

RMT *news*

Essential reading for today's transport worker

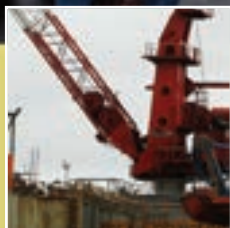
KEEP THE 'LEGENDS'



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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
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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

Branch Sort Code

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



KEEPING SAFE

Congratulations to RMT members taking action on Southern, Northern and Merseyrail to keep the guard on the train and ensure the safety of passengers.

You are all making a stand for safe and accessible rail for all in the face of a minority government and a gang of private train companies whose motivation is profit.

You are a credit the entire trade union movement and it's no surprise that the public is on side in the fight for safe, accessible rail services.

Visiting the picket lines at Brighton we noticed a large police presence along with security guards which was a clear attempt at intimidation.

These days it seems that the safest place to be is on an RMT picket line or around the United States president! I have written to Southern boss Peter Evans demanding that the company cease such tactics immediately.

Chinese state-run South Western Railway, which has described their guards as 'legends', and Dutch state-run Greater Anglia have also sparked ballots for action after refusing to give basic assurances over the future of the guard.

They clearly see the current disputes as an opportunity to cashing in as well by ripping up agreements and stripping out safety-critical staff in a similar manner.

But RMT has been joined in the fight for a safe railway by the Labour Party which has backed the union in the fight against driver-only operation. In this magazine you can read shadow secretary of state Andy McDonald attacking the government for encouraging DOO and the de-staffing of our railways. His wise words should be heeded by all Labour politicians.

The union is also deeply concerned about the elimination of ticket offices across London Overground. Experience shows that, despite promises to the

contrary, the closure of ticket offices leads to the wholesale de-staffing of stations with serious consequences for safety and security.

The terrorist incident at Parsons Green is just one more example that tube staff are the first on the scene in emergency situations and the clear need for safety and security to remain the number one priority and for the resources and staffing to be in place to deal with all eventualities.

Cuts are also behind Network Rail's funding crisis, its plans for 'third party investors' and the feast and famine approach to investment which will all lead to job losses, increasing casualisation and a decline in safety.

Seafarer members were out in force this month on Merchant Navy Day to celebrate our history and call for a new generation of ratings to be trained up if we are not to lose UK ratings altogether by 2020.

The union is also calling for an end to social dumping in the offshore energy sector which is leading to a 'race to the bottom' in terms of wages and jobs.

RMT has called on employers to pay UK rates of pay and give thousands of skilled redundant UK workers a chance to work in the offshore sector.

The union is also campaigning for a reduction in the hours that bus drivers can be forced to work and for an increase in rest breaks by putting pressure on employers and politicians.

Finally, as the 30th anniversary of the Kings Cross approaches, RMT has backed the Fire Brigades Union call for the inquiry into the Grenfell Tower and the government to listen to fire-fighters and the victims.

This union is acutely aware of the need for trade union involvement to ensure disasters like this do not happen again.

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

SOLID GUARD STRIKE ACTION

RMT strike action at Southern, Northern and Merseyrail 'solid as a rock'

RMT members remained solid and determined during strike action in three separate disputes over rail safety earlier this month.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that support was absolutely solid in all areas as RMT members continued the fight to put safety and access before private profit on Southern, Northern and Merseyrail.

"It's now time for Chris Grayling and this minority government to stop the great British rail rip-off, end the wholesale destruction of our rail safety culture and force his

private contractors back to the negotiating table.

"Support from our members in all three disputes over public safety on our railways is absolutely solid as a rock.

"These strikes are about putting passenger safety before private profit and those that seek to undermine the safety culture on our railways in order to fill their own pockets should be called to account and forced back to the negotiating table."

"RMT members are making a stand for safe and accessible rail for all in the face of a minority government and a gang of private train companies whose



NORTHERN: York



SOUTHERN: Barnham



SOUTHERN: Brighton



NORTHERN: Newcastle



NORTHERN: Leeds

motivation is profit.

"RMT members on strike across the country are a credit to their local communities and the entire trade union movement and it's no surprise that the public have decided they are on the side of those fighting for safe, accessible rail services," he said.

The union also attacked an "unbelievably insensitive and hypocritical" terror alert message sent to Northern Rail Guards on the eve of current strike action.

The message sent by Northern Rail management to staff on the eve of strike action said: "Following recent terror attacks, which we have witnessed in the UK and across Europe, it is a timely reminder that the safety and security of our customers and colleagues remains the responsibility of us all".

During rock-solid Merseyrail strike action over safety-critical guards RMT also repeated a question to Labour politicians "Which side are you on?"

"Politicians on Merseyside have no mandate for driver-only trains. They need to make a clear decision, are they on the side of safety-critical guards and the travelling public or on the side of the rip-off private rail companies?"

"RMT welcomes the fantastic and broad support we have had from Labour MPs from all wings of the party in Merseyside and constituency parties who are on the side of Labour Party policy to oppose driver-only trains.

"But unfortunately some of the mayors transport advisers have clearly got a close relationship with Dutch state-owned Merseyrail who stand to make a fortune out of the sacking of guards," said Mick Cash.

Over 14,000 members of the public to date have signed up to a petition begun by a young female passenger who has praised a guard who came to her assistance to protect her from a predatory passenger (Details of the case and the petition overleaf).



NORTHERN: Wigan



SOUTHERN



MERSEYRAIL: Liverpool



NORTHERN: Barrow-in-Furness



SOLIDARITY: John Woodcock Labour MP for Barrow and Furness joins the RMT Arriva Northern Conductors and Drivers Picket Line outside Barrow Station

KEEP THE GUARD PETITION



Huge numbers of the public to date have signed up to a petition begun by a young female passenger who has praised a Merseyrail guard who came to her assistance to protect her from a predatory passenger.

The petition by Ellie Ward on the 38 Degrees website outlined an incident while she was travelling on a Mersey rail

train to Ellesmere Port in which the guard protected her and other vulnerable passengers.

The guard noticed how a man had been following passengers down the train in a suspicious manner.

"If it wasn't for the guard being very vigilant and observing what was going on I wouldn't know what could have happened to myself or the other

lady, especially due to the past few days there has been a number of sexual assaults.

"My boyfriend was waiting for me just over the bridge who then took the other lady home so she was safe.

"This is why we need the train guards to protect those who maybe vulnerable on trains and to diffuse any situation that may happen.

"This is why We need to say NO to driver-only trains, I am very grateful to that guard and the way Merseyrail dealt with the situation.

"Why is saving money and cuts more important than people's safety?"

<https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/say-no-to-driver-only-trains-keep-the-guards>



STRIKE ACTION AT SOUTH WEST BUSES

RMT members on Stagecoach South West buses have voted overwhelmingly for action over a pay dispute.

Nearly 80 per cent voted for strike action whilst nearly 90 per cent voted for industrial action short of a strike.

Members are angry that the company has tabled a pay and

conditions package that doesn't even keep pace with the Retail Price Index and which would condemn a key group of transport staff who are already on low pay levels to a de facto pay cut.

The dispute involves over 750 bus drivers, cleaners and engineering grades at the Exeter, Torquay and Barnstaple garages.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that bus workers in the region provided an essential service across a wide geographical area and they deserved a fair deal on pay.

"At the moment they are being offered a package that stacks up to a de-facto pay cut and the union has agreed with local branches that that is entirely unacceptable.

"RMT negotiators have made every effort in talks to reach a negotiated settlement but the company have come up well short of what our members deserve for the hard work they put in day in and day out," he said.

The precise industrial action to be taken will be announced in due course.

ACTION AT GREATER ANGLIA OVER GUARD THREAT

RMT members on Greater Anglia have voted overwhelmingly for action over the extension of Driver Only Operation and the clear threat to passenger safety, following the company's continuing refusal to guarantee the role of the guard throughout the length of the franchise.

RMT balloted both drivers and guard members and over

200 Greater Anglia guards, on a whopping 90 per cent turn out, have voted by a massive nine to one for strike action. The drivers vote was two to one for action on a 75 per cent turnout.

Despite repeated efforts by RMT in both face-to-face meetings and correspondence Abellio has failed to provide union reps with the assurances they sort with respect to the role

and responsibilities of the guards for the length of the current Greater Anglia franchise.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that Greater Anglia had been given every opportunity to give a guarantee on the future role of the guard on their services.

"They have failed to do so and that left us with no alternative but to move to a

ballot in the interests of rail safety.

"Our members have now voted by massive majorities for action and it's now down to the company to wake up and seize the opportunity to give us the very simple assurances on the future of the guards and the guarantee of a second safety-critical member of staff on current services," he said. ■

NO DRIVER-ONLY TRAINS ON THE WALES AND BORDERS FRANCHISE



RMT has warned against introducing driver-only trains on the Wales and Borders franchise, as strike action takes place on rail companies in the rest of Britain.

Whilst there are not any proposals for the driver-only trains in the current franchise – which ends in October 2018 – RMT members leafleted stations urging passengers to lobby their Assembly Members and MPs to oppose any attempts to remove guards from the next Wales and Borders franchise.

The union has been supported by findings in the

Welsh government's own consultation with passengers on future of the franchise which said: "Over 90 per cent of respondents said a second member of staff was either quite important or essential in the Wales and Borders region and Metro ...health, safety and security were seen to be most important role of the second person".

The union has pointed to the conclusion of Wales Assembly Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee inquiry into the franchise published in June which says: "The committee

welcomes the talks that have taken place to try and head off the industrial disputes seen in other parts of the UK".

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said: "At the moment passengers on every Wales and Borders rail service are guaranteed the protection of a guard on every train to ensure their safety and security and the Welsh government's own survey.

"Strike action is taking place by RMT guards in other parts of the UK and the last thing we want is for these types of disputes to escalate to Wales.

Our members are leafleting

passengers today to ask them to lobby their Assembly Members and MPs to oppose any attempts to remove guards from the next franchise.

"Not only do passengers want to keep their guards, it would be also be a scandal if the shortlisted bidders for the Wales and Border Franchise – who are all owned by foreign states – were allowed to cut decent, skilled, safety critical jobs from Wales and use the profits to support their own railways in China, France, Germany and Holland," he said.



CLEANERS BALLOT AT SOUTHERN AND SOUTHEASTERN

Balloting is underway for action in two separate disputes over pay and working conditions on Southern/GTR and Southeastern as the union steps up the fight for workplace justice for cleaners on Britain's railways.

The two disputes are with Wettons, who hold the cleaning contract on Southeastern and

Churchills, who hold the cleaning contract on GTR which incorporates Southern, Thameslink and Great Northern.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that rail companies that are making a fortune out of Britain's privatised railways think nothing of treating their cleaning staff like dirt.

"It is disgusting and the

travelling public will know full well just what an essential service the cleaning team plays on both the GTR and Southeastern routes.

"These two separate disputes have a common thread and that is the attempt to lock in low pay levels for cleaners and the continuing refusal to upgrade working conditions to a

humane and acceptable level.

"RMT will not allow Southern/GTR and Southeastern to wash their hands of these disputes and the issues at their core. They let these contracts to Churchills and Wettons and they have the power to demand that they treat their workforce with dignity and respect," he said.



KEEP THE 'LEGENDS'

South Western Railway sparks ballot for action after refusing to give basic assurances over guards

The failure by South Western Railway franchise holder First MTR to give clear assurances over the future of guards has triggered a ballot now underway on South Western Railway and Island Line.

RMT will be balloting for industrial action in the form of ban on overtime and a rest day working ban. Guards and driver members on South Western Railway and Island Line will be included in the ballot.

RMT has spent months since First MTR won the SWR franchise from Stagecoach trying to get a water-tight

pledge out of the new owners on guards but it has been met with a barrage of spin and prevarication. A final attempt to pin the company down to a straight answer to a straight question has failed leaving RMT with no choice but to take the issue into dispute.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the union had given repeated opportunities for First MTR to give assurances over the future role of the guards on their trains throughout the length of the new South Western franchise.

"They have refused to give us



those guarantees and it is that failure which leaves RMT with no option but to declare a dispute with the company and to move towards a ballot for action.

"This dispute can be easily resolved if the company was prepared to stick to existing agreements, give staff and passengers alike a guarantee of a second, safety-critical member of staff on all current services and an assurance that safety and access are the absolute priority.

"Guards on SWR have been hailed as "legends" in company publicity material and it is time for First MTR to stand by those legends and to withdraw the threat to throw them off the trains," he said.

The union is urging members to not waste their chance to vote as the new anti-union laws threaten its ability to defend members in the absence of a high turnout of members in the voting period.

Under new anti-union laws they have to meet minimum thresholds and are required to have a minimum of at least 50 per cent of the number of individuals who are entitled to vote returning their voting papers.

Additionally a minimum of 40 per cent of individuals entitled to vote in the ballot have to answer 'yes' to both questions for any action to be lawful.

As a result members need to show their intentions clearly as failing to do so will allow the company to push through driver-only operation and will weaken the position of guards.

To guarantee a swift ballot, RMT membership checks are currently underway to ensure members' details are correct in preparation for the ballot for industrial action.

If a members job title, address or workplace has recently changed, then please contact the RMT Freephone Helpline number on 0800 376 3706, the RMT switchboard on 0207 387 4771 or e-mail info@rmt.org.uk.

Parliamentary column

LABOUR BACKS THE GUARD

The following are extracts from a speech made by shadow secretary of state Andy McDonald during the Parliamentary debate covering the Gibb report into Southern Rail and other disputes against driver-only operation.

"I do not recall the transport secretary doing anything but oppose every single piece of industrial action. It is wrong of him to attack the men and women who operate our railways while washing his hands entirely of the collapse in industrial relations.

"The handling of industrial relations in the case of Southern has been especially appalling, and relations are not helped by the antagonistic behaviour of GTR, the Department for Transport and Ministers.

"The transport secretary has repeatedly attempted to distance himself from industrial action, claiming that it was a matter for the company, despite the unusually close relationship between him, his officials and Govia Thameslink Railway.

"That has never been a credible claim and the Gibb report confirmed the suspicions that the transport secretary was deeply involved in the industrial dispute despite his claims otherwise. Gibb said that the Secretary of State is 'already determining the strategic direction of this dispute'.

"In similar disputes on the TransPennine Express and Scotrail agreements were reached that avoided further disruption. Where there is a willingness to talk on all sides as it is clear that agreements can be reached that benefit passengers? To put it simply, the Secretary of State's militant anti-worker, anti-trade union stance has significantly worsened industrial relations and had a devastating impact on passenger services.

"Labour, like the staff who understand and operate our rail network, the passenger groups who have been protesting and have been motivated to take legal action, and disability charities, simply do not agree with the assumption that destaffing and deskilling our railways is a positive step.

"Despite being first introduced more than 30 years ago, DOO is only in use on a third of the national rail network. In the past 15 years, passenger numbers on Southern have

increased by 64 per cent, from 116 million to 191 million a year. That enormous rise in numbers means that at the platform-train interface there are inevitably increased risks to passenger safety, as anyone who travels on Southern services can see

"Labour believes that passengers are more at risk if they no longer have the guarantee of a safety-critical member of staff on the train to prevent something from going wrong or assist when something does go wrong.

"Labour party policy is: it is to ensure that there is a second safety-critical trained member of staff on that train. It means that they have the appropriate training and are not outsourced or sold short on training, which is exactly what the government want to do.

"The changes proposed by the secretary of state would be retrograde for disabled passengers, whose independence would be wound back. Without a guaranteed second member of staff on board, the ability of passengers with accessibility requirements to turn up and go is severely restricted, requiring passengers to make arrangements 24 hours in advance. Southern passengers have been left stranded on station platforms because, as there is no on-board supervisor on DOO services, there was no one to assist them so that they could get on the train.

"There is no need for the government to prolong the suffering of passengers any longer—this industrial dispute is but one part of an unedifying scene—as basic managerial inefficiency characterises this woeful service.

"It is within the secretary of state's power to end the industrial dispute tomorrow. He can do it by calling off his plans to expand driver-only operation and by guaranteeing a second safety-critical crew member on every train.

The privatised, franchised railway system, which allows all comers, including state-owned rail companies from across the globe—with the bizarre exception of the UK itself—to extract profits from passengers and taxpayers alike has had its day. The government should do the right thing and bring our railways back under public control and ownership. If they don't, a Labour government will."

END SOCIAL DUMPING

RMT calls for an end to the 'race to the bottom' in the offshore energy sector



RMT has called on employers to pay UK rates of pay and give thousands of redundant UK workers a chance to work.

Instead of employing local workers North Sea operators have complained to government ministers that they are facing another skill shortage due to not being able to bring in even more foreign workers.

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Scotland Lord Duncan of Springbank heard the message from companies in Aberdeen at a recent meeting about "unleashing the full potential of remaining North Sea reserves".

The life peer, who was a researcher with oil giant BP, said that there were concerns about "the quality of employees from outside the UK and being able to maintain and secure the skill base on an open basis"

following Brexit.

Oil and Gas UK member company Canadian Natural Resources exploits Malaysian and Philippines workers during the deconstruction of its Murchison platform in the UK sector of the North Sea paying workers \$45 US a day.

BP Exploits workers from the EU and Asia on the deconstruction of its Miller platform in the UK sector of the North Sea using the Saipem operated barge "Saipem 7000". They pay less than the UK minimum wage and apply safety training standards below the UK minimum.

Shell exploited Asian workers during the lifting operations for their Brent Delta platform decommissioning in the UK sector of the North Sea using the AllSeas operated vessel "Pioneering Spirit" and

paying less than half the UK minimum wage to crew members.

Maersk Oil sold the former UK sector floating production vessel "North Sea Producer" which was then subsequently dumped on a beach in Chittagong, Bangladesh where exploited workers including young children will be used to destruct the vessel.

All the major OGUK companies continue to exploit foreign nationals working on the vast majority of offshore supply vessels operating in the UK sector of the North Sea where most seafarers are paid less than £4 per-hour and are working excessive hours. Very few supply vessel operators sail under a UK flag or pay rates which enable workers to live in the UK.

They also continue to

contract work out to foreign-based agencies that undercut long established standards for pay and conditions in the UK sector.

Repsol-Sinopec also recently contracted all diving work to the Dutch agency Boskalis who refuse to pay UK rates and exploit foreign nationals.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that it was an intolerable situation whereby employers depend on cheap foreign to make profits, a practice that is no more than modern-day slavery.

"The offshore and shipping sector is plagued by this kind of social dumping and to watch employers pleading government for more of the same is obscene," he said.



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*To be entered into the prize draw you must successfully apply for an RMT Prepaid Plus Cashback card or be an RMT Prepaid Plus cardholder before 31st December 2017 (no cash alternative). The £250 prize will be loaded onto your RMT Prepaid Plus Cashback card. Full prize draw rules at www.RMTprepaid.com/win. *Range of retail partners and cashback rates are subject to change. Some retailer exclusions apply. *The first payment is charged within 30 days of successful application.

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BUSES – HOURS AND REST BREAKS

RMT News reports on the campaign for a reduction in hours that drivers can be forced to work - and for an increase in rest breaks

While different standards normally apply elsewhere in the EU, under UK working time rules, most bus drivers are only entitled to a break every five and a half hours.

Unsurprisingly, the productive hours (ie revenue produced by the workforce), which transport companies extract from labour has in the last couple of years reached a record high - around 15 per cent more than in the mid-1990s.

THINK! CAMPAIGN

Lengthy periods of driving increases the risk of accidents occurring and injuries being sustained by passengers, pedestrians and other road users. The UK government's road safety campaign "THINK!" highlights results of research and provides guidance. The campaign suggests that every two hours, motorists should take a 15 minute break from driving. That is sensible advice based on rigorous, scientifically-conducted analysis of driving performance and the occurrence of near-misses/ accidents.

SEDENTARY WORKING – HEALTH AND SAFETY CONCERN

Prolonged sedentary working (eg sitting at length while driving a bus) leads to a significant increase in the risk of heart disease, diabetes, obesity, certain cancers, depression and muscle and joint problems.

The Chief Medical Officer has declared that the amount of time which an individual spends

sitting, should be minimised. Further, that seat-based work should be regularly broken up with active-movement breaks (for a minimum of two minutes, at least three times per hour).

Last year RMT wrote to all bus companies with whom it has representation rights, highlighting the health implications for our driver members of prolonged sedentary working (ie sitting at the wheel without sufficient opportunity to intermittently stand/ walk about).

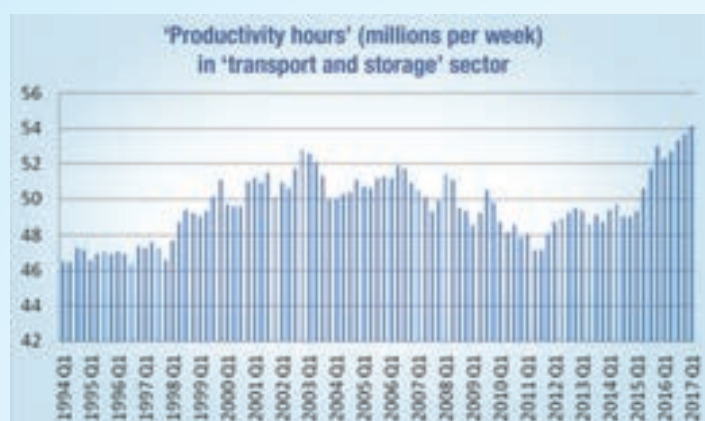
RMT received the following response from Stagecoach suggesting that there were significant numbers of drivers who wanted to work overtime and that this was, in the company's view, suggestive that our members are happy with their working conditions:

"Generally, we would always seek to restrict the number of hard wired scheduling parameters to the legal requirements in order to retain the maximum flexibility both to achieve efficient duty schedules and good working arrangements for staff.

Inefficiency simply increases labour cost which then constrains rates of pay. Every scheduling constraint has a cost.

Producing duties which are unpalatable to staff increases absence levels and turnover which impact on service reliability and cost.

It is clearly in everyone's interest to work toward producing efficient, attractive



duties.

Experience has shown us that one driver's "bad" duty can be another driver's "good" duty and, therefore, rostering has a significant part to play in delivering efficiency and contented staff by packaging duties into rotas staffed by volunteers.

Beyond that, if we insert a hard constraint to, say prohibit duty pieces in excess of 4.5 hours, this will have knock on effects in other ways changing the characteristics of other duties. For example, where there is a restriction on driving time to 4.5 hours, we are more likely to see a greater number of 3 part duties which are, themselves, often unpopular.

Many sets of schedules will have 98% ok duties and 2% not so ok. Hardwiring the conditions which make that 2% unattractive could produce an overall poorer mix of duties.

We have always been open to discussing schedules with staff representatives and have, for

example, conducted a number of exercises at depots across the UK to eliminate duty pieces over 5 hours. To date, every time we have done so the local staff have opted to leave things alone as the knock on effects of the constraint produce an overall worse set of duties.

Rather than insert additional arbitrary constraints, we would encourage dialogue locally between representatives and local management to work together to produce the optimum set of duties and rostering arrangements which deliver efficiency and staff satisfaction based on the particular preferences of the staff at each location.

It is easy to point to one or two duties with unattractive features but often they drive attractive features across the rest of the rota."

RMT received no written response from any other company. Although no other companies replied, our letter has formally placed companies on

notice of the health issue. Specifically, it will be harder for them to subsequently claim ignorance of the consequences of their inaction.

The union recently placed the following resolution before the ITF Road Sector Conference in Brussels raising health issues, and arrangements for shift working and coordination of union activity:

"Conference notes that being sedentary (such as sitting driving a bus) for prolonged periods has negative health implications, specifically prolonged sedentary work leads to a significant increase in the risk of heart disease, diabetes, obesity, certain cancers, depression and muscle and joint problems.

Conference further notes that there is a significant amount of scientific research which now exists to substantiate these concerns.

Conference is deeply concerned that current arrangements for organising bus drivers' shifts and rotating duties are inadequate and that ITF affiliates must now coordinate our efforts to facilitate our members benefiting from vital physical activity.

Conference therefore calls on the ITF, as an initial step, to encourage and coordinate the sharing of information amongst affiliates to establish best practice in regards to the hours and breaks of bus drivers, and other road transport workers."

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

THE BUS SERVICES ACT

RMT also took the opportunity of the passage of the government's Bus Services Bill through Parliament to mobilise friendly MPs to highlight problems which bus workers face, including in relation to hours/ breaks.

The union drafted a new paragraph to be inserted into the draft Bus Services Bill. This clause was designed to introduce new maximum driving hours and more generous breaks for drivers. We discussed the issue with the



Photography: William Spencer

Labour Party's then Shadow Bus Minister Daniel Zeichner (MP for Cambridge) who was co-ordinating opposition to the bill. RMT achieved his support for raising concerns and seeking to amend the bill.

Although the clause did not make it into the Bus Services Act, the issues has been pushed up the political agenda.

LOBBYING

RMT Parliamentary Group convenor Ian Mearns MP and the union met with Andrew Jones MP, the minister at the Department for Transport with responsibility for buses. We set out for him concerns about rest breaks for drivers. The government acknowledged the importance of the issue but declined to introduce any legislative/ regulatory changes on the basis that to do so would impose an unreasonable burden on industry. Following the meeting, Andrew Jones replied in writing as follows:

"The drivers' hours rules (both domestic and EU) are in place to protect road safety, by limiting the time drivers spend at the wheel, which in turn help

reduce the risk of drivers being involved in fatigue-related accidents. They are also in place to ensure there is fair competition across the industry and to improve the working conditions of drivers. The majority of bus drivers fall under the GB domestic driver hours. These rules limit daily driving to 10 hours. Drivers must also take a break of at least 30 minutes after 5.5 hours' continuous driving and for each 24 hour period, drivers must take a rest of at least 10 hours. The domestic rules are vital in ensuring the safety of drivers and others on the road, but any further restrictions risk imposing unreasonable burdens on industry. That is why the government decided in 2010, following an extensive review, not to make any changes to the existing domestic drivers' hours' legislation."

The matter was discussed at RMT's bus workers consultative committee. The consensus view of the delegates present representing Stagecoach, First and Go-Ahead was that the matter would be best pursued through negotiations and

dialogue on terms and conditions and scheduling on the contracts in which the union is recognised.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The issue of hours and breaks remains a high priority and RMT will be working with branches to explore how best to pressure employers to review existing arrangements.

The forthcoming departure of the UK from membership of the EU presents challenges, such as preference of the current government for diluting existing regulations, as well as opportunities including the ability of UK to deviate from the minimal protections set out under EU law.

The new reality of a minority Tory government and the finely balanced composition of the House of Commons may also present fresh opportunities to initiate and progress new legislation not supported by the government. Accordingly, when Parliament reconvenes, RMT will again be lobbying politicians for a change to the law. ■



SEAFARER CAREERS – GOING NOWHERE WITHOUT NEW RATINGS

Union welcomes report recommending significant increase in public funding and training of ratings

RMT officials, along with trade union colleagues and industry representatives, recently attended an event organised by Nautilus and the Merchant Navy Training Board to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Slater Fund.

The Slater Fund, set up in 1977, has donated over £5.5million to help thousands of ratings meet the costs associated with qualifying as a merchant navy officer. Administered by the Marine Society and Nautilus, it offers bursaries of up to £20,000 for deck or engine ratings seeking to move up the career ladder.

RMT assistant national secretary Mark Carden put RMT's main points across

particularly that the declining number and advanced age of UK ratings at sea now meant that the Slater Fund itself will be threatened due to a lack of new ratings in the shipping industry.

RMT CalMac rep Dan Henderson also highlighted the need for reform of the Slater Fund, particularly the need to make it easier for all ratings, especially catering and On Board Services (OBS) to access this support.

The government-commissioned Seafarer Projections report, published at the beginning of the year, forecast a 20 per cent growth in demand for ratings and UK seafarers must be trained up,

ready to fill more of these jobs.

Ratings training, in deck, engine, catering, OBS and retail will be crucial in avoiding a maritime skills shortage, something which RMT has been saying to government and shipping companies for years. The relatively new emphasis and creation of rating apprenticeships in the last few years have given the union, government and industry something to aim for.

The event benefitted from contributions from the current cohort of rating apprentices at RFA, DFDS and P&O, some of whom gave some helpful personal accounts of the apprenticeship process and why they took the decision to train

as a rating.

Nevertheless, the event also highlighted research commissioned by the Slater Fund trustees, including a forecast fall in the number of UK deck and engine ratings of 16 per cent (about 550) in the next decade.

This is further evidence of the chronic need for investment in the next generation of UK ratings, not only for the Slater Fund to continue its positive work but for the country to avoid a shortage of seafarers by the end of the decade.

RMT officials used the day to remind all present across government and industry of the aims of the SOS2020 campaign to reverse the fall in UK ratings

SEAFARERS

2020



New ratings: Two recently-qualified RFA ratings apprentices joined the ratings seminar as well as Ian Parkin CPO, Ian Boyle RMT/RFA convenor, Mark Carden ANS, Russel Downs, Nautilus convenor.

through addressing pay discrimination and enforcement issues and compelling employers to take up Ratings training opportunities.

SMART REPORT

A few days after the event, the government-commissioned report into the Support for Maritime Training (SMarT) fund was published, recommending that the public funding and training of ratings is increased significantly, including on Tonnage Tax qualifying vessels.

RMT cautiously welcomed the recommendations on the future of the SMarT scheme, the main source of public sector funding for merchant seafarer training.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that whilst the SMarT scheme mainly benefits officer cadet trainees, RMT was pleased

that the consultants' report to the shipping minister recommended increasing the fund in order to develop and increase the number of officers and ratings in the UK merchant navy.

"It is vital that the number of UK ratings trained through SMarT increases and that the shipping industry uses the full allocation of public money for this purpose.

"We urge the government to accept the review's recommendations, particularly on developing a system of training UK ratings that is publicly funded and fit for the purpose of dramatically increasing the number of qualified ratings.

"RMT stand ready to work with government and industry to achieve this but we must be

quick, in order to avoid irreparable damage to our maritime skills base which would have intolerable strategic, as well as economic consequences for the UK," he said.

RMT national secretary Steve Todd said that the report once again confirmed the importance of political will in saving the UK ratings workforce, seafarer communities and the national economy from disaster.

"It makes all the right noises on ensuring that the extremely modest stream of funding for ratings through SMarT 3 and 5 not only continues but is increased as part of an effective overall strategy for training and employing the next generation of UK deck, engine, catering and hospitality ratings.

"It even acknowledges the importance of retaining ratings

in deep sea roles to the national maritime skills base.

"This is another step in the right direction but the ball remains firmly in the government's court.

"We trust that the Shipping Minister, who has been supportive to date, will use this report to recruit and train more British seafarers, officers and ratings, in the numbers we need," he said.

Quite simply, the industry is running out of excuses for not training the next generation of UK ratings and the union is turning the screw on the profiteers who hold our seafarers, economy and society to ransom. RMT will keep up the fight until there is a level playing field for UK ratings.



NO CUTS, NO PRIVATISATION

Network Rail market 'reforms' threaten jobs, safety and a less efficient rail industry

Network Rail's funding crisis, plans for 'third party investors' and its feast and famine approach to investment in the industry will have disastrous effects including job losses, increasing casualisation and a decline in safety, RMT has warned.

Even a senior rail industry figure warned MPs and Lords that NR's plan could cause serious damage to its supply chain, impact on passengers and lead to a less efficient rail industry.

Peter Loosley, policy director at trade body the Railway Industry Association (RIA) told the All-Party Parliamentary Rail Group that there was a shortfall of approximately £500 million in renewals work in Network Rail's current programme.

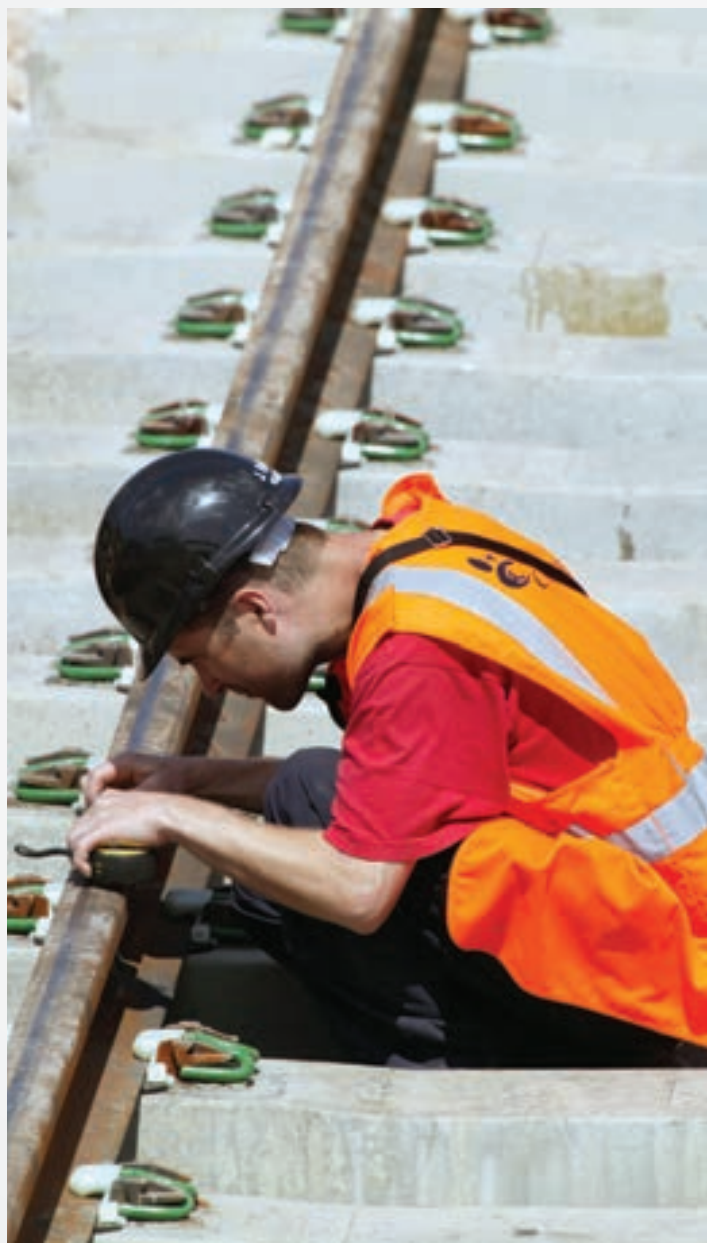
He warned that the hiatus in orders towards the end of Control Period 5 (CP5), which runs to March 2019, combined with a drop in work on future projects under the Governance for Railway Investment Projects (GRIP) process, poses a 'significant threat' to the rail network's supply chain.

The Independent newspaper revealed the contents of a letter written by senior Network Rail official Ben Brooks earlier this year in which he made a grim summary of the organisation's prospects up to 2019, the remainder of its 'control period 5'.

As a result Network Rail would see the cancellation of all remaining renewal schemes on the London North Western route, running from Euston Station through Cumbria to Scotland; all work on the Wessex route, taking in South West London, plus all work planned for 2019 in Wales.

There are also reduced renewal plans on the South East route, from London across Kent, Surrey and Sussex, and on the Western route from London Paddington to Bristol and Penzance.

The letter suggests that £139 million of spending has been deferred from planned work on the London North Eastern and East Midlands route, covering lines from the Scottish border to London King's Cross and from Sheffield to London St Pancras.



RIA members had reported falls in demand of between 20 per cent and 45 per cent in renewals work and 'little if any GRIP 1-3 development work coming through for CP6'.

Suppliers also reported reduced confidence to invest, exemplified by British Steel

reducing its rail finishing facility by around 40 per cent and reduced staff levels at many companies.

Mr Loosley argued that staffing levels would need to be increased when work becomes available again – raising the spectre of a more casualised

work force, producing a very inefficient way of working, compromising productivity and increasing costs.

He argued that the downturn could particularly impact on SME and specialist companies, who often have a forward workload visibility of only a few months.

"It is not impossible that some will not survive into CP6," he warned.

Suppliers also described activity around CP6 enhancement work as "worryingly low, suggesting that the downturn could possibly last into CP6, even if the CP6 settlement restores volumes to pre-downturn levels".

Mr Loosley said that the RIA was 'urgently lobbying' the Department for Transport and Treasury ministers and officials to see if £500 million could be advanced from CP6 to plug the gap.

In the longer term, the RIA wants to see a change in the way that Network Rail's work is planned, moving from five-year control periods, to a 'regularly reviewed rolling five-year programme that doesn't have specific starting and stopping points'.

The government's High Level Output Specification (HLOS) rail strategy published in July made no commitments to infrastructure enhancements (which is what the HLOS is usually for), but instead focussed on addressing the renewals backlog: "the changes achievable through the operations, maintenance and renewal of the existing railway" over CP5 (2019-2024)".

The HLOS claims that the government has accepted the ORR's advice that "there needs to be a significant increase in the volume of renewals undertaken in CP6, to reverse the impact of the deferrals that have taken place in CP5, meet the pressures of growing traffic and address the condition of long-lived assets. Using current unit rates, but with increased volumes, this would imply around £21bn of spend".

The Statement of Funds

Available to be produced next month is expected to reflect this position.

The background to the slim HLOS is the renewals crisis brought about by lack of funds being made available for the work coupled with the inefficiency of using contractors. It has been consistently shown that the efficiencies achieved by bringing maintenance back in-house would be replicated if renewals were returned.

RMT has been monitoring the cancellations of safety critical renewals work in CP5 and noted that this work was deemed necessary by Network Rail (and the ORR) for the safe running of Britain's railway network.

The renewals work will not be delivered due to the fact that the routes are claiming insufficient funds have been made available to deliver essential safety work. This raises many questions including the viability of the proposed fragmentation/devolution project for CP6.

The deferral or cancellation of critical renewals work will have an adverse impact on safety, the quality of services, employment levels, staff morale and the rail skills base. Even the RIA is warning of the "significant threat" the cut backs are creating.

The Office of Rail & Road (ORR) in its Network Rail Monitor notes that "£800



million worth of work has been deferred, which will have longer-term implications for network sustainability" and further that "in 2016-17, Network Rail underspent its net budget of £5,377 million by £499 million.

"However, work to the value of £992 million was not done and will be delivered at a later date.

"This includes £800 million of renewals work, £163 million of enhancements work and £29 million of schedule four compensation payments for track possessions," it said.

It makes clear that inefficiencies are arising from those areas of work which are dominated by private contractors and it warned that the renewals backlog will ultimately lead to delays and inefficiencies due to increasing volumes that need to be maintained when there were

planned to be renewed.

The document states that there will be higher maintenance costs due to "reactive maintenance which had been largely budgeted within renewals" and "increased levels of maintenance needed because of the delay in renewals projects".

A recent Network Rail report also encourages 'third party' investment in enhancements with a view to establishing 'best practice' for larger projects.

It advocates a market-driven approach to rail enhancements, and its publication coincided with the government's lack of specification of enhancements in the HLOS. In other words enhancements will be determined by how much in profit that the private sector can drain from them as opposed to the value they bring to the rail network.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the government and Network Rail had a duty to ensure that the rail network was maintained and renewed to the modern and safe standard that the public and the economy needs and deserve.

"The announcement of cutbacks affecting Carillion and other infrastructure companies are a sure sign of cash and job cuts that will put at risk skilled jobs and also the modern, safe rail infrastructure we desperately need.

"RMT will not stand by and watch these jobs vanish and will campaign all the way politically and industrially to protect them," he said.





MERCHANT NAVY DAY

Celebrating and ensuring a future for merchant seafarers

RMT joined the annual Merchant Navy Day celebrations this month by flying the Red Ensign from regional offices across the UK and from Maritime House in London.

In George Square Glasgow, RMT member Brian Reynolds laid a wreath on behalf of the union and its members for all Merchant Navy Seafarers who lost their lives at sea.

Sunderland also held a well-attended ceremony and RMT were represented by Royal Fleet Auxiliary CPO Ian Parkin and North East Shipping Branch chairman Larry Gaynor. Dover shipping attended a ceremony on the seafront and NEC member Lee Davidson laid a wreath on behalf of the union. The crew onboard MV Stena Europe supported MN day and Eire branch secretary Declan Roche posted a photo of the crew showing solidarity from the ship.

Comrades on P&O ferries in Hull also sent photographs of support from their ship in Holland. There were also two services for lost Merchant Seaman in London and Liverpool, assistant national secretary Mark Carden represented the union at Trinity Square Gardens where large crowds congregated.

National secretary Steve Todd and RMT regional organiser Ken Usher attended the Liverpool service and laid wreaths on behalf of the union and its members.

Two events in South Shields and Portsmouth also promoted positive steps to secure the future for UK seafarers in the merchant marine, with government-commissioned reports published earlier this year forecasting a 20 per cent increase in demand for UK seafarers and recommending increased and clearer funding streams for training the next

generation of UK Ratings.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that seafarers had played a crucial role in our country's often turbulent history and what they do today to underpin the national economy; and the importance of retaining maritime skills for the future.

"RMT applauds those who make the merchant marine work, from the passenger ferry, freight, cruise, offshore supply and container sectors, to the strategically important Royal Fleet Auxiliary.

"How we maintain and increase UK Rating numbers ahead of reform to the UK's international trading arrangements is fundamental to the future of the Merchant Navy and we will be taking to the streets to highlight the importance of merchant seafarers to the country's future," he said.

RMT national secretary Steve Todd said that on Merchant

Navy Day the union was seeking to raise public awareness over the role that merchant navy ratings play in our national fortunes, as well as remembering what their predecessors did to defend and maintain the national interest.

"In 2017, successive reports have set out the opportunities that exist for UK seafarers over the coming decade in terms of increasing the number of jobs and state funding for ratings training.

"Our seafarers, economy and society will only benefit from these opportunities if there is a level playing field, especially for young people, for merchant seafarer jobs.

"Otherwise, Merchant Navy Day risks becoming a celebration of our proud history rather than a positive statement of support for a future merchant marine," he said.

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THE REVOLUTION THAT SHOOK THE WORLD

Professor Mary Davis of the Marx Memorial Library tells the story of the Bolshevik revolution

The Bolshevik Revolution, which began 100 years ago next month, wasn't supposed to happen. In 1917 four-fifths of Russia's population were peasants and Russia was disastrously embroiled in World War One. Even after the revolution of February 1917, Bolsheviks were a small minority.

Yet, within eight months, everything changed. In ten days in October 1917 the world was shaken on its axis.

Despite 'White armies', supported by Britain and 13 other foreign invaders launching war in Russia causing 10.5

million deaths, the socialist revolution survived.

Two revolutions took place in 1917. The first, on February 23 (March 8 in our calendar), was led by women who had replaced men conscripted from factories and launched strikes and huge demonstrations in Petrograd and Moscow against government corruption and food rationing.

Tsar Nicholas abdicated. A bourgeois Provisional Government took office.

The Bolshevik leader Lenin and his wife Krupskaya returned from exile in April 1917, travelling through Germany on a sealed train before arriving at

Petrograd's Finland station.

Lenin's *April Theses* outlined the tasks for socialist revolution; withdrawal from the war, nationalisation of landed estates and banks and for production and distribution under control of workers' councils (Soviets).

The popularity of the Bolshevik programme, summarised by the slogan 'peace, bread and land' led to the second revolution in October 1917.

Russia's Provisional government supported participation in World War One despite its growing unpopularity. As Bolshevik

authority grew in Soviets and the army, they urged the overthrow of the Provisional government.

At this critical juncture Russian railworkers proved decisive, preventing a military coup by general Kornilov, Russia's commander-in-chief.

On August 27 1917 the Petrograd Soviet appealed to soldiers, telegraph operators, and railworkers to defend the revolution and refuse military orders.

The All-Russian Executive Committee of the Union of Railwaymen issued telegrams across the rail network,



demanding stoppages. Railworkers halted troop movements sending troop trains into sidings, abandoning signal boxes, blocking and dismantling tracks.

Russian railworkers' actions delayed Kornilov and allowed revolutionary soldiers to mobilise with new 'Red Guard' armed workers militias to defend Petrograd.

In late October 1917, a blank shot from the Russian Naval Cruiser 'Aurora' in Petrograd harbour, signalled the storming of the Winter Palace - the final offensive against the Provisional government.

Despite mythology, the October revolution was mostly peaceful. Posters across Petrograd declared: "the Provisional government is overthrown" and "Long live the revolution of workers, soldiers and peasants!"

The revolution established a new state - the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic - the first workers' state since the short-lived Paris Commune of 1871.

In its first act it adopted two laws: a Decree on Peace, for negotiations with Germany to withdraw Russia from World War One and a Decree on Land, transferring land from landowners and the church to peasant committees. The slogan

'Peace, Bread and Land' was made reality.

Opponents of the revolution massed against it. But Labour Movement organisations in many countries including Britain supported Soviet Russia, opposing government anti-Bolshevik policies. In Hungary and Germany, worker-led revolutions in 1919 established short-lived, socialist republics.

The 1917 October Revolution was the first time in human history that the majority classes of workers and peasants defeated a capitalist class and imperialist intervention, allowing the working class to take state power and build socialism.

Those who fear the power of the people systematically misrepresent Russia's revolution. That is why trade unionists should celebrate it, and learn from it.

The Russian Revolution Centenary Committee <http://www.1917.org.uk/> has organised an online exhibition and film festival, with an international one-day conference on Saturday November 4 at Congress House, 23-28 Great Russell St, Bloomsbury, London WC1B 3LS.

All trade unionists are welcome. Tickets £8/£10 here <http://www.1917.org.uk/> ■



SPARK

A FESTIVAL OF REVOLUTIONARY FILM

Of all the arts the most important for us is the cinema.' - Lenin

Spark - the Russian Revolution Centenary festival of revolutionary film - takes place at two of London's most renowned independent cinemas: the Phoenix (52 High Rd, East Finchley N2 9PJ www.phoenixcinema.co.uk/) and the Rio (107 Kingsland High St E8 2PB www.riocinema.org.uk/). The festival features classics of early Soviet cinema by Vsevolod Pudovkin, Sergei Eisenstein, Dziga Vertov and Esfir Shub. Warren Beatty's *Reds* will also be shown as a unique and daring Hollywood film about the Revolution, released at the height of the Cold War.

Tickets <http://www.1917.org.uk/spark-film-festival/>

Sunday 24 Sep

Mother (1926, Vsevolod Pudovkin, 85 mins) @ Phoenix Cinema
Sep 24 @ 1:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Sunday 1 Oct

The End of St Petersburg (1927, Vsevolod Pudovkin, 106 mins)
@ Rio Cinema
Oct 1 @ 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Sunday 8 Oct

Reds (1981, Warren Beatty, 195 mins) @ Phoenix Cinema
Oct 8 @ 4:00 pm – 6:30 pm

Sunday 15 Oct

Battleship Potemkin (1925, Sergei Eisenstein, 70 mins)
@ Rio Cinema
Oct 15 @ 2:00 pm – 3:15 pm

Sunday 22 Oct

October (1928, Sergei Eisenstein, 104 mins) @ Phoenix Cinema
Oct 22 @ 1:15 pm – 3:15 pm

Sunday 29 Oct

The Fall of the Romanov Dynasty (1927, Esfir Shub, 66 mins)
@ Rio Cinema
Oct 29 @ 2:00 pm – 3:15 pm

Sunday 5 Nov

Man With a Movie Camera (1929, Dziga Vertov, 68 mins)
@ Phoenix Cinema
Nov 5 @ 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

Sunday 12 Nov

Strike (1925, Sergei Eisenstein, 82 mins) @ Rio Cinema
Nov 12 @ 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm



WIMBLEDON BRANCH SAYS FAREWELL

Ray Davis of Wimbledon branch remembers Susan Elliott a longstanding member, activist and comrade

I first met Susan Elliott (August 10 1954-July 13 2017) in 1981. One of the earliest political campaigns she got involved in was the Anti-Apartheid movement.

In those years South Africa was ruled under a monstrous regime of hatred and vicious discrimination. This regime aroused the anger of people around the world. Huge demonstrations took place in many, many countries. In Britain there was the Anti-Apartheid Movement.

Susan was inspired by the courageous struggle of the South African people. It opened her eyes to many things that she hadn't been aware before.

Another event that had a

large impact on Susan was the miner's strike in 1984. Susan got involved in the Lambeth Miners support group. She, like so many others, was appalled at the brutal treatment of the miners. How the whole machinery of state was brought down on the heads of the miners and their communities. This experience helped to change the way she looked at the world.

In 1986 Susan started work on the railway where she worked for the next 30 years of her life. It was not an easy time to be a rail worker. There were constant attacks on conditions and hard won rights.

Susan was working a depot where the shifts started very,

very early in the morning or often finished in the early hours of morning. Every day you began your shift at a different time. These were among the most demanding shift work hours worked in the country.

This played havoc with your sleeping and eating patterns and could have serious effects on your health. On top of this there was bullying and intimidation

from the bosses. Unfair sackings, racial and sexual discrimination and bullying were everyday occurrence. Susan got involved in many of these fights and one of them sticks out in my memory.

This was the sacking of Sarah Friday a young woman train driver in my depot at Waterloo. Sarah was the safety rep. This brought her into conflict with





one particular boss. He was nothing but a bully.

He set a trap for Sarah and when she made a small mistake he had her instantly sacked. This caused a big uproar and there were many protests in support of Sarah.

Their anger was so great that they decided to march right into the station and stand right in the middle of the concourse right under the famous clock right in the middle of rush hour.

Just weeks ago Susan was on a picket line in support of the Southern Rail guards strike.

Susan was also involved in Solidarity with the Cuban revolution and people. She was an active member of the Cuba solidarity Campaign for 20 years or more.

In 2000 she went to Cuba and visited schools and hospitals and saw for herself what even a poor country can achieve including totally free health care and free education from nursery to university and free from the miseries of capitalism.

Two qualities that Susan had stand out for me, her loyalty to family, friends and workmates and her generosity there nothing more valuable.

Wimbledon branch would like to specially thank Chris Doran and Nottingham and Derbyshire Bus Branch for being present with their banner at the service in her home town that meant so much to her. ■

President's column



TUC GET OFF YOUR KNEES!

I'm writing this article whilst travelling back from the TUC conference and over the last week we have heard many disturbing stories.

The fact that in a poll of 3,287 workers recently carried out by TUC/GQR, one in eight workers say they are skipping meals to make ends meet, almost half say they are worried about meeting basic household expenses, such as food, transport and energy bills.

There are workers that will be leaving their heating off this winter and pawning their possessions, so they can send their children to school with clothes on their backs and food in their bellies.

This is wholly unacceptable in a country that is the fifth or sixth richest in the world.

Unsecured debt per household was £13,200 in 2016 and is expected to exceed £15,000 before the end of the next parliament.

So when we hear about austerity and the government paying off debt, it would appear the real story is the transferring of debt from the government to the people, again wholly unacceptable.

So why am I less than confident that the TUC is going to lead the fight back?

Well it wasn't that long ago Bob Crow seconded a motion moved by POA General Secretary Steve Gillian, calling for consideration of a general strike with Bob saying: "Every delegate at this conference represented workers who had been affected by government austerity measures; every single person here today is representing someone who is under attack by this rotten government", laying the ground for calling a series of co-ordinated disputes with employers across the UK for the first time since 1926. The result of this was zero!

Then we have our previous president Peter Pinkney moving an RMT motion at 2015 TUC for a Generalised Strike, which was carried unanimously. The result of this was zero!

Last year I moved a motion that was carried unanimously, calling for an urgent conference of affiliates to discuss how we collectively fight the new Anti-Trade Union Act. The result of this was also zero!

So I must say the TUC is at least consistent.

In July I had the privilege of attending the 133rd Durham Miners Gala on behalf of our union, I must admit it did feel strange not having the great Davey Hopper there as he sadly died just one week after last year's Gala.

Alan Cummings has taken over as secretary and is doing a fine job following in Davey's footsteps.

Marching with our members and fantastic band is always great and then hoping up to the County Hotel for the March Pass was a really proud experience for me, as was sharing the stage with the likes of Ken Loach and Jeremy Corbyn, which was made all the more special by the fact I had my wife Donna with me.

One week later I marched with the band at the Tolpuddle Martyrs Festival, a weekend festival to rival all others as the birthplace of the movement.

In 1834 six farm labourers from Tolpuddle were arrested on a charge of administering an illegal oath.

The real offence was forming a trade union to defend their livelihoods. They were sentenced to seven years' transportation to the penal colonies of Australia.

The news provoked an immense outcry, leading to the first great mass trade union protest.

The campaign won free pardons and the Martyrs returned home. It was an historic episode in the struggle for trade union rights in Britain and around the world.

The story has been marked ever since with rallies and festivals to celebrate the rights of working people and the values of solidarity. Hope to see many of you next year.

"It was once said that the moral test of government is how that government treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; and those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy and the disabled".

Hubert H Humphrey

In Solidarity, Sean Hoyle

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REMEMBERING GRENFELL

Union calls for trade unions and those involved to be part of the enquiry into the disaster

RMT took part in the Notting Hill Carnival last month and the minute's silence in memory of those who died in the Grenfell Tower fire.

At 3pm on the Monday's of carnival sound systems fell silent and the carnival procession paused to remember the victims of the devastating tower block fire.

Near the charred high-rise, firefighters removed their helmets and bowed their heads outside North Kensington fire station.

The moment was concluded with a spontaneous round of applause and cheers from the hundreds of thousands of revellers celebrating the bank holiday weekend.

RMT has backed the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) call for the inquiry team and the government to listen to firefighters when the public inquiry into the Grenfell Tower disaster gets underway.

There are concerns that the inquiry will only focus on what happened on the night of the fire and not about the wider safety regime and how such a devastating incident could even take place.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that with the 30th anniversary of the Kings Cross fire coming up in November RMT was acutely aware of the need for trade union involvement to ensure disasters like this did not happen again.

"We need a full enquiry involving the firefighters and victims at every stage, we all owe it to those who died and in order to prevent a second Grenfell.

"RMT has had to fight hard to retain the safety measures put in place following the Kings Cross fire following attempts to water them down.

"We now stand with the FBU to ensure lessons are learnt from Grenfell and we never have to witness such scenes ever again," he said. ■



At the heart of the Grenfell Tower community

Remember, Remember
The 11th November
Maxilla Hall, 2A Maxilla Walk W10 6SW
(under the Westway)

"without people you're nothing"

Joe Strummer
1952 - 2002

ABENEFT TO COMMEMORATE

JOE STRUMMER'S LAST LONDON GIG

Rotten Hill Gang **Tymon Dogg**

Take the 5th (Clash tribute)

The Lone Groover (with Anya B)
Joe - 48 Thrills - Williams

Comrade X **Steve White and Funky Lol Ross**

Chris Salewicz (Joe's biographer)

Matt Wrack (FBU general secretary)

DJ Ray - Rude Boy - Gange

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FBU **RMT**

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Bar £11.20, Pints £3.50, Shorts £3.20

Speakers from the Grenfell justice campaign

STEAMING TORNADO



CELEBRATIONS: A shot taken by Stephen Loeber of 60163 Tornado at Weeley on August 12 when she was working between Colchester Town and Walton to celebrate 150 years of Walton Pier and station.

RMT signaller Stephen Loeber tells the unique story of the *Tornado* steam train

The history of the Peppercorn A1 No.60163 *Tornado* is unique. The locomotive is a new-build that was started by the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust in 1994 and completed in 2008 when the engine rolled out of the Darlington Locomotive Works.

It was the first new locomotive built in the United Kingdom since 1960 when the 9F No. 92220 *Evening Star* was

constructed at the Great Western Locomotive Works at Swindon by British Railways.

The design of the engine comes from an original concept by Arthur H. Peppercorn the last Chief Mechanical Engineer of the London & North Eastern Railway (LNER) at Doncaster.

As the railways were nationalised in 1948, the three cyclo A1s built between 1948 to 1949 at Doncaster and

Darlington Locomotive Works were actually constructed by British Railways.

49 locomotives were built for the East Coast Main Line and were allotted to depots across the route from Edinburgh, Newcastle, Leeds and Grantham to Kings Cross for express passenger work. The A1s were suited for the post-war-time of poor maintenance, plus they could burn low grade

coal not like some of their other class mates i.e. the A4s. Sadly by the 1960s with the onset of dieselisation all of the 49 original A1s were scrapped.

An attempt was made to save one locomotive No. 60145 Saint Mungo, the last of the class, but she was taken out of operational service in June 1966 and scrapped in September of that year.

HELP PROTECT THEM WHEN YOU NO LONGER CAN

RMT
protect✓

The things we do for love! Cheering from the sidelines when they're 6-0 down; overlooking the messy bedroom while they're cramming for exams; Justin Bieber concerts; shaking hands with their first boyfriend through gritted teeth; the 'taxi' to swimming lessons twice a week; the packed lunches; and the after-school 'artwork' we pin on our fridge doors...

You look out for your loved ones everyday. Maybe we can help keep up the good work when you're gone.

RMT Life Cover steps in to shoulder some of your family's financial obligations when you no longer can.
How? By giving them a cash lump sum - up to £50,000 - to make up some of the shortfall when they no longer have your salary. It can help cover both the regular household outgoings as well as any other costs that are harder to foresee and, of course, funeral arrangements too.

The average cost of a funeral has more than doubled since 2000 and if the trend continues, it's predicted that costs could reach £6,107 by 2023*. By taking out just £20,000 of life cover, you'll help your nearest and dearest cover immediate expenses and more. With so much else to deal with at this difficult time, helping with the short-term finances for your partner or children can be just the first step towards getting their lives back on track.

It's not the only way life insurance can help them - our cover can also be a longer-term solution for any family who would struggle to pay bills, meet mortgage repayments, bring up the kids and keep meals on the table without your regular income.

It's about helping to keep things ticking over. It's about helping to take care of them, even when you're not around. It's about telling them you still love them.



Don't just take our word for it though. Amanda, 46, from Derbyshire explains why she purchased life insurance, "I have two boys and just worry about leaving them without anything and paying for my own funeral."

Deborah, 47, from Staffordshire agrees that family are extremely important, especially her husband, Paul. "I felt that I had a responsibility to put something in place for him should that day come".

Life insurance is for people like Amanda and Deborah. It's for people who want to enjoy peace of mind knowing their nearest and dearest are going to be ok financially when they're gone. It's for people who want to help their family and home hold together when everything else can feel like it's falling apart. It's for people who have been looking after their loved ones for years, and now want a way to help secure their future too.

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*Year 1 Cashback Terms and Conditions: 1. The cashback amount payable is 10% of the first 12 months' paid premiums. 2. The cashback will be due once the 12th paid premium has been successfully collected and the policy is fully paid up to date. 3. The cashback will be credited to the nominated bank account, from which the monthly premiums are collected. The cashback is paid by RMTProtect.

*Mintel: Funerals - UK January 2007 / Market Research August 2014 / Forecast based on average annual compound growth rate of 6.33% each year between 2007 and 2015.

† The gift card will be sent within 14 days after we receive your second premium. One £30 M&S gift card per customer. Offer ends 31st December 2017.

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BRIGHTON AND HOVE CITY BRANCH
SUPPORT
PAUL BURTON
FOR SOUTH EAST REGION NEC

EUSTON NO 1 BRANCH
NOMINATES
DERRICK MARR
FOR RMT NATIONAL EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE
LONDON AND ANGLIA SEAT

SOUTH EAST ESSEX BRANCH
NOMINATES
DERRICK MARR
FOR RMT NATIONAL EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE
LONDON AND ANGLIA SEAT

WALTHAM CROSS & DISTRICT
BRANCH
NOMINATES
DERRICK MARR
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COMMITTEE
LONDON AND ANGLIA SEAT

ST PANCAS BRANCH
NOMINATES
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COMMITTEE
LONDON AND ANGLIA SEAT

SOUTH LONDON RAIL
NOMINATES
IVOR RIDDELL
FOR THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE

WATFORD BRANCH
SUPPORTS
WAYNE MOORE
FOR REGION 10 EC MEMBER

MARCH & DISTRICT BRANCH
NOMINATE
WAYNE MOORE
FOR LONDON & ANGLIA REGION 10
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



JONES AWARD

Retired member Gordon Jones received a presentation globe on behalf of Central and North Mersey Branch for his 60 years of trade union activity in the union. Members are holding up copies of RMT News which recently reviewed Gordon's autobiography *A Life on the Railways*.

ORGANISING RAIL GOURMET WORKERS



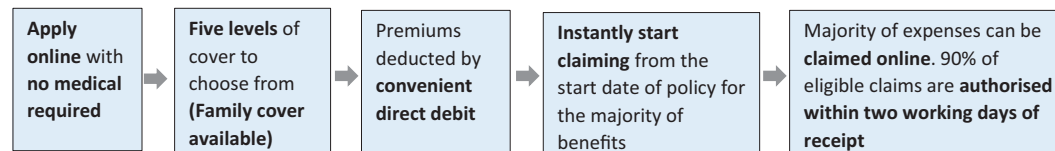
ORGANISING: RMT national executive member Kathy Mazur organising Rail Gourmet staff at London Euston station.

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*Based on personal bronze cover



KEEP THE GUARD

Dear editor,

Reports of sexual assaults on trains have almost doubled in five years. The BBC has reported that almost 1,500 sexual offences were reported to British Transport Police in 2016/17. It was revealed that during 2012/13 the figure was 650 according to a Freedom of Information Request by Radio 5 Live.

Detective chief inspector D Malpas said that a BTP campaign launched two years ago was likely to have prompted an increase in reporting crimes.

However, the real question that needs answering is how is culling guards from trains such as planned by Merseyrail going to prevent such offences? What happens when a passenger in distress for whatever reason, especially women and children, on a driver-only operated train eight coach train needs help?

Surely common sense should prevail and the people who made this decision should think again and support the guards in their quest to keep the travelling public safe on our rail system on Merseyside. It's not broken, why fix it?

Mark Dowd OBE

Former train driver and retired members section ASLEF
Former chair of Merseytravel 1992-2012

LABOUR AFFILIATION DEBATE

Dear editor,

I was a delegate for this year's RMT AGM the decision was made to open up a union wide debate on affiliation to Labour Party. This is an extremely important debate as the political landscape has changed in a way none of us could have predicted in the last couple of years.

As a union I believe we have to ensure our political structure is working to best reflect the rule book. I think we should be trying to use our political activity which best produces socialist government in parliament. I believe in the past using our influence and power to promote individual MPs who sign up to core RMT beliefs was the correct use of our political strategy. Since the election of Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell to leadership of the Labour Party who have over the years supported our campaigns, I believe it would be wrong to then support people standing against candidates for the Labour Party with Jeremy as leader.

It is true that Labour Party is not acting in a democratic manner and is denying membership to bonafide socialists including our own members. There are also elected members who do not observe and respect the decisions the party has made, they act on an individual right wing basis often undermining the democratically elected leadership. Historically both Labour Party and TUC has let us down time and time again often at times when we needed them most, last year's Southern dispute is a classic example of these betrayals.

This is not now a reason to abandon Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell this a time to support them. The Labour Party will not change its rules or policies to accommodate RMT like some members are demanding. The only way we can secure change in Labour Party is by getting in there using our collective power and influence to democratise the party and support a socialist manifesto.

I am afraid that supporting individual MPs is not going to achieve nationalisation of our industries or repealing of the anti-trade union laws. I am afraid supporting the Trade Union and Socialist Coalition will not help the electability of the Labour Party. In reality I believe the only way to achieve our political aim is to support the Labour Party through affiliation making stronger the commitment to socialist policies.

Ian Allen

NO LETTERS?

Dear Editor,

I was astounded to find no members letters page in RMT News. Yet our brother general secretary and our brother president have letters in every edition, how is this fair? So much for a member-led union!

Also, can consideration be given to improving the cross-word prize? I complete it nearly every edition but as an RMT member I wouldn't get out of bed for £50, maybe a weekend in Benidorm?

Yours,

Josie Starling, Essex

RETIRED MEMBERS MEET IN BRUM



Retired members held their quarterly meeting for the first time in the new Midlands regional office in Water Court, Birmingham.

The meeting allowed regional organiser Ken Usher time on their busy agenda to give a special welcome. He said that the property was available for

retired members on an equal basis as current members.

"Had it not been for the efforts, struggles and victories of our forefathers and sisters across all grades and sectors, then we may not be here and as strong as we are today," he said.

Their next meeting will be held on November 2 2017. ■



RMT general secretary Mick Cash presents Crewe branch secretary Paul Howes with a long service award.



AWARD: Assistant general secretary Mick Lynch presented retirement and long service awards to Neasden branch members (from left to right) Phil Brunt (37-membership retirement), Jim Scannell (25 years), Sue Simmons (10 year) and Mark Williams (25 year).

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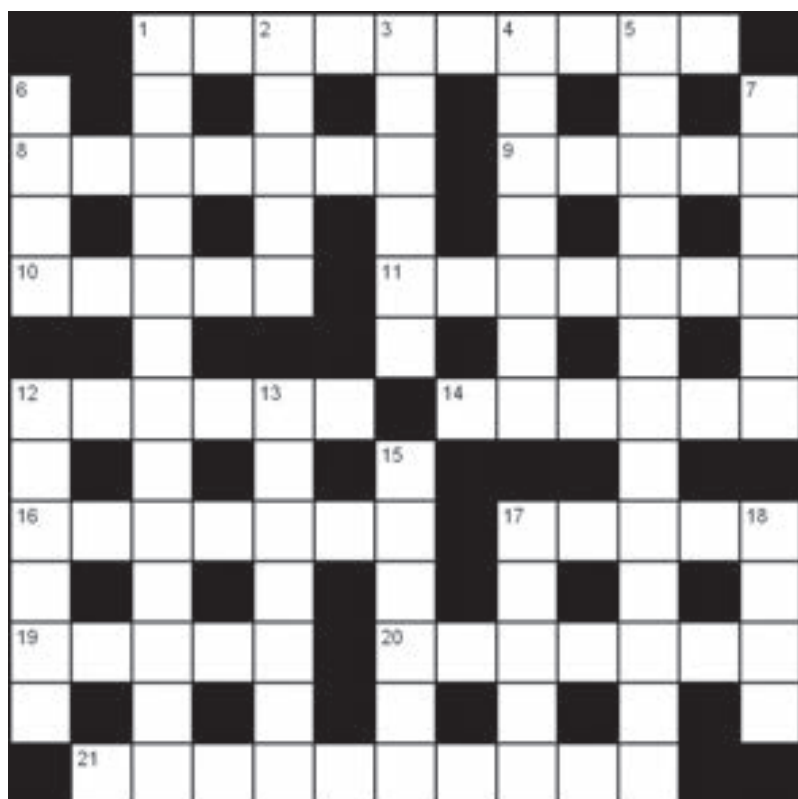
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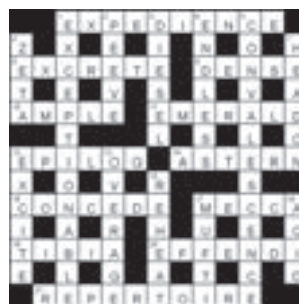
Cars shown for illustration only. Autosave, Trax Park, Doncaster, DN4 5PD

rmtdrive.org.uk

£50 PRIZE CROSSWORD



Last month's solution...



The winner of last month's prize crossword Winner A Nagy, Rainsborough.

Send entries to Prize Crossword, RMT, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD by October 13 with your name and address.

Winner and solution in next issue.

ACROSS

- 1 Self-appointed (4,6)
- 8 Accept as true (7)
- 9 Rummage (5)
- 10 Result (5)
- 11 Rearrangement of letters (7)
- 12 Written agreement (6)
- 14 Warm again (6)
- 16 Oared vessel (7)
- 17 Cheap (5)
- 19 Superpower (5)
- 20 Despotism (7)
- 21 Replicable (10)

DOWN

- 1 Selflessness (4,9)
- 2 Feudal lord (5)
- 3 Fluctuate (6)
- 4 Distance (7)
- 5 Fizziness (13)
- 6 French cleric (4)
- 7 Recluse (6)
- 12 Tempt (6)
- 13 Too old (7)
- 15 Group of six (6)
- 17 Pulsate (5)
- 18 Toy (2,2)



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Home phone			
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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 ☐

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Bank/Building Society account number

Branch Sort Code

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The minority Government must not be allowed to get away with this attack on our railways at a time when there is a growing demand for more investment and public ownership.



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