duty cast aside their fears
They stoked those hungry boilers and stood behind the wheel
While cooks and stewards manned the guns on coffins made of steel
They moved in icy convoys from Scapa to Murmansk
And crossed the western ocean, never seeking thanks.
They sailed the South Atlantic where raiders lay in wait
And kept the food lines open from Malta to the Cape.
Tracked by silent Uboats which hunted from below,
Shelled by mighty cannons and fighter's flying low,
They clung to burning lifeboats when the sea had turned to flame
And watched their ship mates disappear to everlasting fame.
I speak not of a handful but 30,000 plus,
Some whose names we'll never know in whom we placed our trust.
They never knew the honour of medals on their chests
Or marching bands and victory and glory and the rest.
The ocean is their resting place, their tombstone is the wind,
The seabird's cry their last goodbye to family and friend.
Freighters, troopships, liners and tankers by the score,
Fishing boats and coasters, 2,000 ships and more
They flew the Red Duster as they sank beneath the waves
And took those countless heroes to lonely ocean graves.
Their legacy is freedom to those who hold it dear
To walk with clear horizons and never hide in fear
So when you speak of heroes remember those at sea
From Britain's Merchant Navy who died to keep us free.

By David Partridge October 2002

LU ENGINEERING BRANCH
NOMINATE

MICK LYNCH

FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL
SECRETARY

KINGS CROSS
SUPPORTS

MICK LYNCH

FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL
SECRETARY

JUBILEE SOUTH BRANCH
NOMINATE

MICK LYNCH

FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL
SECRETARY

GREAT NORTHERN RAIL BRANCH
SUPPORTS

MICK LYNCH

FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL
SECRETARY

LEEDS CITY BRANCH
NOMINATE

MICK LYNCH

FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL
SECRETARY

NEASDEN BRANCH
NOMINATES

EAMONN LYNCH

FOR COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVES

EUSTON N01 BRANCH
NOMINATES

MICK LYNCH

FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL
SECRETARY

NORTH THAMES BRANCH
SUPPORTS

MICK LYNCH

FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL
SECRETARY

PADDINGTON N01 BRANCH
NOMINATE

MICK LYNCH

FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL
SECRETARY

NEASDEN BRANCH
NOMINATES

MICK LYNCH

FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL
SECRETARY

SOUTH LONDON RAIL BRANCH
NOMINATES

MICHAEL LYNCH

FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL
SECRETARY

CENTRAL LINE EAST BRANCH
NOMINATES

EAMONN LYNCH

FOR COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVES

NORWICH BRANCH
SUPPORTS

MICHAEL LYNCH

FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL
SECRETARY

JUBILEE SOUTH BRANCH
NOMINATE

EAMONN LYNCH

FOR COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVES
LONDON TRANSPORT

IPSWICH BRANCH
NOMINATES

MICK LYNCH

FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL
SECRETARY

DORSET RAIL BRANCH
NOMINATE

ALAN POTTAGE

FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL
SECRETARY



BRIGHTON PRIDE

Brighton held its own gay pride festival earlier this year with the theme 'Freedom to Live', transforming the city into a riot of colour as people partied on the streets.

The message of this year's Pride was that we must not forget those people in 78 other countries where the LGBT community is persecuted.

RMT Brighton and Hove City branch chair Greg Hewitt said that the branch was proud to take part in the parade from the seafront along to Preston Park a route of nearly two miles.

"There were 80 floats and with over 250,000 people visiting Brighton over the weekend and our message of solidarity with the LGBT

community and the 'keep the guard on the train' campaign was clear.

"A huge thank you to Roger Hackett and his partner Chris and their friends for making it such a memorable day," he said.

Greg thanked Alan Pottage and head office for their assistance and to members from Reading and London branches

in attendance as well.

"We have pledged that we will try to make it bigger next year, so any branch, region, member or officer wanting to join us and make the RMT section even bigger next year, contact me or just come along," he said.



RMT Special Offer
Celebrate New Year
at UNISON Croyde Bay Holiday Resort

29th December - 2nd January

4 nights - £299^{pp*}
3 nights - £269^{pp*}
Half Price for Children Under 14

Hotel Accommodation
Breakfast & Dinner
Nightly Entertainment
Gala Buffet
Late Disco and Bar

To Book, Call us on
01271 890 890
www.croydeunison.co.uk

RMT member rate, non-members price £331.77. Activities subject to change. Can be withdrawn at any time. Subject to availability. For full terms & conditions call 01271890890.

DERBY CELEBRATION

Derby Rail & Engineering branch held a long membership awards night

recently with regional organiser Ken Usher doing the honours.



CELEBRATING 40 LANCEY YEARS



RMT general secretary Mick Cash presented North East regional office administrator Steve Lancey with his 40-year award at head office recently.

Steve commenced employment in 1974 as a junior clerk and has been carrying out various administration roles ever since. He became the assistant private secretary in 1986 and regional admin officer at the North East regional office in 1992.

"While Steve comes across as

a quiet, likeable guy, as a martial arts instructor of Wing Chun he ensures that no one at the office or the Education Centre in Doncaster interrupts the peace and tranquillity," said Mick.

APOLOGIES

An error appeared in accounts printed in the last issue of RMT News, a correct version is printed below

SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION EXTRACTED FROM THE FULL ACCOUNTS

Summary income and expenditure accounts for the year ended 31 December 2013:

General Fund and Orphan Fund

	2013 £'000	2012 £'000
Subscription income	14,282	13,923
Operating expenditure	(15,656)	(14,769)
Operating deficit before investment operations	(1,374)	(846)
Income from investment operations and donations	2,371	2,655
Operating surplus after investment operations	997	1,809
Other non-operating income and expenditure	292	36
Surplus for the year	1,289	1,845

Political Fund

	2013 £'000	2012 £'000
Subscription income	247	241
Investment income	2	2
Total income	249	243
Total expenditure	(263)	(244)
Deficit for the year	(14)	(1)

SUMMARY OF SALARIES AND BENEFITS PROVIDED

Name	Position	Details	Amount
R Crow	General Secretary	Salary	£92,344
		Pension contributions	£35,585
M Cash	Assistant General Secretary	Salary	£71,482
		Pension contributions	£20,251
S Hedley	Assistant General Secretary (incoming)	Salary	£51,863
		Pension contributions	£14,693
P Pinkney	President	Attendance, lodging allowance and reimbursed expenses	£47,642

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

Summary of attendance and lodging allowances and reimbursed expenses paid to the Council of Executives

General Grades salary + expenses - allowances

Name	Amount	Name	Amount
J Booth	£ 40,320	S McGowan*	£ 57,802
T Butler*	£ 58,389	K Morrison*	£ 59,013
D Connor*	£ 53,011	N Quirk*	£ 47,044
S Hoyle*	£ 48,408	M Sargent	£ 45,844
D Ireland*	£ 39,229	S Skelly*	£ 48,102
D Marr	£ 42,876	P Walker*	£ 9,082

Shipping Grades

Name	Amount	Name	Amount
M Dunning*	£ 5,047	K Lingwood*	£ 1,086
A Gordon*	£ 16,111	D Procter*	£ 7,594
J Laing*	£ 3,792		

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

LU ENGINEERING BRANCH
NOMINATES
JOHN REID
FOR COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVES

CAMDEN 3 BRANCH
SUPPORT
MICK LYNCH
FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY

TFL BRANCH
NOMINATES
JOHN REID
FOR COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVES

PERTH NO1 BRANCH
NOMINATE
ALAN POTTAGE
FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY

CAMDEN NO3 BRANCH
NOMINATES
JOHN REID
FOR COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVES

EDINBURGH NO1 AND PORTOBELLO
DISTRICT BRANCH
NOMINATE
ALAN POTTAGE
FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY

LINCOLNSHIRE ROADCAR BRANCH
SUPPORT
ALAN POTTAGE
FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY

WALTHAM CROSS & DISTRICT
BRANCH
NOMINATE
MICK LYNCH
FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY

WATERLOO BRANCH
NOMINATES
ALAN POTTAGE
FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY

LONDON ANGLIA MIDLAND
TRANSPORT BRANCH
NOMINATE
MICK LYNCH
FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY

EURO PASSENGER SERVICES BRANCH
NOMINATE
MICK LYNCH
FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY

BIRMINGHAM ENGINEERING BRANCH
NOMINATE
MICK LYNCH
FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY

PERTH NO1 BRANCH
NOMINATE
JOHN MCDUGALL
FOR COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVES

PICCADILLY AND WEST BRANCH
NOMINATE
MICK LYNCH
FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY

KEITH BRANCH
NOMINATE
JOHN MCDUGALL
FOR COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVES

WATFORD BRANCH
SUPPORT
MICK LYNCH
FOR ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY

Placing election adverts

A new system has been put in place to ensure all election adverts appear in RMT News. All requests for branch election adverts must be sent to a designated RMT email address: electionads@rmt.org.uk



24 REASONS TO BE

There are many good reasons to be an RMT member and below are just 24 of them

1. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

The union has a dedicated team of elected officers and local reps to serve your interests negotiating with employers on issues from pay, hours of work, pensions and working conditions. They are supported by a team of researchers to formulate pay claims to obtain the best negotiated terms for you.

2. SUPPORT IN THE WORKPLACE

RMT has a national network of 230 branches organised under regional councils aimed at providing local support. Every member has their own branch secretary to provide immediate support and advice in the workplace. The union has health and safety at work representatives coordinated from head office to ensure safety is given due priority by employers and risk is properly managed. RMT's equal opportunities specialists also provide support to ensure fairness and help to stamp out bullying and harassment.

3. HELPLINE 0800 376 3706.

A freephone members' helpline staffed by experts in the industrial relations department advises members on all work related and membership enquiries. Lines are open Monday to Friday 0800 hours to 1800 hours and Saturdays 0930 hours to 1600 hours.

4. ADVICE LINE 0800 376 3706 (England & Wales) 0800 328 1014 (Scotland) If you have a query on any topic besides workplace issues, members can ring up the Advice helpline.

RMT provides initial advice on personal and domestic matters such as divorce, property purchases, debt etc and can point you in the direction of professional bodies and solicitors.

5. CRIMINAL CHARGES 0765 911 8181

Should a member or family members find themselves arrested by the police or questioned under caution, RMT's Criminal helpline can give initial advice and the provision of a duty solicitor should the need arise. Members who are charged with crimes at or connected to work and who are not guilty can be considered for legal representation. All legal representation is discretionary and according to Rule. General criminal queries can also be dealt with on this number. Lines are open 24 hours a day, 7 days per week.

6. INDUSTRIAL DISEASES

Members who have suffered an industrial disease will receive free legal support to make a claim. Such claims are underwritten by the union and members will not have any deduction from their settlement unlike claims run by no-win, no-fee companies. Call 08457 125 495

7. PERSONAL INJURIES

Personal injury claims cover if you suffer an accident in work or outside work. RMT underwrites settlements that would not be provided by no-win, no-fee companies. Call 08457 125 495

8. EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNALS

Should a member find themselves unfairly dismissed, discriminated against or have any claim which has reasonable prospects of success at an Employment Tribunal, RMT will provide legal representation and pay the fee. Even if the union is advised that the claim is unlikely to succeed, members who make a claim are eligible to receive free legal advice.

9. DONCASTER EDUCATION CENTRE

The union has an Education Centre in Doncaster offering a range of courses for activists to increase our professionalism in the workplace. The centre has an Information Technology suite which is a valuable training resource together with video linkage to headquarters enabling conferences with the general secretary and other officials. From January members will be able to book places on courses online subject to subsequent Branch approval.

10. ACCIDENT BENEFIT

Payable if you have an accident at work or on the way to or from work. Accident benefit is only payable if you have been off for three days or more. Accident must be reported to branch secretary within 26 weeks in order to qualify for accident benefit.

11. RETIREMENT BENEFIT

Payable to any member who retires over the age of 60, or aged 55 if retired through redundancy or resettlement. Ill

health retirement also payable; proof of this must be sent with application for retirement benefit.

12. DEMOTION COMPENSATION

Payable to any member who is experiencing loss of wages through being permanently demoted or downgraded as a result of illness or injury. Payment of £300 provided that member reports this to Branch Secretary within 12 weeks.

13. DEATH GRANT

If a member dies in service (i.e. not retired) then £600 is payable to the members' next of kin. Documents to be sent in with application for death grant would be death certificate and copy of will or probate, if neither are available, a copy of the funeral invoice will suffice.

14. ORPHAN FUND

The beneficiaries of this fund would be any child of a member or spouse if the member dies in service or if a members' spouse dies and the member has responsibility of the children. Benefit is paid while a child is in full-time education up until the age of 22. Payment is made quarterly and the rate is £12.00 per week for children up to the age of 16, then £12.75 per week from 16 to 22.

15. OLD AGE GRANT

This one-off grant is payable to shippers who, at the time of the merger of NUR/NUS (September 1990) had twenty years continuous service. This benefit is paid out at retirement age of 65. If a member retires before



A MEMBER OF RMT

that age, they can elect to either wait until they are 65 and receive Old Age Grant, or waive the right to this benefit and receive normal Retirement Benefit. A claim for this benefit must be made within six months of the claimant attaining the qualifying age.

16 FUNERAL GRANT

On the death of a member of the Shipping Grade who had had twenty years service at the time of the NUR/NUS merger and was five years or less from the relevant age of retirement, the sum of £200.00 is payable to the person or persons nominated to receive said Funeral Grant.

17 CAMPAIGNING

The union has a political fund to run campaigns and provide a political voice to benefit members' interests in the workplace. RMT has a very active parliamentary group which raises issues of concern for members in the House of Commons at Westminster, the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly

18 FINES POOL

The Fines Pool is administered from Head Office and will become open to more members. If you drive a company vehicle as part of your job and are an RMT member, then you can join the Fines Pool. The fund will reimburse members for fines incurred under the Road Traffic Act during the course of your employment, court costs, and lost time to attend court hearing. This excludes offences involving drink or drugs, smoking, mobile phones, seat belts, parking fines, or violations of the Driving Hours

Regulations.

19 RMT NEWS

Members will receive a lively informative journal delivered direct to you containing industrial, social and political updates on major issues affecting workers. There are 10 editions each year plus a free diary packed with useful information. Regular newsletters are also produced for the various grades of RMT member.

20 WEBSITE

RMT's revamped popular website www.rmt.org.uk is full of industry information as well as a members-only area. This gives you access to a continually updated pay and conditions database and you can view various RMT conferences, including the AGM. You can also debate union-related issues through the members' forum and view and update your own membership details.

21 CREDIT UNION

RMT has its own Credit Union, run by members for members. It offers a savings and loan scheme at competitive rates of interest on a not for profit basis. Members can also access their account through the RMT website.

22 THE RMT PREPAID PLUS CARD

Earn between 3% and 6% cashback when you use the RMT Prepaid Plus MasterCard® card to shop at retail partners. There is no limit to how much cashback you can earn, all this for £1.95 per month! There is no application fee or credit checks.* This card is different to debit or credit cards, you load money

before you spend so there's less chance of going over your budget.

23 RMTREWARDS.COM

RMT Rewards gives you cashback, discounts and loads of great deals for your online shopping. Plus, to help you get started, you'll receive a FREE

£10 welcome bonus in your rewards account - just for signing up on www.RMTRewards.com

24 TAX AND WILL PREPARATION

The union can provide a personal taxation service and will preparation service.

NOTIFICATION OF CONTRIBUTION RATES FOR 2015

Like most things, the cost of providing you with the benefits of RMT membership increases every year and contribution rates increase to help us to maintain and improve those benefits and our services to members.

From the 1st January 2015 contributions will be increased to £4.64 per week, for members aged 18 or over in an adult post.

For members who are under 18 years or who, if not in an adult post, are under 20 years of age, the weekly contribution rate will be increased to £2.32, the latter rate also applying to those staff on part-time contracts of employment.

Those members on a full time contract with a basic of less than £20,500 per annum, (including London Allowance where applicable), will pay £1.28 per week.

Direct debit payments will be amended accordingly as will contributions collected by employers under paybill deduction arrangements. Members who pay contributions to Cash Collectors will receive a new contribution card from the collector. Those sending cheques or postal orders direct will need to adjust the amounts sent in accordingly.

Period	Adult Full Time	Junior/Part Time	Concessionary*	Apprentices
Weekly	£4.64	£2.32	£1.28	
4 Weekly	£18.56	£9.28	£5.12	
Monthly	£20.11	£10.06	£5.55	
Quarterly	£60.33	£30.17		
Half-yearly	£120.66	£60.33		
Annually	£241.28	£120.64	£66.56	£5.00

*Members on a basic rate of pay of less than £20,500 and those for whom the Council of Executives has agreed a discounted rate for recruitment purposes

SCOTLAND HONOURS BOB CROW

The Scottish Regional Council unveiled two memorial plaques in memory of former RMT general secretary recently which will be a permanent feature in the regional offices in Aberdeen and Glasgow.

The event took place at the Scottish TUC headquarters with some 60 branch representatives attending, along with national officials and executive committee members, retired members, administrative staff and our solicitors, along with Bob's family.

Scottish political officer Phil McGarry read out letters of support from around the world and others who were unable to attend and placed on record everyone's appreciation to the regional council for organising a worthy tribute.

RMT Parliamentary Group Convenor Elaine Smith MSP spoke about Bob's commitment to set up the RMT group at Holyrood and came along to launch personally.

"Bob was one of the most outstanding leaders of the trade union movement and he was loved by the membership and respected within all in the transport industries.

"He cared passionately about

every working man and woman and fought tirelessly for social justice and the redistribution of wealth and power, both nationally and internationally," she said.

STUC general secretary Grahame Smith said that Congresses were not the same without Bob's barnstorming speeches, which were always without notes but with the usual passion and humour.

"He believed in advancing the interests of his members and never flinched when he led the membership out on strike, often in the face of adversity and personal attacks," he said.

Bob's family, Nicky his partner, Natasha his daughter, her partner Tom and Bob's granddaughter Amelia were all in attendance.

Natasha said that it was an honour to speak on behalf of the family.

"My Dad fought for his members, pensioners, the unemployed and those vulnerable people in society, and was always standing up for the freedoms of the working class.

"He was loved by so many for his strength of character when fighting for others.

"He never put himself first

and valued the underdog and he didn't just talk-the-talk with empty words, he walked-the-walk and was a man of action," she said to rapturous applause.

National president Peter Pinkney said that it was a privilege to be asked to officially unveil the memorial plaques.

"The loss of our general secretary was a devastating blow to everyone in the union and beyond," he said.

He also reminded the meeting of the loss of council of executive member Brian Munro and said that everyone at Unity House and throughout the union pulled together to ensure RMT continued to function.

He concluded by saying that the wording on the plaques was befitting and a lasting legacy to Bob, The Workers' Hero, Don't Mourn - Organise.



OBITUARY TERRY DIN 1951-2014

Terry was a founder member of LUL track and signals branch along with Bob Crow. Terry was branch chair for many years until 2005. He was a regular attendee at the engineers grades conference where his input was always welcome, he will be sadly missed RIP Brother.

Willie Devlin



EAST SUSSEX COASTWAY CELEBRATION

East Sussex Coastway branch marked the unveiling of a new banner with a number of long service awards.

Guest speakers also included ITF inspector Darren Proctor, Jeff Slee, Gary Hassell, assistant general secretary Steve Hedley and EC member Mike Sargent.

Members receiving from left to right: 10 years badges were awarded to A Lewis, P

Jephcote, S Arfaoui, J littlejohn, Richard Parkhurst, Steven Quinnell, David Thomas, Geoffrey Medhurst, N Button, K Burton, A Fothergill, S Breakwell, T Griffiths, R Mccue, A Goddard. A 25 year badge was awarded to J Morgan and D Robin, D Boyd, Patrick Kinsella and Glen Lipscombe all received 40year badges.



LETTERS

NETWORK RAIL MUST DEAL WITH TRAUMA

Dear editor,

I have been involved in investigations representing members when near misses, injuries or sadly death has occurred. I have also witnessed a suicide right in front of my eyes.

I write this because, as far as I am aware, there is no post-incident, co-ordinated, structured support for members in Network Rail, apart from 'Care First', which is usually offered within the first 48 hours when members are in a very raw state and confused.

For this reason 'Care First' is not equipped or has the skills to deal with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD. The company does not have a section that deals with post incident care or, indeed, knows how to deal with those involved and each area or department treat incidents and their staff differently.

It is not the fault of supervisors and managers, rather the lack of the special knowledge needed to deal with people after an incident.

PTSD can be severely disabling and was officially recognised in 1980. It is an anxiety disorder caused by very stressful, frightening or distressing events. The symptoms are severe and persistent. It can develop immediately or weeks or months even years after and is estimated to affect one in three people who have had a traumatic experience.

Whilst it appears that TOCs and LUL seem to look after their staff very well and have staff trained in dealing with mental

trauma. But those who actually witness the incidents on the track get little or no support and in many cases are sent back to work within days or made to sit in their depot stewing. There is a laissez-faire attitude to any after care for members later on.

I successfully fought the company for better treatment for the post-traumatic stress I suffered. There was an 18 month waiting list on the NHS for cognitive behavioural therapy, but that is far too long to put up with the symptoms. There is a very successful system developed in America and Ireland for those who experienced PTSD. This is called Eye Movement Desensitisation and Retraining (EMDR) which replicates the dream state and helps you deal with what you experienced.

I write this, because yet again I am involved with an inquiry and our members are treated with disrespect and offered very little or no specialist help, other than care first.

Many of our members go out of the industry after witnessing distressing incidents because of a lack of help. We must therefore push for better treatment and a better structured supportive system of after care.

I would be grateful if members could contact me with information of how their various companies deal with these issues. On Hewitt.g@sky.com

Regards, Greg Hewitt

Brighton & Hove City branch

FOREIGN OWNERSHIP NOT AN ISSUE

Dear editor,

I am disappointed with the front page of October's RMT News. The problem with rail franchises is not that they are "75 per cent foreign-owned" but that they are 96 per cent privately-owned.

British owners like Virgin or Stagecoach are no better than companies like Deutsche Bahn. They are all in it for profit, whatever their nationality.

RMT rightly points out that companies like DB use the profit extracted from railways in this

country to subsidise fares in Europe. Is that any worse than using it to subsidise Richard Branson's billionaire lifestyle or Brian Souter's homophobic propaganda campaigns? I don't think it is.

We don't want these franchises transferred to a British private owner - we want them brought back into public ownership. So let's concentrate on that, not on the current owners' nationality.

Yours in solidarity, Janine Booth
Central Line East branch

NEW LABOUR WOULD HAVE RE-PRIVATISED SCOTRAIL

Dear editor,

I have just read Elaine Smith's opinion page in October's RMT News in which she whines on about the SNP government in Scotland granting the Scotrail franchise to Abellio.

This union knows all about the madness that is rail privatisation but for her to suggest that New Labour would have done any different is disingenuous. After all income tax is about the only new power that New Labour want devolved to the Scottish Parliament, for her to suggest sweeping new powers are in the pipeline is false.

Real changes for the public good could have been possible after a Yes result in the independence referendum but that golden opportunity has been lost, mainly due to dishonest unionist politicians and the state media lying to the electorate.

Labour's "Powers For A Purpose" document from March 2014, outlining the party's proposals for further devolution,

spends just two of its 298 pages discussing the subject of the railways, with most of the content cribbed from a Co-Op Party paper last year. It supports some vague notion of a not-for-profit franchise - starting AFTER the end of the period just awarded to Abellio.

In other words, Labour would have done exactly what the Scottish government has just done - given the contract from 2015 to 2025 to the best tender from the available private-sector bidders (public ownership being currently forbidden by UK law, in the shape of a 1993 act not repealed by Labour during 13 years of Westminster power).

Labour would have done nothing differently to the SNP for at least 11 years, which in political terms might as well be forever. Readers will, I am quite certain, be just as astonished as me to see them bleating piously about it anyway.

Regards, Jeff Kirk
Edinburgh No.1 branch

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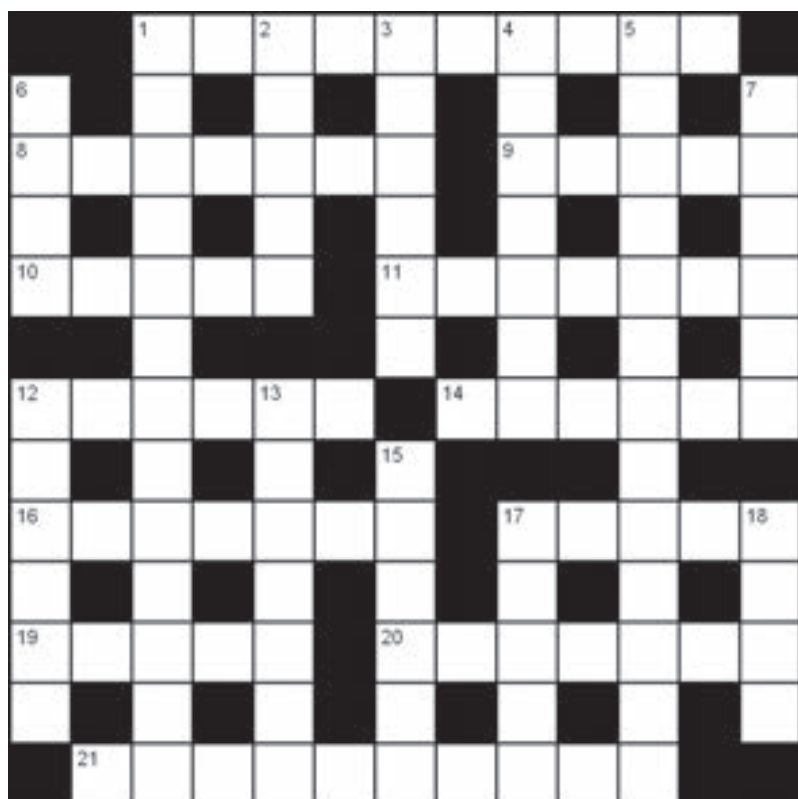
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rmtdrive.org.uk

£50 PRIZE CROSSWORD



Last month's solution...



The winner of last month's prize crossword
Mrs Smale, Barnstaple

Send entries to Prize Crossword, RMT, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD by January 8 with your name and address.

Winner and solution in next issue.

ACROSS

- 1 Antiviral drug (10)
- 8 Festoon (7)
- 9 Pass a rope through (5)
- 10 tent (5)
- 11 Incompetent (7)
- 12 Elegant (6)
- 14 Wide plain (6)
- 16 Stern (7)
- 17 Male duck (5)
- 19 Leg bone (5)
- 20 Christian recluse (7)
- 21 Replicable (10)

DOWN

- 1 Indescribable (13)
- 2 Name (5)
- 3 Regretful (6)
- 4 Serious (7)
- 5 Exaggerate (13)
- 6 Sharp blow (4)
- 7 Tenant (6)
- 12 Meagre (6)
- 13 Adolescent (7)
- 15 Return to normal (6)
- 17 'Uncool' child (5)
- 18 Level (4)



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

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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.

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.



JOIN RMT BRITAIN'S SPECIALIST TRANSPORT UNION



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

0800 376 3706

Problems at work? Call the helpline
(Now with two operators)

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.

