

RMT *news*

Essential reading for today's transport worker

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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 ☐	Annual Basic Salary	

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	Hetrosexual ☐	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/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

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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EDITORIAL



VOTE FOR JEREMY CORBYN'S LABOUR PARTY

RMT is calling for a maximum vote for Labour in this snap general election.

All workers will benefit from a Labour manifesto that calls for a ban on zero hour contracts, the repeal of the Trade Union Act and commitment to International Labour Organisation standards.

Labour's commitment to British state ownership of our rail, power and water, as opposed to the foreign state-backed exploitation of our essential services supported by the Tories, shows that Jeremy Corbyn's Labour is clearly fighting to protect our national interests.

Labour's manifesto recognises the dangers of Driver-Only Operation and commits to safe and accessible railways for all.

The Labour manifesto represents a massive boost for public transport after more than two decades of Tory privatisation and RMT welcomes this departure from the failed, profiteering model that has dragged Britain into the slow lane.

Just over a year into the franchise, German state-owned Northern Rail has announced that they will be increasing fares substantially from this month.

Despite the pretence of 'rail devolution' it is clear that value for money for passengers has been shunted into a siding to ensure that profits continue to flow out of the country to subsidise the publicly owned and operated railway in Germany.

This latest fares rip off is just another example of industry costs being shifted to the passenger, whilst the profits made continue to be leaked away from Britain's railways and shipped across the Channel.

Labour is also calling for public

control over our bus services. This is the only way we can stem the decline in the industry which has been mismanaged and bled dry by the private sector for decades.

As RMT's SOS2020 campaign has outlined, UK seafaring ratings have fallen by 25 per cent and the total number of UK seafarers decreased by over 13 per cent.

This union is determined that the future of our maritime industry is not ignored during this general election as there is a huge amount at stake economically and industrially if we allow central government to continue to allow the decimation of UK shipping.

Our engineering grade conference meeting Norwich launched a new charter in the fight against the culture of privatisation and sub-contracting which should be driven out of the rail industry.

RMT road freight workers meeting in Yarmouth have made a call for unity and agreed that the time had come to unite with other grades working in the freight sector.

Ultimately the inter-modal, bulk carrying and logistics sector, involving rail and road workers, remains an area where this union can organise and exert its influence for the good of workers.

This is a good opportunity to expand in areas where the union has always worked within.

Whatever the challenges that are thrown at us in the months ahead I give you the assurance that your union will remain standing tall, fighting for your interests.



RMT MARKS YEAR-LONG SOUTHERN SAFETY FIGHT

RMT held a national protest outside Parliament last month to mark the one-year anniversary of industrial action against the extension of Driver-Only Operation (DOO) on Southern Rail.

Addressing the rally inside Parliament that followed, RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that heroic members working for Southern Rail had taken 31 days of industrial action against the threat to rail safety from

DOO.

“Those RMT members have put their passengers and their local communities first and they are a credit to the entire trade union movement.

“It is right that rail workers from across the country should have a chance to come together with our Southern members to mark the first anniversary of the dispute.

“DOO is a national threat and this protest provides the

opportunity for members from across Britain to make their voices heard and for us to show the politicians and media that our fight for passenger safety will continue.

“Last month the transport select committee exposed the ongoing shambles that is Southern Rail and the blind eye that has been turned by the government to gross mismanagement of this franchise on an industrial scale.

“The select committee called on the government to engage in talks with the company and the union but that call has been ignored.

“This protest shows not only RMT’s opposition to Southern-GTR’s profit-motivated drive to get rid of guards on trains but also to hear from those who will be most affected by the proposed cuts, including pensioners and the disabled,” he said. ■



Carlisle

NORTHERN RAIL STRIKE

“SOLID AS A ROCK”

A 24-hour strike on Northern Rail services went ahead last month after talks broke down in the dispute over the role of guards.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the responsibility for the inevitable disruption lay wholly with the company as it was trying to “bulldoze through” plans for driver-only-operated trains.

“The action is solid as a rock from coast to coast and right the way across the Arriva Rail North franchise as our members continue the fight to put public safety before private profit.

“If the German state-owned Arriva get away with their plans we will end up with a toxic combination of de-staffed trains and stations where safety and access are compromised while fat profits are shipped across the Channel to subsidise rail operations in Germany.

“That is a national scandal and the government should be hanging their heads in shame.

“The public support for our

fight for safe trains for all has been fantastic and the company should take note of what their own customers and staff are saying about their plans and sit down with the union to negotiate a sustainable solution to this dispute,” he said.

RMT also condemned the news that, just over a year into the franchise, German state-owned Northern Rail announced substantial fare increases this month.

The increase follows a previous hike less than nine months ago in September 2016 as Arriva seek to milk the franchise for every penny they can get.

Despite the pretence of ‘rail devolution’ it is clear that value for money for passengers travelling in the North of England had been shunted into a siding to ensure that profits continue to flow out of the country to subsidise the publicly owned and operated railway in Germany.



Liverpool



Newcastle



Barrow



LONDON BRIDGE THREE STRIKE ACTION



RMT members at London Bridge took 24-hour strike action earlier this month in support of the three members that have been subjected to the most appalling miscarriage of justice after a violent incident involving a fare-dodger last autumn.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash congratulated members on their solid action which also involves not to servicing ticket machines and not challenging customers who refuse to produce a valid ticket or permit for travel.

"The union is well aware that LU have mobilised an expensive and sophisticated scabbing operation that raises serious issues about the safety of the travelling public.

"Instead of wasting time and money on bank-rolling a scab army LU should be recognising their duty of care to front-line staff confronted with violent thugs on their stations and supporting out members who have been sacked and victimised as a result of this shocking incident," he said.

In the incident, which occurred last November, a fare-dodger assaulted two members of staff, including pushing a pregnant colleague in the stomach. One staff member had his glasses stolen and was

punched twice.

That member of staff has now been sacked in what the union describes as an "appalling miscarriage of justice".

RMT has slammed LU for bogus and disgraceful claims that the female member of staff wasn't assaulted – despite the fact that they admitted that crucial fact in the disciplinary hearings.

The staff member who initially challenged the fare-dodger to produce a ticket or oyster card was disciplined on the ludicrous, trumped-up charge of "inciting or provoking an incident".

A third member of staff, who defused the situation after being repeatedly threatened with violence, has also been disciplined by London Underground when they should have been commended for their bravery.

As a result one member of staff has been sacked with the other two members receiving 52-week final warnings.

"London Underground should do the decent thing – reinstate our member, lift the disciplinary action and send out the message that fare-dodging and violence will not be tolerated and that staff in the front line will get the support and assistance that they need," added Mick Cash. ■

GREATER ANGLIA TICKET OFFICE MASSACRE THREAT

Dutch state-owned company Abellio plans to remove the vast majority of ticket offices across the franchise

RMT has launched a campaign to fight a planned programme of ticket office closures the length and breadth of the Greater Anglia franchise run by the Dutch state-owned company Abellio.

The company, which currently holds the franchise until 2026, plans to remove 57 of the currently 64 ticket offices across the Greater Anglia network threatening hundreds of ticket office jobs.

It intends to only have seven remaining traditional ticket offices located at London Liverpool Street, Colchester, Norwich, Cambridge,

Chelmsford, Ipswich and Stansted Airport.

That means that the company is proposing to close the bulk of the remainder of their station-based services during the next year in three stages, with seven ticket offices to close by this summer. Greater Anglia has also revealed that it intends to introduce revenue staff and place ticket vending machines (TVMs) at all stations with major implications for jobs and services.

RMT is completely opposed to any closures or reduction in opening hours of ticket offices, to any cuts in station staff jobs

and the potential introduction of lone working at stations. As a result the union is planning a campaign of opposition designed at engaging the public, passenger groups and campaign groups and politicians right across the area in an all-out drive to halt the ticket office massacre.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the union was appalled at this planned attack on ticket offices and station staff across the franchise which would wipe out the vast bulk of these vital passenger services over the next year.

"The union will fight with

every tool at our disposal to halt these disastrous plans which are all about cutting public services to pump up private profits.

"This is all part and parcel of a national drive to de-staff our trains and stations as the private train companies look to smuggle in a faceless railway in a dash to fatten up their own profit margins.

"RMT is calling on the public and politicians to join with us in a mass campaign to halt this ticket office massacre that would stretch the length and breadth of the Greater Anglia franchise," he said. ■





SOS2020 SEAFARERS' CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED IN DOVER

RMT's SOS 2020 campaign was officially launched in Dover last month highlighting the fact that as an island nation and net importer, the country's economic, social and security interests depend upon seafarers and a resilient UK maritime skills base.

The exclusion of seafarers' from full employment or equality rights, low levels of training and the rise of Flags of Convenience registers, including those in the Red Ensign Group, such as on the Isle of Man and Bermuda, have led to a decline in UK ratings and officers from 58,000 in the 1980s to 23,380 in 2015. Non-UK ratings continue to be recruited on rates of pay below the legal UK minimum.

This unfair competition blocks UK seafarers' access to work, damages the maritime skills base and drives down

employment standards, training and pay across the industry. Employers also routinely avoid paying seafarers their full entitlement even to these low wages – last year an estimated £31.5 million of earnings were not paid to seafarers working from UK ports.

Since 2011, UK Ratings have fallen by 25 per cent and the total number of UK seafarers decreased by over 13 per cent. The ageing nature of seafarers also means that if training and employment do not increase before then, 2020 will see the retirement of thousands of UK seafarers, exposing this country to negative economic, social and security effects of a maritime skills deficit.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the union was determined that the future of our maritime industry was not

ignored during the general election campaign and ports like Dover had a huge amount at stake economically and industrially if we allow central government to continue to allow the decimation of UK shipping.

"As part of our SOS2020 campaign RMT is demanding jobs, training and the end of the race to the bottom on pay and working conditions. Our objective is simple – a guaranteed future for the UK shipping industry based on the development of a skilled and expanded domestic workforce that will secure the economy of areas like Dover well into the future," he said.

RMT national secretary Steve Todd added that for too long our maritime sector had been ravaged by social dumping and the flouting of pay and

employment regulations at the expense of UK ratings jobs. That scandal has to end and RMT will be challenging the candidates for political office to sign up to the union's campaign."

SOS2020 facts:

- 95 per cent of all imported and exported goods in the UK are transported by ship
- Over 496 million tonnes of maritime freight handled from ships at UK ports
- Over 22 million passengers moved on short sea, continental and international cruise ferries
- The shipping industry directly contributes over £3 billion to UK GDP
- The Royal Fleet Auxiliary is the biggest employer of UK merchant seafarers

Parliamentary column



MAXIMUM VOTE FOR LABOUR TO DEFEAT TORIES

The outcome of this general election will clearly be either a Labour government led by Jeremy Corbyn whose key policies include support for trade union and employment rights, repeal of anti-union legislation, public ownership of the railways and opposition to austerity or a Tory government who wish to introduce even more vicious anti-trade union legislation, austerity and privatisation and attacks on the working class.

Following a decision of the national executive committee, RMT is supporting a maximum Labour vote at the general election to defeat the Tories and for there to be a Labour government led by Jeremy Corbyn.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that Jeremy Corbyn was the genuine article who has a vision of Britain based on hope not fear that delivers for working people.

“He has pledged to put transport, and the renationalisation of our railways, right at the top of the agenda.

“That’s a policy that is backed by 70 per cent of the British people and stands in stark contrast to the privatised racketeering on our tracks under the

Tories.

“In contrast, Theresa May is a hard right politician who is seeking a mandate to carry out the agenda of the big business establishment.

“That means more cuts to our public services and driving down pay and job security through shredding employment

and trade union protections.”

“Although RMT is not affiliated to the Labour Party we have no hesitation in saying that it is in the interests of working people for there to be a Labour government led by Jeremy Corbyn,” he said.

A MESSAGE TO RMT MEMBERS FROM LABOUR LEADER JEREMY CORBYN

Dear RMT members,

Thank you for the fantastic job you do in our rail, tube, bus maritime, offshore and road transport sectors.

It’s your efforts that keep our country moving. You and your families are entitled to a fair deal at work and at home.

But instead of backing you the Tories back the transport corporations and their constant cuts and attacks on your jobs and conditions.

And already in this election they are trying to sow fear and division in our communities.

But we can change things by backing Labour on June 8.

A Labour government will roll up our sleeves

and work tirelessly for an economy and society which delivers for the many not the few.

That means a secure well paid and valued job. It means affordable housing with decent local schools and high quality health care for all. It means a properly staffed public transport system.

I am grateful that RMT and many other unions are backing Labour. Now let’s work together for a better future.

Best wishes,

Jeremy Corbyn MP

Leader of the Labour Party



WINNING FOR CLEANERS

RMT executive committee member Eddie Dempsey reports on the fight for sick pay for cleaners at Great Western Railway following a massive pay victory and the ending of agency contracts

Like the majority of privatised train operating companies, Great Western Railway (GWR) outsource the cleaning of their trains..

This allows them to pose as a 'modern employer', for example by flaunting their *'Investors in People'* silver award, at the same time as denying cleaning workers the most basic workplace rights in the pursuit of profit.

GWR's previous train cleaning provider, Mitie, locked RMT members into minimum wage, zero-hours contracts in an environment rife with bullying

and intimidation.

Following months of strike action by outsourced cleaners and an occupation of GWR's head offices in Swindon, in the finest traditions of industrial trade unionism, RMT registered a dispute with GWR on the issue of outsourcing.

RMT argued that the existence of minimum wage and zero-hours contracts represented a clear and present danger to all GWR employees. If GWR was allowed to employ workers on these contracts through outsourcing their employment to a labour agency, or sub-

contractor, then, sooner or later, this method of employment would spread to directly employed staff as well.

The combined pressure of strike action by cleaners and the bargaining strength of RMT forced GWR to concede the London Living Wage and Living Wage not only for cleaners, but for all GWR sub-contracted workers and the elimination of zero-hours contracts. This represented a 40 per cent pay boost for our lowest paid members.

Only GWR could provide for such a contractual pay increase, exposing the lie that train operating companies are not directly responsible for the conditions of employment of their sub-contracted workers.

Following the award of GWR's train cleaning contract to Servest UK, the new contractor imposed a raft of detrimental changes to RMT members' conditions of employment. Servest also brought in additional outsourcing by employing agency labour on minimum terms, whilst reports of serious discrimination, bullying and intimidation flooded in.

Despite the introduction of the Living Wage, more than two thirds of our train cleaning members were either in debt, or had been in debt to pay day lenders within the last year.

The direct cause of this was the absence of a sick pay scheme. Cleaners working in an unsanitary environment are obviously susceptible to sickness, but without the protection of an occupational Sick Pay scheme they are thrown onto Statutory Sick Pay at a weekly rate of £89.35.

The majority of our members are migrant workers with immediate family living abroad. When they fall sick in order to pay their rent and essential bills they are faced with the dilemma of either using their annual leave entitlement, which means they can't visit their families abroad, or of going to Pay Day loan sharks and become embroiled in a cycle of debt.

RMT members entered into a

dispute with Servest earlier this year with a series of rock solid strike days and defiant mass picketing. Over 70 striking RMT members shut down busy Praed Street outside Paddington station in Westminster in an act of civil disobedience.

Over 100 striking cleaners travelled by coach to GWR's head offices in Swindon to demand an occupational sick pay scheme in GWR's train cleaning contract. GWR closed their offices while senior managers and directors hid.

RMT members quickly established a massive picket and protest outside GWR's offices until GWR agreed to receive an RMT delegation and accept our letter of demands.

Under pressure from continued strike action, Servest UK agreed to go to GWR cap-in-hand, to seek changes to their contract in order to resolve our dispute. GWR rejected Servest's approach, but RMT has established that GWR is responsible for their train cleaners' conditions of employment.

GWR deputy managing director Andy Mellors publicly repeated the mantra: "The relationship between Servest and its employees should rightly be between them" in a letter to *The Guardian* newspaper.

In the same letter he portrays GWR as a modern employer by pointing to the Living Wage element within its sub-contracts as an example of generosity, omitting to mention the months of strike action and campaigning by our members that forced the concession.

Finally members accepted an offer from Servest UK that ends the use of agency contract labour, delivers a pay award backdated to 2016, and a raft of other concessions including an increase in the number of RMT workplace representatives across the contract.

RMT members have used these significant gains to launch a campaign for sick pay using all of the campaigning methods available to them and the resources of the union.

These workers have come a

long way since a small group of half a dozen RMT members began organising a largely non-unionised, intimidated and disaffected workforce a few years ago. Supported by RMT branches and RMT South Wales and West Regional Council, they are now a formidable 250-strong unit of militant trade unionists.

In their struggle, they have learned vital organising and campaigning skills and seen through the scams of the privatised rail industry.

They have won serious concessions for themselves and fellow rail workers, produced talented and courageous leaders and are confident in their strength and prepared to employ everything they've learned in the pursuit of their demands for a sick pay scheme.

Their achievements show that it pays to be audacious in our demands and ambitious with

our goals for low paid workers. RMT must continue to expose the sub-contracting scam. Train operators are responsible for the pay and conditions of subcontracted workers and we will lead the fight for direct employment.

Seeking RPI (inflation) pay rises and superficial improvements for low paid workers doesn't necessarily inspire workers to join a union and fight for better conditions.

RMT must challenge employers hiding behind sub-contracts to conceal the abuse of their workers through zero-hours contracts and use of agency labour and fight to turn irregular workers into regular full-time employees to improve their working conditions. The way to do that is to inspire workers with 'big ticket' items such as our claim for a proper sick pay scheme. ■

Summary of the deal RMT signed with Servest UK in April 2017

- All employees not subject to the Living Wage will receive a 1.6 per cent increase backdated payment to April 2016 as well as a further percentage increase from April 2017 equal to RPI and the same uplift in April 2018.
- All supervisors and team leaders will receive a proportional percentage increase in line with the Living Wage/London Living Wage increase since April 2015.
- Permanent jobs to be offered to all current agency staff who have worked on the Servest GWR contract for 12 weeks or longer prior to the date that all points of dispute are resolved and withdrawn.
- Agency staff only to be used in consultation with local RMT reps
- A review of PPE and cold weather uniform requirements across the contract for each role will take place and the outcome will be discussed with the union reps.
- The company will work with RMT to facilitate elections for five new additional union reps by May 2017.
- A commitment to updating the current recognition agreement in line with current ACAS principles.
- Training to be provided to help prevent and deal with bullying and harassment in the workplace. Training will be given to relevant managers and workplace representatives.



BUILDING FREIGHT INDUSTRY UNITY

Road freight
workers call for
unity in the
freight sector and
re-organisation of
conference

RMT's national road freight organising conference meeting in Great Yarmouth agreed that the time had come to unite with other grades working in the freight sector.

Maurice Hamilton, Leeds Goods and Cartage said that the inter-modal, bulk carrying and logistics sector, involving rail and road workers, remained an area where the union could organise and exert its influence for the good of workers.

"The current title of our conference could be confusing and we need a more united presence in the freight sector.

"We need to be able to bring together workers from companies such as Freightliner Intermodal, Heavy Haul, DB Cargo, GBRF, DRS, DHL, UPS and others in order to better organise and create a vibrant and effective presence," he said.

Assistant general secretary Mick Lynch said that it was an opportunity to expand in areas where the union has always worked within.

"By requesting a review you are giving the union a mandate to bring forward a rules change in order to create a sector-wide conference.

"The conference liaison committee can draw up a cohesive plan based on a broader model for organising, uniting drivers. Warehouse staff and rail workers where appropriate," he said.

Delegates agreed that part of that process was to produce a charter for freight workers as well as other propaganda.

Tom Wilson, Southampton said that such a charter should point out the benefits of being in the union and include a membership form.

Mark Neil, Birmingham Engineering said the health and safety issues were also a good recruitment tool.

"A simple poster at motorway services and other stops in the toilets would have a big impact," he said.

George Marshall, conference president said that branch mapping was an important part of he recruitment process.

"Branches must now draw of

plans under rule and we have a plan in place to target Freightliner and other workplaces four times a year," he said.

Mick Lynch agreed and said that such mapping exercises involved targeted development to building membership in the workplace.

Mark Broadfield, Leeds Goods and Cartage called on the union to take up the issue of why drivers working for Freightliner were still the only grade deducted 30 minutes pay from their long working day.

"LGV drivers have hal an hour deducted yet train drivers on three times the salary are paid an extra hour if contacts at home and paid extra if their shifts are shortened or lengthened, this disparity is outrageous," he said.

Maurice Hamilton added that it was criminal that drivers could not take their breaks and often ate in their cabs.

Mark Broadfield also called on the union to campaign for

companies like Freightliner to directly recruit LGV drivers instead of using agency workers.

"If there is work there then the company then they should recruit staff and not simply use more and more agency workers. In many cases they outnumber permanent staff," he said.

Graham Keeble, Leeds Goods and Cartage warned that companies were using the opt-out in the EU agency workers directive, known as the Swedish Derogation, to avoid employing staff.

He said that under this opt-out individual drivers were forced to become limited companies themselves which allows the companies to pay lower rates of pay.

Tom Wilson also called on the union to pursue Freightliner over the long-promised but still not delivered payment for ADR (hazardous work).

"For the last 10 years road motor drivers have been promised additional payments

for doing hazardous work which is more dangerous and has higher responsibility that involves legally-required accreditation.

"Most other road haulage businesses pay drivers additional payments for carrying out these duties but Freightliner has failed to deliver," he said.

Delegates backed a called for the union to demand payment or deliver a ballot to refuse to carry out future ADR work.

Conference also called on the union to challenge Freightliner over its lack of cover in some locations which forced staff to work 12 hour shifts.

Jane Criton, Liverpool No 5 said that due to the current roster system and the lack of cover people were leaving the industry.

"Staff can't make doctor or dentist appointments or even take holidays due to this lack of flexibility," she said.



ORGANISE!

The union has called for an organising day of action next month on June 13, Bob Crow's birthday, to increase RMT membership and bargaining power at the workplace

The union has developed a far-reaching organising strategy for this year to increase membership levels in every sector and grade that the union organises in.

This strategy includes a branch organising day around June 13, an idea proposed South Essex branch secretary Derrick Marr at an RMT

national organising strategy meeting held in Doncaster last year.

The union also agreed for all branches and regions to include the day as part of their organising plans that are now required under rule following the 2015 annual general meeting.

To order your commemorative T-shirt e-mail; rmtorgday@sabcat.com Bulk orders via your branch/regional council of 10 or more shirts cost just £6 per shirt



RMT AT STUC

RMT sent a full delegation to the 120th Scottish TUC held in Aviemore last month and moved motions on the crisis in the offshore industry and the maritime industries, driver-only operation and on calling for public ownership of the Scotrail franchise currently run by the Dutch state-owned company Abellio.

Surprise speakers included Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn who received a standing. He said that the election was between a party of the privilege and a Labour Party prepared to challenge those powerful interests to transform the lives of working people.

The Labour Leader pledged to scrap the Trade Union Act and

introduce sectoral collective bargaining and to aggressively take on the tax evaders by making large corporations publish their tax returns. He also pledged a £10 per hour minimum wage and a ban on zero-hours contracts.

Congress also welcomed film director Ken Loach who spoke about the sanction regime of the DWP and the effect it was having on claimants who had to visit food banks. He said that the new regime of people coming off Work Capability Assessments (WCA) onto the new Independence Payment Assessments (IPA) often meant that disabled people were being sanctioned and had benefits stopped.

Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon also accused Theresa May of calling an election in order to crush dissent and escape prosecution for election fraud against those 30 Tory MPs under investigation.

She warned that a Tory victory will make Scotland a poorer country and lead to a more unfair society, and that the Scottish Government would not comply with the draconian provisions of the Trade Union Act.

RMT regional organise Jake Molloy was re-elected on to the STUC General Council with an increased vote and Janet Cassidy retained her seat in the women's section.



RMT SEAFARERS BURSARY

RMT has worked in conjunction with Seafarers UK to establish a bursary for financial assistance towards education, training and learning opportunities for current and former RMT seafarer members.

I AM A CURRENT OR FORMER RMT SEAFARER MEMBER, WHY SHOULD I APPLY?

The opportunities for development, promotion or mobility in any industry is often linked to training and educational qualifications, the seafaring industry is no different. Often the only barrier that an individual cannot overcome is often a modest amount of financial assistance – this bursary is set up to help overcome this barrier.

WHO IS SEAFARERS UK?

Seafarers UK has been helping people in the maritime community for 100 years, by providing vital support to seafarers in

need and their families, and to those in education or training who are preparing to work or serve at sea. The charity does this by giving grants to organisations and projects that make a real difference to people's lives.'

RMT is re-launching its Seafarers Bursary in conjunction with Seafarers UK. This relatively modest Bursary offers excellent opportunities to take up training or educational courses to enhance current or potential employment opportunities. The average bursary to be granted is envisaged as being not more than £400 per applicant.

Applications for funding should be aimed at meeting the following criteria:

That the learning/training funding being applied for can be demonstrated to enhance the seafarers' employment opportunities both directly in the seafaring industries or the individuals' overall

employment more generally.

Applicants should complete the attached application form fully and forward to, National Education Officer, Bob Crow National Education Centre, 47 Thorne Road, Doncaster, DN1 2EX.

All applications will be checked against the criteria for such grants and the application forwarded to the General Secretary setting out if the application meets the criteria. The General Secretary will make a final decision to award the grant or not and inform the applicant accordingly in writing.

Should the applicant not accept the decision of the general secretary they will have the right of appeal to the National Executive Committee.

The union hopes that all seafarer members, past and present, will consider taking up the opportunity this bursary offers. ■

RMT WELCOMES MARITIME INDUSTRY APPRENTICESHIP LEVY

RMT has welcomed the potential benefits for the UK maritime industry of the apprenticeship levy which kicks in today and has urged employers on the UK shipping register to seize the opportunity to train up a next generation of skilled workers in the sector on decent pay and conditions.

The union's SOS2020 campaign aims to highlight the abusive employment practices across the shipping industry and the need for the UK to commit to a programme for the long term recovery of seafarer jobs and skills.

RMT general secretary, Mick

Cash said that after five years in the making, the welcomed the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy which would provide a clear route to training the next generation of workers that the UK needs across the transport sector.

"There is an acute need to train UK seafarers, particularly Ratings to meet forecast increases in demand over the next decade. If the UK shipping industry again fails to take up another state sponsored incentive to train UK seafarers, we risk a maritime skills deficit coinciding with a slew of post-Brexit international trade deals.

"The industry can no longer hide behind offshore payroll arrangements and employers need to use the Levy and the new set of maritime

apprenticeships to commit now to the long term recovery of UK seafarer jobs and skills," he said. RMT national secretary Steve Todd said the union had worked with employers and maritime colleges on the Maritime Trailblazer Working Group to develop a new set of Rating Apprenticeships which will benefit from apprenticeship levy funding.

"A Deck Rating apprenticeship is available now

and a recent Government report estimated that the number of UK deck ratings in training today will have to increase three-fold to meet future demand.

"Apprenticeships for Ratings in Engine, Catering and Hospitality are close to introduction.

The aim of increasing maritime apprenticeships is supported by the government's Maritime Growth Study and RMT urges all employers on the UK Ship Register and across the UK shipping industry to take up rating apprenticeships as a matter of urgency," he said. ■

ABERDEEN STREAMLINE PROTEST AGAINST POVERTY PAY

RMT protested in Aberdeen last month against poverty pay on Streamline Shipping's Cyprus-flagged MV Daroja.

Workers are paid as little as £2.56 per hour on freight routes between Aberdeen and Orkney and Shetland on the ship. Streamline has relentlessly profited from this exploitation, receiving over £3 million from the Scottish taxpayer*.

The ship has a very poor safety record and was involved in a serious collision off Peterhead in 2015 and was again detained by the MCA in November for a number of deficiencies, including the internal safety management system.

Shareholders are pocketing millions in dividends whilst migrant workers are mercilessly exploited and local seafarers excluded from work on a maritime freight route between Scottish ports.

RMT is calling on the Scottish and UK-Governments to end Streamline's profiteering off the backs of seafarers and



the taxpayer by:

- Enforcing National Minimum Wage legislation.
- Increasing freight capacity in the Northern Isles Ferry Service contract.
- Requiring Streamline to comply with Work Permit regulations.
- Reviewing the MV Daroja's safety record.

RMT general secretary Mick

Cash said that they was an excellent response to the SOS2020 protest in Aberdeen union as the union continued to put these ships of shame under the spotlight.

"Poverty pay on Streamline Shipping's MV Daroja is a disgrace. We call on the Scottish government to take action, as it did on Seatruck where it has been agreed that they will pay at least the national minimum wage on the NIFS/Seatruck contract.

"Only a nationalised Northern Isles ferry service can meet the needs of local communities and the seafarers that serve them," he said. ■

* STREAMLINE SHIPPING GROUP LTD ACCOUNTS 2008-09 TO 2014 (PERIOD UNDER PUBLIC CONTRACT)

Year	Post-Tax Profit	Dividend	Tax charged	Public Subsidy	Highest Paid Director
08-09	£102,698	£100,000	£35,649	TBC	£232,446
2009	£108,836	£100,000	£41,080	£418,441	£115,123
2010	£54,164	£100,000	£2,218	£559,158	£137,554
2011	£56,693	£100,000	£0	£567,594	£175,226
2012	£445,593	£300,000	£122,353	£621,412	£158,124
2013	£2.217m	£600,000	£616,061	£610,158	£134,972
2014	£1.889m	£600,000	£439,827	£226,842	£136,134
Total	£4.874m	£1.9m	£1.257m	£3.003m	£1.089m

FIGHTING CASUALISATION!



Engineering grades launch a sub-contractors charter and demands an end to casualisation

The culture of privatisation and sub-contracting should be driven out of the rail industry agreed delegates to this year's industrial organising conference for engineering grades meeting in Norwich.

Assistant general secretary Mick Lynch said that across the rail network, where once there was central collective bargaining for standard pay and conditions, there are now multiple contractors and agencies that seek to get as much as possible for as little in return.

"The break-up of full-time unionised employment for infrastructure workers is a deliberate act to dehumanise the industry and push wages and

conditions down and profits up.

"For infrastructure workers this fragmentation has resulted in vastly differing and often poor pay and conditions with little, if any, security of employment.

"RMT's strength is that it is an industrial union uniting workers in all grades and across all employers, on every worksite, in every depot, regardless of employment status, licenses or competencies.

"That is why we have produced a charter to get as better deal for agency and sub-contracted staff alongside our existing charter for fleet maintenance workers," he said.

He said that there was a huge

potential for membership growth where the union can get organised to create a powerful force at the workplace where it mattered.

The charter sets out the unacceptable situation infrastructure workers find themselves in and the changes required. Research has shown that in companies and workplaces where the union is well organised, rates of pay are higher and terms and conditions better.

Therefore it is a recruitment tool to encourage people to join the union to improve their conditions at work.

RMT's aim is to end the abuse and bring rates of pay

and conditions of service up to the best in the industry. This will not happen overnight, but RMT will challenge each and every company on the basis of this charter and the benchmarks within it.

Mark Hall, Wakefield and Healey Mills said that Network Rail Works Delivery was relying heavily on labour-only sub-contractors rather than employing in-house staff.

"This is not only an attempt to undermine the hard-fought terms and conditions, but also a cost-saving exercise whereby Network Rail can use these workers as and when they want offering them no job security and only to send them home

when they are no longer of any use.

"This practice is also an attack on our union's ability to collectively bargain for workers as sub-contractors are often employed through bogus self-employment which sees them having to pay for their own PPE and with no annual leave or sick pay.

"Many of these people believe that it is not worth joining a trade union because if they were to raise a concern they will be laid off.

"Works Delivery is deliberately set up as a top-heavy organisation with small teams designed to manage labour only sub-contractors and if these practices are not challenged they will inevitably become the standard business model across the whole of the company," he said.

Delegates called on the union to write to Network Rail to demand a thorough review of the use of contractors in conjunction with RMT in particular for Works Delivery rather than a constant and increased reliance on labour only sub-contractors.

Paul Jackson, LUL engineering said that the union was fighting a race to the bottom.

He paid tribute to RMT national executive committee member Andy Littlechild for instigating a 'workmates' scheme whereby activists encouraged sub-contractors to defend themselves whenever possible.

"Part of the battle is getting these workers to overcome fear from the employer that they will be picked off," he said.

Pat Collins, Birmingham Engineering said that he fully supported the campaign.

"We can't allow the employers to divide us," he said.

Mark Eastwood, Doncaster said that often agency workers were only given work on Saturday night.

"We need to get these people in the union, contractors and subbies should be on everyone's agenda," he said.

Dave O'Donnell, Fife said that

there was enough work to bring them in-house.

"If there is enough work for agency workers there should be given proper jobs and get on with it," he said.

Mick Lynch also outlined how the Safe Work Leader project had been finally abandoned by Network Rail after lengthy negotiations as it was confusing for everyone concerned.

Dai Hobbs, Swansea said that SWL was still being used on renewals and infrastructure projects and that this should be addressed.

Delegates also called for the protection of Network Rail 'stood off' procedures which allow the treatment of staff with health and wellbeing issue without losing their jobs.

Paul Reilly, national executive committee said that many NR managers simply did not understand stood off procedures.

Mark Denny, Wigan agreed and said that managers often didn't even recognise the agreement, "some areas it is used, others not".

Alex Hogg, Edinburgh and Portobello said that NR was

attempting the procedure as a bargaining chip in pay deals negotiations.

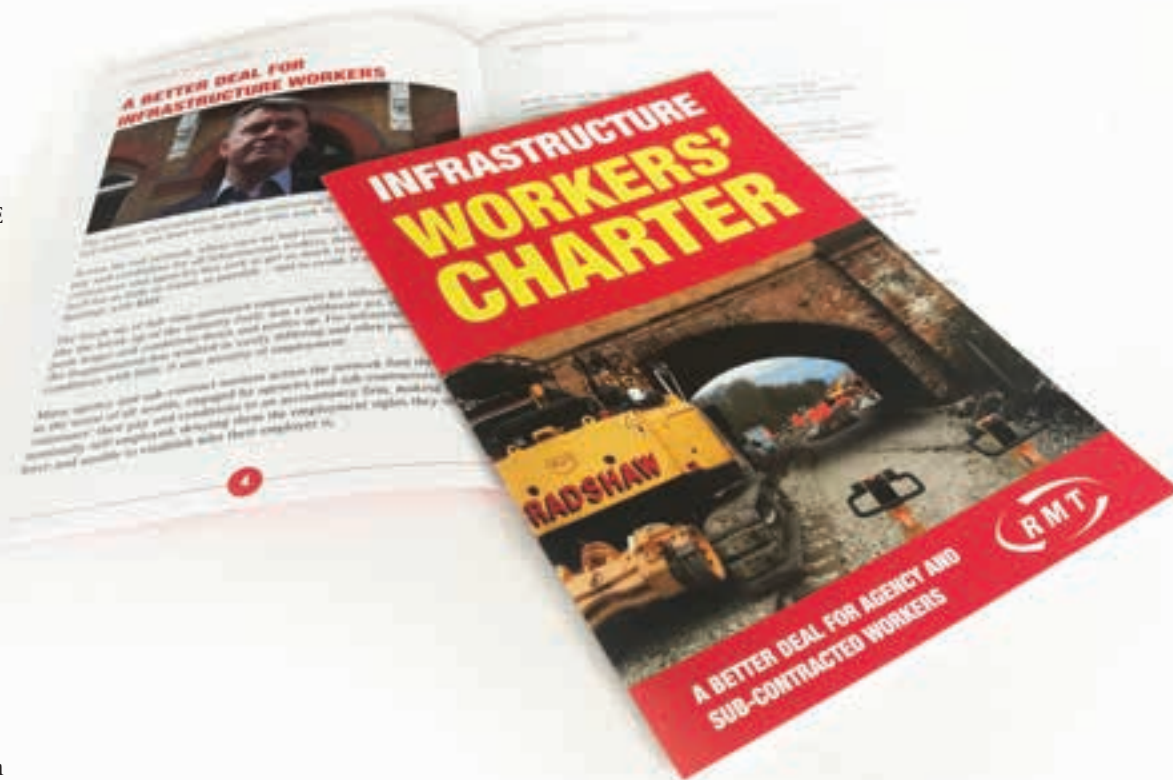
"They have introduced their interpretation of the agreement with HR issuing guidelines to local managers using a format of points for managers to follow when dealing with such cases.

"HR people are very seldom attending the hearings leaving managers to push through their

version of agreement on to our members which can vary from route to route.

"We need to protect 'stood off', it is a gold watch agreement," he said.

Delegates called on the union to produce campaign material detailing the benefits of stood off and pointing out the safeguards within such an agreement. ■



The aims of charter:

- EMPLOYMENT SECURITY
- END LOW PAY
- HOLIDAY PAY
- PAID SICK LEAVE
- PENSIONS
- TRAVEL PASSES
- FAIR DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES
- GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES
- HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE AT WORK
- UNION AND HEALTH AND SAFETY REPS



FIGHTING FOR STATION STAFF

Delegates to the station staff at the Station and Associated Grades organising conference meeting in Liverpool called for a national campaign to defend members working in the grade.

Meeting on the same day as a Northern Rail Guards' strike, delegates joined the demonstration at Liverpool Lime Street citing the Keep the Guard campaign as being a good model for organising.

RMT assistant general secretary Steve Hedley told delegates that for purely ideological reasons nationalisation of the railway was being dismissed out of hand yet the government allowed companies run by foreign states to make a profit from Britain's railways, effectively subsidising operations abroad.

Steve explained that every time a franchise came up for renewal there were attempts to remove more jobs from the industry in the pursuit of profit:

"They make money twice over because they get rid of someone selling a ticket and

then they use machines that have been proven to overcharge people.

"Casualisation of staff is part of the problem. We have to both recruit these workers and bring them in house. We need to educate the public and our members and get a campaign up and running," he said.

Chris Reilly, Reading gave a report of what de-staffing meant in practice with an account of how Great Western Railways had started to remove vacancies from rosters, slashing staffing levels on gatelines.

Safety had been put in jeopardy as the company was insisting on the single staffing of gatelines despite the fact that it has been proven to be unsafe, especially when staff also had to sell tickets to passengers.

"Despite the protest of our stations divisional council the company are ploughing ahead with their method of working.

"We feel this puts our members who work on the gates at more risk of assaults both verbal and physical, as well as a risk to the public, especially if

vulnerable or a child.

"If they are alone dealing with issues then, as happens quite often, someone is trapped in the gates could be injured quite badly but this is being ignored by GWR.

"We want to have full staffing on our gatelines with true and accurate risk assessments to take place and take all factors into account and no less than two members on gatelines," he said.

Jason Humphreys, Jubilee South told delegates of the appalling treatment of three members of stations staff at London Bridge, who were violently assaulted, and in the wake of defending themselves have been disciplined by London Underground management.

Conference unanimously backed the campaign for justice for the London Bridge Three and pledged solidarity with any industrial action.

Ross Marshall, Central Line West told conference that there had been a rising tide of assaults, abuse and violence

against station staff. He explained that he has been seriously assaulted himself during his career.

"There is a lack of empathy and support for assaulted staff, and even the move by companies to discipline staff. The union needs to ensure all companies fully support staff and push for the strongest penalties against perpetrators and fight to stop staff victimisation," he said.

Daniel Randall, Bakerloo called for the Keep the Guard campaign to be widened out to demand properly staffed stations as well.

Lloyd Griffin, Waltham Cross spoke about the problems that outsourcing cleaning staff had created and the appalling working conditions that it had created.

"The conditions we work under are a national disgrace. We are not even allowed heating in our workplace as it is a plastic building," he said.

Daniel Randall explained that not only was cleaning subcontracted on London



Underground but the subcontractor then in turn sub-contracts half of that work out.

“Workers are bullied into registering as self-employed or limited liability companies,” he said.

Conference supported a call for all railway staff to be employed directly in-house on proper terms, conditions and pay.

Peter Creaby, Central and North Mersey highlighted the stress that members were put under whilst they are under

investigation.

“Staff are often left in turmoil for months whilst management scrutinise every piece of evidence to secure a conviction.

“While appreciating that investigations will take place these members should be treated with dignity and respect at all times, members’ lives are literally put on hold and they live in fear of any investigatory outcomes. Sometimes stress gets to people so badly that their relationships break down during the period they are suspended.

“Investigations should be held as quickly as possible and staff should only be stood off as a last resort,” he said.

Guest speaker Terry Renshaw from the Shrewsbury 24 campaign outlined how the campaign aimed to overturn the convictions and sentences of building workers who took part in picketing during a national strike of building workers in 1972.

Five months after the strike ended 24 pickets were charged with over 200 offences despite

none of them being cautioned or arrested during the strike itself. Three of the pickets were imprisoned and all were blacklisted from the industry and most never able to work in their trade again.

Conference backed a motion supporting local workers at the Adelphi Hotel, which is connected to Liverpool Lime Street Station. Delegates left the venue to support a lively demonstration outside the hotel in support of the low paid workers. ■

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Keep your RMT membership details up-to-date

In the light of draconian anti-trade union laws that have been used against the union, members should keep their personal data up to date. It 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.

GLASGOW PROTESTS IN SUPPORT OF DISABLED PEOPLE'S ACCESS TO RAIL TRAVEL



SOLIDARITY: RMT members are joined by campaigners from Disabled People Against the Cuts outside Glasgow Central Station this lunchtime in the fight for Safer Scottish Trains

RMT and Disabled People Against Cuts Glasgow held protests this month for the rights of disabled people to have a fully accessible and safe rail service.

Joint protests and leafleting took place outside Glasgow Central and Glasgow Queen Street stations.

Parliamentary answers in 2016 revealed that 214 of Scotrail's 346 stations are

unstaffed, over 30,000 trains currently run as Driver Only Operated trains and nearly two thirds of stations have no staff available at all.

RMT also produced figures in July 2016 to show that the annual number of ScotRail services that went into service from April 2015 onwards, without a second member of staff on board when there should have been one present,

was running at anything from 5,700 to 7,300 a year.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that RMT had consistently asked what happens to a disabled person trying to access or exit a train, at an unstaffed station with only the driver on board?

"How can disabled people in Scotland really travel unobstructed if the support and staff necessary to access rail

travel services are not available? Will they even want to try and attempt a journey if there is no guarantee of being able to get on off the train?

"We are sending out the message that disabled people should be able to travel without discrimination and for that to happen both trains and stations needs to be properly staffed," he said.

OPPOSE SCOTTISH TRANSPORT POLICE PROPOSALS

The safety and security of rail workers and passengers will be put at greater risk if MSP's do not oppose the Scottish Government's legislative plans to abolish the British Transport Police RMT warned ahead of a Stage 1 debate of the Railways Policing (Scotland) Bill in the Scottish Parliament this month.

The union has also pointed to the near universal opposition to the proposals from rail workers, the police and train companies and said this means MSP's "must put aside ideology and party loyalty and oppose the Scottish Government's proposals".

In a briefing to MSPs the union has also warned that:

- By abolishing the BTP in

Scotland and absorbing it into Police Scotland, we will lose specialist skills and identity in policing passenger rail services in Scotland, accrued over many years.

- The loss and erosion of specialist rail policing skills and expertise will result in an inferior service, adversely impacting on the safety and security of rail workers and passengers, particularly on Driver Control Operated services and at unstaffed stations.
- These proposals will require rail service operators on both sides of the border, particularly where the

service crosses the border to have the same operational agreement with two separate police forces, where currently only one Railway Policing Agreement (RPA) is required. This will have a negative effect on the co-ordination of policing crime and anti-social behaviour on cross border rail services, as well as confusing lines of responsibility, including around the additional administrative costs created by this move.

RMT General Secretary Mick Cash said that MSPs needed to be clear that if they do not oppose this Bill it will increase the risk to the safety and security of rail passengers and

workers.

"The loss or erosion of specialist skills provided by the British Transport Police is opposed by rail workers, rail employers and the police federation.

"The Scottish government's consultation failed to include any alternative approach to that in the Bill. "That is not a sensible, proportionate or safe way to proceed, as four MSPs on the Justice Committee looking at this Bill have recognised.

"MSP's must put aside ideology and party loyalty and oppose this Bill in the interests of safer Scottish rail services," he said.



FIRST DISABLED MEMBERS' CONFERENCE

The first RMT disabled members' conference discussed the work of the TUC disabled workers' committee and its manifesto.

RMT sent a full delegation of 15 members to the last TUC conference and its committee produces lots of useful guidance and information for trade

unionists.

Delegates discussed the TUC Manifesto for Disability Equality in detail, looking at which issues were particularly relevant in our workplaces and what we want the union to do to fight for the Manifesto's demands.

Conference passed six

resolutions on issues such as disabled workers and attendance at work policies, the persecution of disabled workers and workers with caring responsibilities for disabled dependants.

Other issues covered were mental health and the workplace, understanding

disability, the need for accessibility audits and the impact of austerity on disabled people.

Delegates called on the union to campaign against austerity, support Disabled People Against Cuts (DPAC), and challenge myths about 'benefit scroungers'. ■

BIG UP TRANSPORT!



Workers in Hastings celebrate transport and call for a fully-integrated public network

Hastings Trade Union Council joined a transport industry representatives, campaign groups, local political groups and heroes from the Southern GTR dispute to promote a fully funded, publicly owned and integrated transport network last month.

Celebrating the workers who provide the transport we all use and remembering those who have died in providing that service, the protest called for real change to bring our transport

network back under public control.

Keynote speaker RMT assistant general secretary Steve Hedley asked: "How can it be OK for 75 per cent of the rail network to be run by state railways from other countries?

"Yet we are told that we cannot run our own state rail network, where any profit or benefit is ploughed back into the service or economy of our own country.

Hastings Trade Union Council led the march through the town centre to a rally at the train station before a meeting at the Central Hall where many speakers, members of the public and activists gathered to debate the future of transport.

On the way they called by at Cornwallis Gardens to dedicate a plaque to the memory of those who went to work and never returned home because they lost their lives, just as a result of

trying to earn a living.

RMT SERC education officer Ivor Riddell said that it was a fantastic event

"This was made possible by the hard work and commitment of ordinary working people who are prepared to stand up and fight for what is right and defend those benefits delivered through the struggle of working class people who went before us," he said.

RETIRED MEMBERS MEET

Over 50 delegates from all regions attended RMT's retired members' annual conference in Doncaster last month.

Issues discussed included how the imposition of Driver-

Only Operation on trains affected pensioners and people with disabilities and the government's total disregard for the 2010 Equality Act.

The future of social care was a major issue which needed to

be integrated with our NHS and paid for through general taxation. Conference was pleased from the address by Mathew Morris from RMT young members under the banner Uniting the Generations

which led to discussion. Delegates agreed that that our movement must not be trapped into the "generation blame game" but rather build unity between the generations as the way forward. ■





WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON?

This RMT News should reach you shortly before you head to the ballot box to decide just what type of society you want to live in.

Your union has long supported Jeremy Corbyn and although I am writing this before the full Manifesto has been released, we do know some of his pledges that we will have the opportunity to vote for come 8 June:

- £10 an hour, minimum pay.
- £500bn investment in infrastructure and industry, creation of a million good quality jobs.
- A million new homes built over five years with at least half being council homes.
- Ending of zero hours contracts.
- Re-nationalised Rail & Mail and extend democratic social control over our energy.
- Free education for all.
- End privatisation and integrate the NHS and social care. £37bn more invested.
- Clean energy, fair transition to a low carbon economy.
- Progressive tax system for a more equal society, higher taxes for the 5% [earners over £80,000]. Corporation tax cuts to be reversed.
- Tackle all discrimination, violence against women and girls and secure real equality for LGBT and disabled people.
- Full rights for EU citizens living and working in Britain - not allow them to be used as pawns in Brexit negotiations.

- Conflict resolution and human rights at the heart of foreign policy.

We have long seen the right-wing media continue to attack Jeremy at every opportunity. Recently we had the bizarre situation where Laura Kuenssberg from the BBC was supposed to be reporting on the complete U-turn by the government after concerted Labour pressure regarding the increase to national insurance for self-employed workers.

What we witnessed was Ms Kuenssberg focussing on how JC didn't attack Teresa May enough and how he "should have landed more blows" so the fact that it was his challenge that created the about turn was no longer newsworthy and we are seeing similar reporting bias right across the media.

The great thing about live television is that it is much harder to spin what you are saying, Labour MP Emily Thornberry appeared on the Andrew Marr show recently alongside Tory MP Michael Fallon. She ended up telling the defence minister to stop making stuff up and that he was talking bollocks! Now that's my type of politics...tell the truth and say what you think.

Noam Chomsky, author of *Manufacturing Consent: The political economy of the mass media*, talked about the manipulation of the population through the media for many years. "Historically the media have proven highly efficient to mould public opinion. Thanks to the media, paraphernalia and propaganda have been created to destroy social movements"; he says it much better than I ever could.

Jeremy Corbyn may have a task of historic proportions against him but I believe he can win this election. If he continues to be bold about his policies and not tone them down, put the people at the centre of all he does not try to compromise with his enemies in the Parliamentary Labour Party and the media, on 9 June we really could wake up to a socialist living at number 10.

The most important thing is that we get rid of this "bloody working class-hating Tory government".

I recognise that in some areas [especially Scotland] it won't always be a straight fight between Labour and Conservative. But I don't really see that as a problem for us. Our current AGM political strategy states, one of the things we must consider regarding the supporting of candidates is "whether support for a candidate should make it more likely that there would be the election of another candidate whose election would clearly be more harmful to the interests of the union and its members".

Finally, I was wondering if the general public would really swallow the continuous "Strong and Stable" line that every Tory politician repeats on the hour every hour. Now I see that it's just a "strong stable" they want for their horses as they get ready to re-introduce fox hunting...party of the people - tally-ho!

"If we continue to keep our powder dry for much longer, we'll all be dead on the battlefield surrounded by barrels of dry powder" [Sean McGowan]

Yours in Solidarity
Sean Hoyle

RMT STANDS UP FOR ITS MEMBERS

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

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

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

FOR THE BEST LEGAL ASSISTANCE FOR RMT MEMBERS CALL FREE ON 0845 712 5495 (0800 328 1014 in Scotland). Lines open 8.00am-8.00pm Mon-Fri (except public holidays) and 9.00am-5.00pm Sat and Sun. For the 24 hour criminal law line call 0765 911 8181 (0800 328 1014 in Scotland)



PROTECTING AND PROMOTING OUR MEMBERS' INTERESTS



WORKERS' MEMORIAL DAY!



Thompsons solicitors launch £5,000 photographic competition to highlight vital protections which allow workers to return home safely

Campaigning law firm Thompsons has marked International Workers' Memorial Day 2017 on April 28 by launching a national photography competition to highlight and defend health and safety laws.

The "Focus on safety at work" competition – which comes with the chance to win a share of £5,000 and feature in an exhibition at the People's History Museum – challenges budding photographers to capture in an image why health and safety is so important in the workplace.

Participants will be asked to submit photos that illustrate why health and safety should not be considered a burden or "red tape", but an essential protection for all.

The competition launch coincides with International Worker's Memorial Day, a day which commemorates workers

who have lost their lives as a result of dangerous working conditions, and draws attention to harmful practices in workplaces across the world.

"Critics like to dismiss health and safety as 'red tape', but it's this so-called 'red tape' which is usually just planning and common sense that helps to make our workplaces safe and ensures that employees return home to their families at the end of the working day," said Tom Jones, head of policy at Thompsons solicitors.

"As accident at work specialists, whether it's the hazard of a trailing cable in an office, asbestos exposure in a store room or a truck reversing without thought, we see the impact on individuals and their families when health and safety slips off the agenda.

"Thompsons is launching this competition, and later, an exhibition, to show what health

and safety really means and how important it is day to day. We want budding photographers from across the UK to use their cameras and creativity to show why health and safety is not a burden, but something every worker deserves."

The competition will run until 28 June 28, after which a panel of judges will decide the winners. Entrants should seek to capture an image which explores one or more of the following themes:

- what 'health and safety' means to me;
- why I think 'health and safety' is important;
- why 'health and safety' is neither a burden, nor "red tape"
- why I think 'health and safety' should be protected.

Photographs should be submitted at

www.thompsons.law/focus.

The winners of the competition will be awarded a share of £5,000, and have their artwork displayed at an exhibition in the People's History Museum in Manchester. No participant should put themselves at risk of injury, prosecution or other detriment in pursuit of an entry. The full terms and conditions can be found at

www.thompsons.law/focus.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that it was the day to remember all those, known and unknown, friends and strangers, who have suffered injury or death in the workplace.

"Workplace deaths are preventable deaths.

"We must enshrine health and safety at work and ensure that employers recognise this too," he said.





EXPLORING THE REVOLUTION

The British Library hosts the *Russian Revolution: Hope, Tragedy, Myths* exhibition but does it tell the whole story?

The British Library, a stone's throw from RMT's London headquarters, has launched what it describes as a "definitive" exhibition taking a fresh look at the Russian Revolution 100 years on, from the reign of Russia's last Tsar to the death of Lenin in 1924.

Russian Revolution: Hope, Tragedy, Myths presents rarely seen items from across the political spectrum, from a 1848 first edition of the Communist Manifesto to anti-Bolshevik

propaganda alongside the tales of ordinary people living through extraordinary times.

Not surprisingly, as one of the country's largest research resources, it draws much of its material from printed matter including posters, letters, photographs and banners as well as recordings and film.

Some most absorbing items include a request from future Bolshevik leader Vladimir Lenin to join the British Museum Library as a reader in 1902 and

a letter from 1922 from Scotland Yard requesting that Bolshevik literature should not be made public by the library.

There are also an amazingly well-preserved Items of Red Army uniform and a banner gifted by young Bolsheviks to the Shipley Young Communist League.

The Red Bolshevik propaganda on display here is, of course, far superior and more striking and engaging than the White Tsarist material in

defence feudal obscurantism.

The exhibition begins with the last days of the Russian Empire and the downfall of the last Tsar Nicholas II, only reinforcing the ludicrously backward nature of the regime. White Army propaganda generally made few attempts to harness local support as they generally saw the peasantry as lower than vermin.

Conversely, much of the Red propaganda focuses heavily on the abolition of ignorance with

bold legends 'Down with illiteracy' and From Darkness to Light' revealing a forward-thinking mind-set.

This is where the parallels with the 1789 French revolution can be drawn, a thoroughly rotten feudal dictatorship is collapsing in the face of a determined foe armed with revolutionary zeal and a vision for a new world free from tyranny.

This social and political explosion also sparked a revolution in art, culture and design. The film extracts here alone reveal how this new media was successfully harnessed by the Bolsheviks to expose the cruel and corrupt nature of the old regime and the possibilities of a world without venal capitalists.

That said there is little here actually about the October revolution itself and the impact it had worldwide or, indeed, the massive military intervention that followed by Western imperialist powers. Winston Churchill's famous dictum that

Bolshevism must be "strangled in its cradle" is missing.

By 1918 nearly 100,000 combined US and Japanese troops had landed at Vladivostok in the east and French and British troops invaded from the west to back the anti-Bolshevik White forces in Russian civil war.

In 1919 socialists in Britain launched the Hands off Russia movement to oppose British intervention on the side of the White armies in the Russian Civil War.

Yet these events are not referred to at all in the entire exhibition except for a picture of Japanese Red Cross personnel which lead curator Katya Rogatchevskaia claims were there "to help everyone", which is doubtful to say the least.

Similarly while there is no reference to the 1916 Easter rising in Ireland, which exemplified the revolutionary zeitgeist and heavily influenced Lenin, there is an item on the far more idiosyncratic and less historically significant 'Limerick

Soviet' which lasted just days.

Ultimately students of labour movement and Soviet history will find this exhibition frustrating and a missed opportunity. The global influence of the Russian revolution on anti-imperialist and workers movements over the last 100 years is not dealt with here.

However there are continuous events, lectures and debates throughout the year that will allow the public to explore the many areas not covered by the exhibition.

Highlights include *The Storming of the Library* on June 23, an evening of performance, music, film and spectacle with designs by avant-garde artists drawing inspiration from Soviet film makers such as Eisenstein.

Design and the Russian Revolution on June 27 looks at the enduring influence of the Russian Revolution on design, architecture and fashion.

On July 21 and 25 there are two sessions that look at railways and the revolution

from the role of the Transsiberian to Lenin's fateful railway journey on a sealed train organised by Germany in a desperate bid to win the war.

This flawed exhibition is an interesting introduction to the 100th anniversary of an event that shook the world and its reverberations are still with us today.

Russian Revolution: Hope, Tragedy, Myths runs until Tuesday August 29 cost £13.50.



Red Army uniform - Budenovka cap
© Polish Army Museum

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TISA – A THREAT TO JOBS AND RIGHTS

A new campaign launched by the International Transport Workers' Federation reveals the threat to jobs and workers' rights posed by the Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA).

The ITF is seeking to enlist the power of trade unions to fight back against the deal, which has been negotiated in virtual secrecy by the European Union and 22 other countries.

It aims to prove the danger to rights, conditions and democracy posed by TiSA in order to provide the information needed to oppose it.

All the information will now be findable in one place: www.tisameanstrouble.org.

ITF president Paddy Crumlin said that TiSA would supercharge the most powerful companies in the transport industry, giving them preferential treatment.

“What’s missing from this equation is any value at all for workers and citizens.

“It creates serious barriers for any state wanting to invest in, manage and operate its

national infrastructure or – crucially – to defend decent work and decent terms and conditions across transport.

“It is our duty as trade unionists to build the knowledge and alliances needed to challenge the secrecy and lack of democracy involved, and develop realistic, worker-centred alternatives,” he said.

ITF general secretary Steve Cotton said that despite the wall of secrecy constructed around the TiSA talks, it was well known that the deal represented a threat to hard-won workers' rights and conditions.

“But what isn’t so well known is the way it directly threatens transport workers’ jobs. We aim to put that right.

“At the moment negotiations are suspended pending the scheduling of a new round of talks. That gives us a one off window of opportunity for a hard-hitting informational campaign to help challenge this unrepresentative and undemocratic deal.” he said.

What TiSA aims to do:

- enable the global reorganisation of capital through new technologies and digital platforms;
- support globally integrated logistics and supply chains;
- promote competition and contractualisation in providing services;
- remove barriers to cross-border services and offshoring;
- prohibit policies and strategies that support the domestic economy and jobs;
- remove employment-related obligations on foreign investors;
- ensure corporate élites have a right to enter and work in other TiSA countries;
- allow foreign firms to use foreign contract workers to deliver services in a TiSA country;
- enable employers to bypass collective agreements and de-unionise the workforce;
- require pro-business approaches to licensing, qualifications and technical standards, including those that directly affect labour; and
- weaken the standard-setting role of specialist international bodies, especially in transportation.

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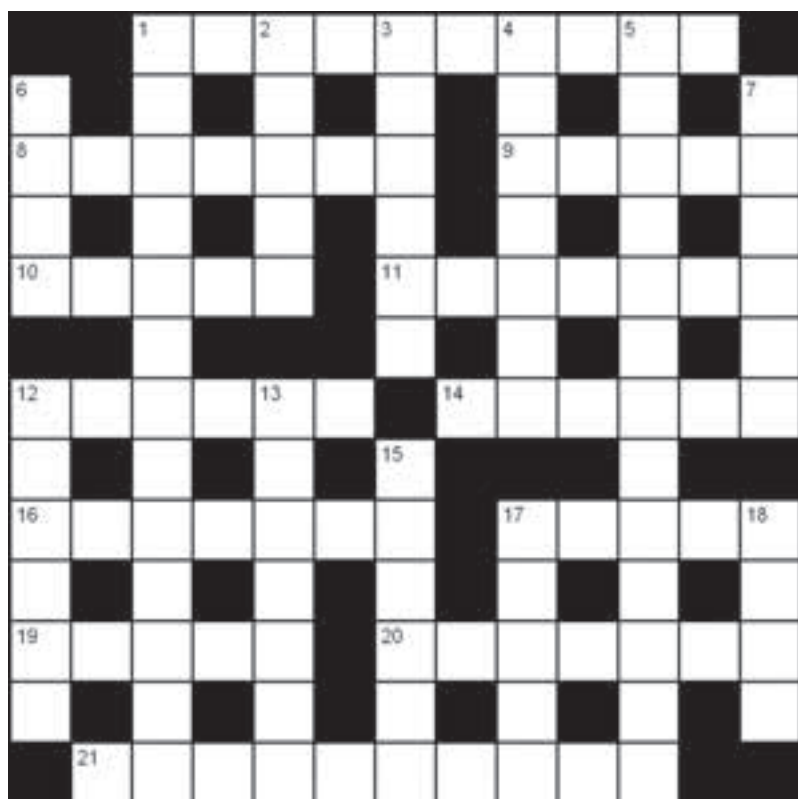
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Last month's solution...



The winner of last month's prize crossword Winner D Thompson, Dumfriesshire.

Send entries to Prize Crossword, RMT, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD by June 10 with your name and address.

Winner and solution in next issue.

ACROSS

- 1 Gaudiness (10)
- 8 Swing (7)
- 9 Small land mass (5)
- 10 Long hill (5)
- 11 Gemstone (7)
- 12 Pass by (6)
- 14 Turbulent (6)
- 16 Boating meet (7)
- 17 Assist (5)
- 19 Added (5)
- 20 Apprentice (7)
- 21 Indecisive (10)

DOWN

- 1 Female relative (13)
- 2 Pass a rope through (5)
- 3 Oblique (7)
- 4 Innocence (7)
- 5 Confidence (4,9)
- 6 Celebrity (4)
- 7 Indigestible (6)
- 12 Salaried person (6)
- 13 Locate (7)
- 15 Skin art (6)
- 17 Chaotic state (5)
- 18 Level (4)



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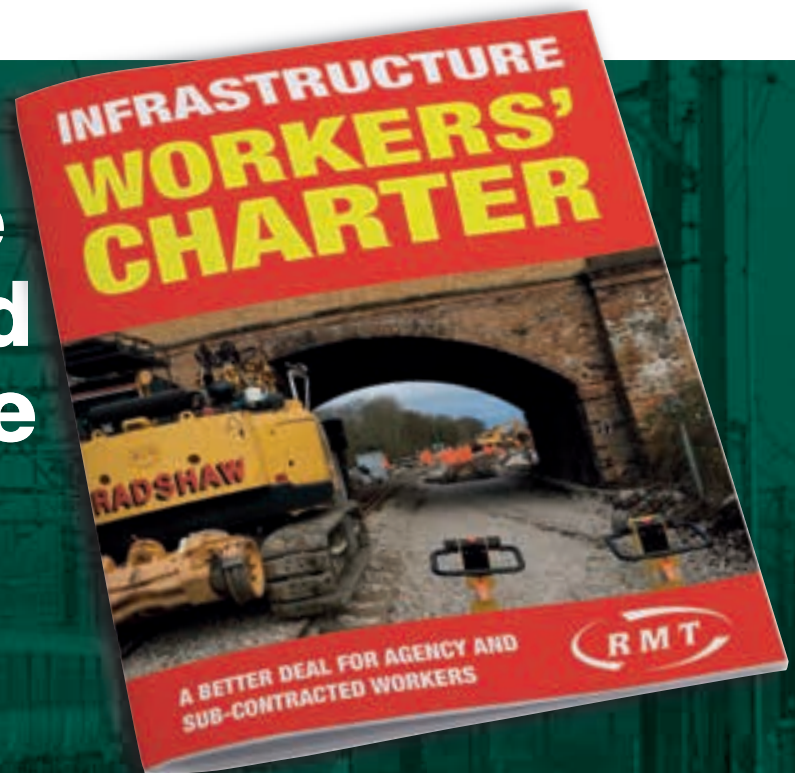
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