

RMT *news*

Essential reading for today's transport worker



FIGHTING FOR SAFETY



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www.rmt.org.uk

WORKING FOR YOU

RMT membership helps you at work and saves you money

RMT has developed a number of benefits to save members money. This includes negotiating access to savings and special offers from our approved partners.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

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

CAMPAIGNING

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

PERSONAL INJURIES

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

INDUSTRIAL DISEASES

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

EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNALS

Should a member find themselves unfairly dismissed, discriminated against or have any claim which has reasonable prospects of

success at an Employment Tribunal, RMT will provide legal representation and pay the fee. Even if the union is advised that the claim is unlikely to succeed, members who make a claim are eligible to receive free legal advice.

ACCIDENT BENEFIT

Payable if you have an accident at work or on the way to or from work. Accident benefit is only payable if you have been off for three days or more.

Accident must be reported to branch secretary within 26 weeks in order to qualify for accident benefit.

RETIREMENT BENEFIT

Payable to any member who retires over the age of 60 or aged 55 if retired through redundancy or resettlement. Ill health retirement is also payable; proof of this must be sent with application for retirement benefit.

TAX AND WILL PREPARATION

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

DEMOTION COMPENSATION

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

ORPHAN FUND

The beneficiaries of this fund would be any child of a

member or spouse if the member dies in service or if a members' spouse dies and the member has responsibility of the children.

Benefit is paid while a child is in full-time education up until the age of 22. Payment is made quarterly and the rate is £12.00 per week for children up to the age of 16, then £12.75 per week from 16 to 22.

RMT CREDIT UNION

Accessible savings and affordable loans from RMT's Credit union.
www.rmt.org.uk/about/credit-union

ONLINE SHOPPING DISCOUNTS

Shop online with RMTrewards.com and earn cashback savings from hundreds of retailers, like B&Q, Argos and Tesco. It's free to join, plus you'll get a FREE £10 Welcome Bonus in your online account! (Terms and conditions apply)
www.rmtrewards.com

FINES POOL

if you drive a company vehicle as part of your job you can join the RMT fines pool for £7 per year. The Fines Pool will reimburse members for any speeding fines, related court costs and lost time to attend a court hearing.
www.rmt.org.uk/member-benefits/fines-pool

BEREAVEMENT BENEFIT

A Death Grant of £600 is payable to the nearest relative or legal representative if a member dies through any cause prior to retirement.

CASHBACK PREPAID CARD

Fancy cashback on your everyday shopping? Use your RMT Prepaid Plus Cashback card at over 50 partner retailers, including Sainsbury's, ASDA and Boots, and earn unlimited cashback! It's different to a credit or debit card - you can only spend what you load so there's less chance of getting carried away.
www.rmtprepaid.com

FREE £5,000 ACCIDENTAL DEATH COVER

As a benefit of your RMT membership you can register for £5,000 Free Accidental Death Cover. Cover is for UK residents aged 18-69.

12 months free cover. Annually renewable and always FREE. The Cover is underwritten by Advent Insurance PCC Ltd – UIB Cell.
www.rmtprotect.com

HOME INSURANCE

Get a £50 Love2Shop Reward when you buy a UIA Home & Contents insurance online.
www.uia.co.uk/rmt
RMT DRIVE
Risk Free Car Purchasing for RMT Members
www.rmtCAR.oco.uk

HEALTH CASH PLAN

For a small monthly premium you can claim cash-back on dental, optical and therapy treatments. Visit
www.bhsf.co.uk

Join RMT by visiting
www.rmt.org.uk

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EDITORIAL



EAST COAST CHAOS

So the Tory government has called upon the public sector once more to launch a rescue operation on the East Coast mainline but instead of being a temporary arrangement Chris Grayling should listen to his staff and the public and make it permanent.

After three shambolic private sector failures on the East Coast the message should now sink in that these cowboys cannot be trusted and should be locked out of the system on a permanent basis.

Anything else risks playing out the same expensive farce over and over again. RMT will now be seeking an urgent meeting with the new operator to bolt down guarantees for staff on jobs, conditions and pensions.

Four other private operators are also teetering on the brink of collapse according to news reports and the government is in turmoil over how to keep the services running, and names both Greater Anglia and South Western Railway as the next basket cases in the frame.

A magnificent protest outside Parliament this month also marked that other example of market-led mismanagement the second anniversary of the Southern dispute.

The game is clearly up for the Tory government and it is now no longer a question of if Britain's railways are taken back into public ownership it's a question of when.

It is frankly scandalous that a huge chunk of Britain's private rail operations now stand on the brink of collapse due to the gross mismanagement of the train companies in cahoots with Chris Grayling and his government.

No number of internal reviews will end Britain's great rail fare rip-off and no one trusts Britain's rip-off private rail companies to do the right thing by passengers when it comes to fares and ticketing.

These are the same bunch of spivs

who have hacked back on staffing levels and axed ticket offices in the name of profit.

Until we get public ownership of our fragmented railways they will always be seen as a cash cow by the private operators.

This government could learn something from the Isle of Man government which is taking the lifeline Isle of Man Steam Packet Company into public ownership and out of the hands of Portuguese financiers Banco Espirito Santo.

This is the only way we can secure commitments around the training of the next generation of Manx and UK seafarers who will deliver services for islanders and visitors for the decades to come.

The union is also calling for the Northern Isles Ferry Service contract to be returned to public operation, when the current 2012-18 contract with Serco NorthLink expires.

Since the Scottish government handed Serco the contract, the number of passengers and vehicles has fallen, along with punctuality and reliability compared with the record of the previous operator.

We want more frequent, affordable and reliable ferries to the Northern Isles, on properly staffed vessels which are covered by the collective bargaining agreements and this can be achieved under public ownership and operation.

The time has come to end the situation where in the name of profit people pay through the nose to travel on rammed out and unreliable trains, see lifeline bus services ripped to shreds and find themselves unable to access services because there are no staff to provide disabled assistance.

Mick Cash

When you have finished with this magazine give it to a workmate who is not in your union.



FIGHTING FOR SAFETY

Rally in parliament marks two-year battle on Southern to defend safety

Hundreds of RMT members, MPs, disabled activists and supporters from across the country staged a vibrant protest outside Parliament on the second anniversary of the fight to defend the guard on Southern before packing out a meeting in the House of Commons.

Guards also took further rock solid strike action earlier this month on Arriva Rail North and Greater Anglia and the battle continues on Merseyrail and South Western Railways.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash congratulated members for their continuous show of strength and solidarity throughout the dispute.

"The union also thanks the travelling public for their support and understanding throughout our campaign to put safety and access to services for everyone using our railways right at the top of the agenda," he said.

In a powerful address to the rally in parliament Labour Shadow transport secretary Andy McDonald congratulated the "defiant stance" of the union, telling workers that Transport Secretary Chris Grayling was "a very worried man".

"The government's stance is

totemic. Grayling is running a rail system that does not deliver competition, does not deliver value, and is collapsing.

"It shows what slavish, profit-driven ideology is at work here. The guard's role is not about pushing a button. This is about security. It's about sex attacks and hate crimes. It's about accessibility. Railway employers can choose to ignore this at their peril," he said.

Reminding everyone that the broad opinion of the whole country is behind the guards, he assured train guards of the support of the Labour Party to sustained applause.

In an equally moving and passionate speech Shadow Rail Minister Rachel Maskell praised RMT for inspiring all other workers and said that "the reason why there is a dispute is because Chris Grayling wants a dispute, but we can tell Chris Grayling there is only one of him and hundreds and hundreds of members across our railways who will not tolerate his behaviour and will stand up to him at every step of this journey.

"And I am proud to stand with you today and over the coming weeks and months in solidarity, and you have to keep

going, let's keep up the pressure, keep up the good work and let's win the strike," she said.

Liverpool MP Dan Carden who has worked tirelessly on behalf of Merseyrail members was proud of the real change in the Labour Party supporting industrial disputes.

"Isn't it incredible that the Labour front bench is addressing this meeting, and backing the RMT wholeheartedly?" he asked.

Emily Yates from the

Association of British Commuters read out a message from Ann Bates OBE who thanked RMT for defending the right to safe accessibility that can only be guaranteed by having the second safety critical member of staff on board.

She also told the Daily Politics show that the government was behind the drive to de-staff trains as outlined in the McNulty report launched back in 2011.

MPs Ian Lavery, Ian Mearns,



Getting the message across

Graeme Morris, Liz McKinnis and Kelvin Hopkins all gave powerful statements of support before Mick Cash brought proceedings to a close and received a standing ovation whilst congratulating members on continuing the hard fight for two years.

“Our guards are at the forefront of the campaign to make sure we keep a safe, secure, accessible railway.

“I urge you – keep it up. There is still fuel in the tank, there’s more to come. The end result of this battle will be making sure that we keep a second safety-critical person on every train in the country.

“The sheer grit and determination of our members on Southern, Northern, Merseyrail, Greater Anglia and South Western Railways to put public safety before private profit over the past two years is a credit to the trade union movement and the communities they are standing up for.

“We have long detected the dead hand of the government interfering to stop us reaching negotiated settlements in the current disputes and it’s about time Chris Grayling stopped playing politics with passenger safety and started taking the issue seriously,” he said.

RMT is also calling on the ORR to refuse to sign off any more train operating companies Disabled Peoples Protection Policies which result in the loss of safety critical staff on trains – the very staff who ensure access is guaranteed for all and especially at unstaffed stations.

“With 843 organisations, campaign groups and individuals responding alongside the RMT to this consultation it shows just how important the issue of accessibility on the railway is to so many people.

“If the ORR is genuinely committed to a vision ‘to empower confident use of the railway by all’ then they must act to ensure that disabled people have the guarantee of a second, safety-critical member of staff on board our trains,” Mick Cash said. ■



On the TUC march this month



Colchester



Liverpool

RAIL FRANCHISING 'BROKEN'

RMT calls for Grayling to resign as cross party committee slams rail franchising scandal

Britain's rail franchising system is "broken" leading to "ludicrous, Alice-in-Wonderland" situations, the head of a public spending watchdog has said.

A hard-hitting House of Commons public accounts committee (PAC) report criticised the Department of Transport's "completely inadequate" management of two important franchises Govia Thameslink and Virgin Trains East Coast.

The committee, made up of seven Tory and seven Labour MPs and one each from the Liberal Democrats and the SNP, also criticised infrastructure operator Network Rail.

Meg Hillier, the MP who chairs the committee, said that the market for franchises was not functioning properly, with contracts tending to go to incumbents and very few parties bidding.

"The government needs to go back to the drawing board and put passengers at the forefront.

"If taxpayers are to have any faith in government's ability to deliver an effective passenger rail network then it must conduct and act on a thorough review before any further

franchises are awarded," she said.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that when such a cross party committee says that the franchising model is broken and that this government is to blame for both the Southern and East Coast fiascos that have cost the economy and tax payer billions, Chris Grayling must resign.

"He is a specialist in failure of the highest order and is not fit to run a wheel stall let alone our railways.

"The committee's call for a review before any further private rail passenger contracts are awarded makes it impossible to see how the East Coast contract can be handed back to Virgin and both that franchise and GTR should now be taken into public ownership.

"The MPs also rightly blame the government for the prolonged industrial action on Southern Rail and RMT is repeating the call for an urgent summit to resolve the current disputes over guards and safety," he said.

The DfT responded angrily to the report claiming that MPs had failed to understand "the complexity of the situation".

However Network Rail chief executive Mark Carne agreed with the PAC and said that the priorities and incentives of Network Rail and franchise operators need to be aligned.

The committee examined the failure of the Virgin Trains East Coast franchise, run by a Virgin Group-Stagecoach consortium. Back in February Chris Grayling announced that the franchise would end "in a very small number of months" after VTEC breached a contractual financial covenant.

The DfT is now considering options for who might run it, including VTEC on a not-for-profit basis.

Ms Hillier said that she found it fantastical "where an operator says, 'We can't deliver what we promise but we'll still run the railway with taxpayers' money'.

"We were amazed at the chutzpah," she said.

The committee also looked at the Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern franchise, run by Govia Thameslink (GTR). The report said that the department had "turned a blind eye to the potential level of industrial action".

"The Department failed to

see, or chose not to see, the perfect storm of an ambitious upgrade programme coupled with plans to increase driver controlled operation of trains.

"Whilst the Department seeks to heap blame on the unions, it must acknowledge that its own decisions and lack of constructive engagement have played a large part in the dismal service for passengers," MPs concluded.

The watchdog singled out the design of the franchise, which it said did not include incentives for GTR to maintain performance levels. The committee also recommended that the company engage with RMT to settle the dispute.

Ms Hillier said that GTR had expected to "ride out" a parcel of problems but that approach was "reckless for passengers, who have suffered".

She said that although it was not the committee's role to propose a new model for franchising, it was clear that the current one was not working.

"You want a market of choice and there isn't much choice out there. Mostly it's been the incumbent that's won, so why would you bother?" she said. ■



DLR VICTORY

A second round of strike action by members working for Keolis Amey Docklands (KAD) was suspended at Docklands Light Railway last month after 13 days of talks at ACAS.

The RMT negotiating team secured significant progress on the key issues including the threat to jobs and conditions from outsourcing and a whole range of grievances around workplace justice.

Meetings were held between members and the negotiators including regional organiser John Leach at Beckton and Poplar at which the details of the offer were explained. Members voted by a majority to accept the offer and suspend the strike action.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that it was only through the rock solid industrial action and the determination to take further action that got the situation to this point.

"I would like to congratulate the members involved for a great show of union strength during this time and for

supporting the union's position throughout.

"The union will remain vigilant that the progress made on these issues is carried out and that a climate of good industrial relations is reached at this company," he said.

Progress made in the talks on each of the issues at the heart of the dispute includes the fact that KAD will honour the two-year PSA roster pattern.

Staff that had worked in excess of 1820 hours in 2017 will be credited time off in lieu or the equivalent hours will be removed from their 2018 requirement, as agreed by the individual staff member.

KAD agree that rosters for other grades are negotiable and completed using the agreed Collective Bargaining Machinery.

The company also commits to train, retrain and maintain licences for employees to undertake the role that they are currently employed to do and any changes to be consulted.

KAD will also adhere to existing capability policy which

includes wording that identifies that termination for reasons of medical capability will only be instigated following advice by GP or medical specialist.

KAD will also ensure that future gritting work will be undertaken by competent people. Agreement on use of contractors applied to all grades covered by collective bargaining. KAD also committed

to only utilising agency staff when all reasonable steps have been taken to exhaust internal resources for needs and requirements.

Air Quality Assessment results, Depot Assessments for hazardous substances and Risk Assessments will all be resolved via the Health and Safety Forum. ■





RMT AT STUC

Scottish TUC backs RMT on the dangers of the EU single market and on helicopter safety

Scottish trade unionists warned last month that “strict adherence to EU competition rules” following Brexit would “endanger the future prospects of the Scottish economy”.

A majority of delegates at the Scottish TUC Congress in Aviemore backed an RMT-backed motion that pointed out that EU single market and customs union membership would prohibit an interventionist economic programme involving “a state investment bank, public ownership of utilities and state aid to industry”.

Moving on behalf of South Lanarkshire Trades Council, former RMT officer Phil McGarry called for “government assistance as required by the use of government money for any ailing industries, public ownership of our railways, the ferry sector and the offshore sectors”.

“Let’s renationalise the energy companies who are ripping us off and build social housing under local authority control,” he said.

Mr McGarry said that this programme, as well as new rules on public procurement ensuring

companies winning government contracts engage in collective bargaining and are not blacklists, was “incompatible with membership of the single market and customs union.”

He praised Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn for recognising that anti-union rulings of the European Court of Justice such as the Viking, Laval, Ruffert, Luxembourg and Holship judgements needed to be “binned” as part of any exit settlement.

“Let’s have a progressive exit from the European Union on our terms. If we don’t, then Davis, Johnson, Gove and Fox will do some dirty trade deal.

“The Tories will ensure they look after the interest of capital and the City of London to our detriment,” he said.

Opposing membership of the EU single market, RMT NEC member Paul Shaw emphasised the threat of the EU’s 4th Railway Package, which demanded wholesale privatisation across the EU.

RMT regional organiser Jake Molloy rose to oppose a motion demanding the ‘free movement’ of labour within the EU.

Delegates also heard that the



Marching On the May 12 TUC demonstration

lessons of the Piper Alpha disaster were being forgotten 30 years on.

An explosion and oil and gas fires on the North Sea drilling platform claimed 167 lives on July 6 1988.

Delegates endorsed a call for a public inquiry into the safety of helicopters transporting workers to and from oil platforms in the North Sea.

Super Puma aircraft have been grounded after a series of fatal accidents since 2009 causing 33 deaths.

RMT delegate and offshore worker Robert Wynoss said that the motion was about the ability of workers to “travel to work in the confidence they might get back alive.

“If this aircraft was involved in any kind of public service, it would have been grounded a long time ago,” he said.

The motion warned that offshore workers’ safety was “under increasing pressure” from bosses.

Most platforms have moved to three-week-on, three-week-off shift patterns since the oil downturn of 2014, meaning workers frequently work 21 consecutive days.

Other RMT delegates addressed Congress including Ann Joss from Aberdeen branch and Dan Henderson of Glasgow Shipping branch.

First time speaker and Scotrail guard Michelle Boyle of Glasgow 5 branch also rose to speak against Driver-Only Operation.

George Lonie of Glasgow Shipping also spoke on publicly-funded tug services and regional organiser Gordon Martin spoke on Orkney Ferries and reported that the union had smashed the pay cap over the wage settlement and increased RMT membership as a result.

Zimele Maroti, Glasgow 5 spoke regarding British Transport Police on ScotRail and Mandie Walton, North Clyde branch seconded a TSSA motion on workers’ health and work/life balance.

North Clyde branch secretary Janet Cassidy successfully moved a motion on the cost of living crisis on behalf of Clydebank TUC.

RMT had three successful well-attended fringe meetings including the SOS 2020 campaign (see overleaf).

RMT general secretary Mick Cash also spoke at the Radical Options for Scotland and Europe fringe meeting emphasising an EU settlement for workers, collective bargaining, workers’ rights, public ownership and an end to compulsory competitive tendering (CCT).

Scottish Labour leader Richard Leonard also told

delegates that blacklisting construction giants should be put on a public services blacklist, along with tax dodgers.

He told delegates that companies that victimised thousands of trade unionists over decades “should be barred” from public contracts “until they own up, clean up and pay up in full”.

Mr Leonard used his address to blast the SNP’s record in government, saying the party had presided over a “decade of mediocrity and timidity”.

“We are moving backwards, to a landlord-tenant society and we continue to live by a master-servant relationship at work,” he said.

He said that SNP’s claim to have record low levels of unemployment, trumpeted by leader Nicola Sturgeon in her own address to the STUC, had been debunked by academic studies.

He said that real levels of unemployment were twice as high as the official rate.

He also called for “not a public-sector bid” against privateers to run ScotRail, as the SNP has indicated, “but public ownership of our railways” and “not a public-sector bid but public ownership of our ferry services”.

He argued that Labour north

and south of the border was “starting to face the future with a renewed confidence.

“It is a renewed confidence not just in our own abilities but it is a renewed confidence in working people to run their own affairs.

“There is nothing wrong with that old socialist maxim of from each according to their means, to each according to their need.”

“The campaign of Jeremy Corbyn shows that people will not only respect principle, conviction and integrity in politics but they will also vote for it,” he said. ■



RETIREMENT: Glasgow Shipping branch presented retirement gifts to George Lonie who, for the first time in his long career, was speechless and emotional. Delegates wished him a happy retirement.



RMT joins TUC May Day march in London to celebrate workers' day

RMT branches brought their banners to this year's May Day rally to demand public ownership of Britain's railways and to end the scandal of poverty pay on Britain's ships of shame.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash told the Trafalgar Square rally of the union's battle against the rail operators' drive to strip away safety-critical staff.

"This dispute is about making sure they do not place profit before safety and our fight to keep guards on trains

"If the government have their way, there will be millions of guard-less trains running, making it less safe and less accessible.

"We are not giving up and will fight to keep railways safe.



"We need a railway for the benefit of the country and passengers and not for the spivs and profiteers.

Mr Cash said that the way to do this was to renationalise the railways, as the Labour Party

intends to: "If other nations can run our railways, so can we. Bring it back to public ownership.

"We need a party for the many, not the few," he said.





SAVE OUR SEAFARERS

RMT STUC fringe demands action on pay and Northlink ferries nationalisation

Leaving the EU provides a huge opportunity to end the race to the bottom on seafarers' rights, RMT general secretary Mick Cash told STUC delegates at a packed fringe meeting.

Addressing the Save Our Seafarers (SOS) 2020 fringe meeting in Aviemore, he said that of 500,000 mariners working in EU waters, just 40 per cent were EU nationals.

Abuse of flags of convenience to allow unscrupulous employers to replace British seafarers with cheap, super-exploited labour from abroad had decimated the industry since Margaret Thatcher came to power in 1979, delegates heard; in the following decade, the third-largest merchant navy in the world dropped to 27th place.

"Anyone who wants a debate on what free movement means in terms of labour rights can take a look at the seafaring industry," he pointed out, citing Ukrainians working on ferries operating out of Weymouth paid just £2.45 an hour.

"That's why we supported leaving the EU and why we still support it.

"When a boat goes from one

EU port to another EU port, why can't we enforce a minimum wage?

"It's time for change and we can use opportunities like Brexit to keep employment in this country," he said.

RMT Scotland regional organiser Gordon Martin agreed, saying he was "fed up" hearing people say Brexit was a terrible thing.

"We need to get the right politicians in place to deliver it, but the EU has been no friend to maritime workers," he said.

RMT national secretary Steve Todd called for the Northern Isles Ferry Service contract to be returned to public operation, when the current 2012-18 contract with Serco NorthLink expires.

"The union welcomes the news that three leased vessels are being brought into the

NorthLink fleet on a permanent basis which shows the importance and long-term viability of these life-line services.

"However, the public are paying for the vessels and the service, through the Scottish government, and to ensure we get value for money the entire operation should be brought into public ownership without delay to ensure the investment is made in the vessels, infrastructure and workforce and is not lining the pockets of Serco shareholders," he said.

He welcomed a review of ferry procurement policy announced by the Scottish government last year, including the option of bringing all public ferry contracts permanently in-house, using a 'Teckal' exemption from EU competition and State Aid laws.

"Since the Scottish government handed Serco the NIFS contract, the number of passengers and vehicles has fallen, along with punctuality and reliability compared with the record of the previous operator.

"We want more frequent, affordable and reliable ferries to the Northern Isles, on properly staffed vessels which are covered by the collective bargaining agreements and this can be achieved under public ownership and operation," he said.

Nautilus International national ferry organiser Micky Smyth also said that the industry should be made to invest in training young seafarers in this country in order to see more workers opting to go to sea.



CRASH: The scene after a tram overturned in south London killing seven people on November 9 2016. The tram was classed as a bus until it crashed.



ALL ROADS LEAD TO CROYDON

Bus safety campaigner
Tom Kearney says the
three lessons of Croydon
tram crash must be applied
to the bus industry

On November 9 2016, the Croydon Tram operated by FirstGroup Tram Operations Limited on a 30-year Contract with Transport for London (TfL), overturned and crashed, killing seven passengers and injuring 62, 19 of them seriously. The Croydon tram crash marked the first train-related fatality in the United Kingdom after eight years of a fatality-free operation.

Because the Croydon Tram was contracted, managed and regulated by Transport for London's Bus bosses, in my opinion, the Croydon Tram should be considered to be a bus operation.

But, while the Croydon Tram was abused until it crashed, the investigation of this incident presents a huge opportunity for bus drivers to force some positive changes.

Based on what we've already learned from the The Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) and TfL's own investigations, I believe that there are at least three lessons already learned which bus workers and their unions can campaign for now to improve the operational safety performance environment across the bus network.

LESSON 1

Bus workers should campaign for Road Safety Incidents to be investigated just like Rail and Tram Safety Incidents.

Unlike bus crashes, train and tram safety incidents are subject to a well-established process of independent investigation by:

- The Rail Accident Investigation Branch - "The RAIB carries out the investigation into rail accidents and incidents without apportioning blame or liability, with a view to enabling lessons to be learned to improve safety on railways and prevent similar accidents and incidents."
- The Office of Rail and Road (ORR)- "Investigates whether or not there have been any breaches of health and safety law. An ORR Investigation will also review how effective the dutyholder's health and safety management system is working and identify areas for improvement."
- British Transport Police - Investigates whether not any criminal act on the Railway has occurred. The BTP does not investigate Road "accidents" (unless they involve a Train or Tram).

Since 2015, reported safety incidents involving TfL buses have resulted in over 30 deaths and 12,000 injuries, yet none have been subject to that sort of independent investigation.

LESSON 2

Bus transport workers should create a union-organised National Confidential Safety Reporting Service open to all bus

workers.

Recommendation 12 of the RAIB Croydon Crash investigation published last December highlights the importance of Safety incident Reporting for

- i. fostering the creation of a 'just culture' in which staff are more likely to report incidents and safety-related concerns;
- ii. establishing a common understanding of what constitutes a safety incident when reported by the public, or that should be reported by staff;
- iii. improving management systems to ensure that safety issues are properly identified from any reports, whether from staff or members of the public, and that appropriate and timely actions are taken in response; and
- iv. developing improved processes to ensure that suitable lessons are learned by [the Operator] from such reports and that outcomes are fed back to the reporter.

Taking this Recommendation 12 into account trade unions should collectively fund and maintain their own independent National Confidential Safety Reporting Service. To me, the advantages of doing so are obvious:

- Access to a union-organised National Confidential Safety Reporting Service should not be subject to subscription by any company or public transport agency: if you're a member of a union, you can access the service.
- By being funded and maintained by the unions nationwide, this Union-organised National Confidential Safety Reporting Service need not restrict itself to one location or transport mode: any transport industry that employs union members would automatically mean these workers were entitled to have access to this National Confidential Safety Reporting Service.
- A National Confidential Safety Reporting Service will be in a better position to monitor employers, industries and regions on a national level and analyse and share this information to ensure failures and best practices are learned and communicated nationwide.

Using the RAIB's good phrase, I believe that a National Confidential Safety Reporting Service can go a long way toward the creation of a "just culture in which bus workers are more likely to report incidents and safety-related concerns." If Bus Transport Workers "own" a union-organised National Confidential Safety Reporting Service, they can ensure that this service cannot not be compromised by too close a connection to private or public subscribers.



CAMPAIGNER: Tom Kearney was critically injured after being struck by a TfL Bus on Oxford Street, London in December 2009 and has voluntarily campaigned for safer Working Conditions and improved Operational Safety Performance Reporting and Monitoring for UK Bus Transport Workers since November 2011.

LESSON 3

Bus transport workers must campaign to reclassify Late Work—especially that on a permanent basis—as "Night Work".

A restricted and confidential Fatigue Risk Management System Audit of First Group Tram Operations Limited conducted six months after the Croydon Crash revealed nine specific safety failings of the Tram Operator, most of which have direct application to the road transport industry.

But there is one failing that particularly stands out: "For fatigue risk assessment, and medical fitness for work purposes, First Group Tram Operations Limited does not consider late shift workers, particularly those on permanent late shifts, to be night workers."

No transport operator should be permitted to their safety critical workers on permanent late shifts to avoid committing the extra resources that would be required if they were deemed to be Night Workers. Late Work is Night Work.

Keep up with Tom Kearney on social media on:

Twitter: @comadad

Blog: www.saferoxfordstreet.blogspot.co.uk



SAVE OUR STATIONS

Station grades conference calls for campaign to defend jobs and an end to lone working



Mick Cash unveils new banner

Delegates to the industrial organising conference of station and associated grades meeting in Reading called on the union to fight to save station jobs.

Chris Reilly, Reading branch said that station management were often not following agreements reached between the RMT and the union.

"Staff are being told to accept additional duties with no extra pay, to move from rostering agreements or they are just ignoring reps concerns when issues are brought to them.

"We need a major campaign to protect all grades on every stations network from being

treated in this way and to protect the roles and jobs before we end up with stations with either no or just a few staff involved with the safe working of the railway," he said.

Conference called for a re-launch of the Save our Stations campaign to be run in conjunction with other grades as well to highlight their own issues and fights.

Jenny Adams, Camden No 3 said that despite major incidents on London Underground in the last two years and constant trade union pressure the issue of unstaffed stations was getting worse not better.

"The union is already doing



good work in regards to unstaffed stations but we need a heightened and sustained media campaign to alert the public to the dangers involved," she said.

Richard Lucas, Reading branch said that Great Western Railways and other train operating companies were reducing staffing levels on gatelines to lone working either permanently or during certain hours.

"We are concerned that this will lead to job losses, more physical and verbal abuse, additional workloads and profit before safety.

"Managers often see natural wastage as an opportunity to lose permanent jobs and introduce lone working on the gatelines. I often feel like we have constantly got the finger in the dyke to prevent a flood single staffed gatelines," he said.

Keith Miller, Central and North Mersey said that Merseyrail was moving static staff around to quieter or busier locations.

"This is being done at no extra cost to the company and leaving some stations unstaffed representing a serious health and safety risk," he said.

Delegates also noted that in many disputes, untrained staff from other grades were being used and encouraged to cover striking workers grades.

Jose Partington, Blackpool North described them as PUGS (Pop Up Guards) and said that they were being paid £150 just to be available.

"They are getting guards on the cheap and it is dangerous," she said.

Whilst delegates welcomed the opening of the Elizabeth Line across London this year and investment in new railways, they could not accept lower safety standards.

Chris Ryan, Central Line West raised serious concerns including the reduction in minimum numbers of staff.

"We need qualified staff to be employed on Crossrail stations with robust emergency procedures including full station staffing at all running times," he said.

Freddie Seale, Paddington No1 said that there had been repeated assaults where he worked on the line and called for more to be done as the Elizabeth Line becomes fully operational.

Ronnie Hardman, Central and North Mersey also warned that train operating companies were regularly trying to overrule the doctors and specialists used by staff with their own occupational health staff.

"Occupational health staff do not know the entire cases nor know staff personally and

always have a priority of getting staff back to work, in many cases at the detriment of their health," he said.

Conference demanded an end to this practice.

Delegates also called for a joint LUL/Network Rail/Samaritans campaign to reduce suicides on the railway.

Ross Marshall, Central Line West urged the union to support such a programme and expand it to all companies and better support for staff post-incident and more available staff to try and stop people committing suicide.

"This matter is important to all of us as the railway is a place where people can and do commit suicide and we need to do all we can to prevent this.

"These incidents have a huge impact on staff and passengers," he said.

Conference heard from London Underground suicide prevention officer Martin Bendry who reported that between 2000 and 2010 LUL experienced 40 suicide incidents each year.

"This number began to increase after the 2008 recession and we have seen the number of trackside suicide attempts every year since.

"The reason for the increase is head to define but it is likely to relate to cuts in social

services and a difficult economic climate," he said.

He called for improved co-ordination between station, train and service control and the British Transport Police.

"LU now has a suicide prevention team overseeing the programme and our aim is to improve awareness and operational response," he said.

Several delegates made the point that such an approach was made harder by the huge amount of cuts being faced by staff and the general public.

Conference also raised concerns at the low level of membership and organisation among Network Rail station staff.

Chris Cuomo, Deptford said that the campaign should include providing information to relevant regional councils and branches on the terms and conditions of these staff, and their representation arrangements.

"Network Rail is committed to a detailed review of the terms and conditions of these staff so we need to organise them," he said.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash was asked to unveil the new conference banner for station grades, made by banner maker Ed Hall in conjunction with the advisory committee. ■



FIGHTING FOR BUS WORKERS

RMT bus conference delegates warn unreliable new technology is being used to discipline workers

Meeting on the Isle of Wight, delegates to the 2018 national bus workers industrial organising conference called on the union to produce a legal guide for RMT reps on the use of telematics equipment and data in disciplinary cases.

Lee Odams Notts and Derby, said that telematics systems were becoming increasingly common in the bus industry under the guise of saving fuel and improving driver performance but they were also being used in disciplinary cases.

"The legal position in relation to the use of telematics systems needs to be looked at in

a similar way that CCTV use has.

"These systems are recording driver's actions on a second by second basis and then a profile of the driver is being held on their personnel record.

"If telematics evidence is gathered using covert surveillance methods, workers should have access to the information, be afforded the opportunity to explain or challenge the data and be allowed to make representations before any disciplinary or other action is taken," he said.

Backing the motion Jason Gosling, Poole said that it was a

case of 'big brother' coming and advised that it may be worth requesting your personal data to see what it contained.

"Managers are seeing black and white in the data while there is actually huge grey areas," he said.

Leroy Tolcher, Camborne called on the union not to accept Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) and other systems which are being used in disciplinary cases.

"This has resulted in written warnings, dismissals upheld and significant fear and concerns among bus workers.

"These systems operate on

the mobile phone networks that are not reliable and signals regularly fail particularly in rural areas.

"Managers are trawling this system and using wrong information to discipline members," he said.

Delegates called on the union to campaign for bus workers to have a right to full pay from day one when they have been injured at work.

Mark Thomas, South Devon Bus said that this does not mean paying sick pay but 100 per cent pay from day one.

"Companies should pay for any specialist treatment which

will help the employee get back to work quicker and regain their full health," he said.

Delegates also called for a support programme which would give members the care and assistance following incidents such as fatal accidents and suicides while on duty.

Mark Ellis, South Devon Bus said that other companies in the rail sector were providing such services.

"There is no counselling policy in the bus sector and staff are offered no time off while in the rail sector it is a different story and we need to change that," he said.

Delegates also called on the union to carry out a national survey of bus branches regarding the size and design of bus cabs and any corresponding health issues.

Lee Rundle, South Devon Bus said that the union needed to find out if this was a nationwide problem and fight for the interests and health and safety of union members.

"We need to have a real input into this as cabs are getting smaller and our members are the people that have to drive in them," he said.

Conference also called on the union to launch an organising campaign to recruit workers in the coach industry.

Trevor Coltman, York and District said that workers in the coach industry were suffering major problems with poor pay, casualisation and poor enforcement and avoidance of health and safety and welfare legislation.

"There are at least 4,000 workers in the industry with only a small minority were in a trade union.

"In an industry where the workforce is individualised with a majority of workers on self-employed agency and zero hours contracts RMT should adopt a strategy on how to approach these workers," he said.

Jason Gosling said that it would be difficult to penetrate the sector but coach employees were transport workers that needed organising.



RMT assistant general secretary Mick Lynch with Keith Murphy (left), retiring conference secretary after serving ten years in the post, and retiring conference president Paul Rossiter who is also retiring from the industry. Both wished the conference well for the future and thanked delegates for their support.

Delegate John Short, North Devon Bus won support for a call for a minimum temperature for bus workers to operate which companies must comply with.

"During the winter it is not unusual to be given a bus in which cab heating is very poor or even non-existent.

"Reaction times when driving under the influence of drink or drugs is well documented and is considered so dangerous that under current law a driver will quite rightly lose his licence to drive.

"In a recent study entitled *The Cold Driver: Driving performance under Thermal Stress*, showed that a driver exposed to 41°F (5°C) for 30 minutes resulted in significantly increased error in driving performance," he said.

Rob Moore, Exeter No 2 warned that bus drivers were often sent out to drive in red weather warnings.

"We have had requests for advice regarding urgent matters concerning the safety of all concerned and the responses have been inadequate at best, these have taking months of chasing organisations and individuals for clarity, with advice that was more like calamity.

"We are expected to be professionals, but the government departments are failing in their duty to protect staff working in the transport services where profit dictates safety, someone needs to make

decisions regarding safe operations from outside of a company viewpoint, especially in times of emergencies," he said.

Delegates called on the union to campaign for changes in the highway code including rule 223 which gives priority to buses 'especially when they signal to pull away from stops'.

Mohammad Aslam, Exeter No 2 said that currently this rule was too vague and gave no protection to moving vehicles, passengers or pedestrians," he said.

Delegates agreed that the rule should now be changed to the following:

"Priority must be given to these vehicles, especially in built up areas and areas where speed limits are below 30mph. These vehicles must not be passed when they signal to pull away from stops in Home Zones and Quiet Lanes or any area where there are traffic calming measures in place."

Delegates agreed that bus drivers needed protection from drivers who continuously put passengers in danger by passing vehicles and cutting in causing accidents.

"Now with penalties and fines being increased for professional drivers, more legislation should be provided to protect bus, coach and tram drivers from all other road users including cyclists and pedestrians," Mohammad said.

RMT assistant general secretary Mick Lynch, speaking

as the officer covering bus workers, reported that membership in the sector was holding up.

He congratulated Exeter No2 bus for hosting last year's RMT annual general meeting pointing out that bus branches play an important part in the union.

He gave a breakdown of membership figures by company and another by branch with increased figures in many areas,

"We now have over 4,000 bus industry members in the union and we should be looking to push that figure to 5,000," he said.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash echoed this call for the need to organise at the workplace where it mattered.

"RMT is collectively recognised as a fighting, democratic union and we need to build the union to fight those battles across the country," he said.

RMT president Sean Hoyle called for on delegates to give a standing ovation to retiring conference secretary Keith Murphy and conference president Paul Rossiter.

On behalf of the conference liaison committee Lee Rundle moved that conference donate £300 to the dispute on Southern against the introduction of driver-only operation.

"We need to stand in solidarity with the guards on Southern as one day we may have to call on solidarity from the union ourselves," he said.



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LEGAL

HELPING MEMBERS IN CRIMINAL CASES



For emergency, 24-hour criminal law advice call 075659118181 in England and Wales or 0800 328 1014 in Scotland

RMT solicitors Powell Spencer, working in conjunction with the union's in-house team, help members on a wide range of matters from serious allegations of theft, fraud and assault as well as those engaged by the complex process of accident investigation and subsequent prosecution.

In addition the in-house team advises and represents in a range of driving related offences and licensing matters where legal aid was unavailable to our members.

Because members are in the front line they often face disgruntled customers who vent their anger upon our members often meaning that they then face prosecution and potential loss of their livelihood.

RMT believes that members should be protected when our members seek advice and representation when they are to be investigated by police or

other bodies such as the Office of Rail Regulator (ORR) who have the right to interview under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act caution.

Representation is also provided at interviews being conducted by regulatory bodies such as Licensing Authorities who are investigating offences as this also can lead to prosecution at court.

RMT has provided representation for all sectors of membership from rail and tube staff, bus and taxi drivers and maritime employees. Many of the cases have involved issues involving the public RMT members' serve.

It has represented many members at the police station, whether after arrest, or at interviews under caution when the member is 'invited' to attend voluntarily. It has attended with members subject to investigation by Licensing

bodies, the ORR and Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB).

It is important that the union is notified as early as possible and members must exercise their right to remain silent until they have had an opportunity to take advice. This applies especially when initially they are told this will be 'an informal chat' or that they are 'helping with enquiries'. RMT ensures that being interviewed under caution or when being investigated in any circumstances should always be treated seriously.

Members should not accept a caution from the police believing this is the quick and easy option. To accept a caution means that you are admitting that you have committed an offence and the fact of having a caution on your record is likely to affect your employment prospects and applying for entry

to certain countries.

All members assisted were likely to have been dismissed and have a criminal record making finding another job extremely difficult if not for the support given by this union.

The union does not win every case but it is dedicated to providing the highest quality legal support to members.

Whilst the union can't provide financial support to family and friends our specialist team in Powell Spencer will assist them wherever possible in matters relating to criminal defence work.

This includes free representation in police interviews unless other solicitors have had prior involvement with the matter. They will also always offer competitive rates should legal aid not be available and they wish to use our lawyers at court.





END DE-SKILLING AND OUTSOURCING

Engineering grades demand an end to casualisation in the rail industry and for agreements to be respected

The industrial organising conference of engineering grades conference met in Wigan recently with a determination to standardise agreed procedures across the network and oppose the deskilling and outsourcing of labour in the industry.

David Doyle, London and Orient Engineering called for an investigation into the misuse and implementation of the Managing for Attendance Procedure (MFA).

He told delegates that Network Rail OCR (Overhead Condition Renewals) is enforcing a different MFA procedure (GTRM ex Carillion) without agreement with RMT, or consultation, that undermines members' terms and conditions.

"The procedure being enforced is being used to apply pressure on staff to work when sick.

"People come to work with

broken limbs and the flu because they are scared not to. This is a potential safety risk for our safety critical workers," he told delegates.

"Management are not considering individual circumstances and have been classing serious illness, bereavement, stress and even hospital appointments and special leave as 'short term sick'.

"This then triggers the 'target' which leads to unfair hearings, disciplines and potential dismissal.

"Our members are being told at stage 1 that this is an informal procedure and nothing to worry about. They are not being made aware of the seriousness of the MFA procedure or being told they are entitled to union representation until a MFA reaches stage 2. At the Stage 2 hearing a formal discipline is issued.

"This policy should be used for persistent short-term sickness but is instead being aggressively used to put pressure on staff and undermines Terms and Conditions. This matter has been raised through the machinery of negotiation at local level on more than one occasion without any progress being made," he added.

John Joe Carruthers, Carlisle City told conference that industrial relations within Network Rail maintenance were in an atrocious state.

"We are dealing with the constant ignoring of agreed processes and procedures to deal with issues by Network Rail management in terms of both individual and collective matters.

"There are also persistent attacks on terms and conditions and an apparent situation where

our formally agreed processes fail to deal with issues," he said.

Pat Collins, Birmingham Engineering expressed concern that members within Network Rail are having skills competencies either removed, or not renewed, with management claiming the competencies are no longer required.

"Members are then finding that their work is in fact being outsourced. This has mainly applied to welding staff who are finding that contractors are replacing their work, effectively privatising their jobs," he said.

Mark Denny, Wigan highlighted the problem with Network Rail altering agreed contractual rates of pay regarding on the former GTRM contract for Over Head Line Operatives and Technicians within London North Western North.

"Network Rail currently are



refusing to honour contractual agreements and natural progression for OHL staff. We see this is an attack on our Blue Book conditions and we see nothing was agreed in regards to pay scales during phase 2b/c even though Network Rail re-branded grades to operative, technicians and team leader,” he said.

David Doyle explained that in the absence of an agreed annual leave policy several attempts at consultation have been made by local reps but failed.

“Several unviable proposals have been received which undermine Terms and Conditions. OCR management want to limit leave at weekends, bank holidays and any wiring weekends.

“The numbers of men off at any time is also being restricted. The proposals put forward would not even allow staff to use their full annual leave entitlement and severely restrict the times they can take leave,” he said.

He summarised the issues as:

- Leave rejected without giving reason
- Leave left in trays for sometimes months without being signed off
- Staff are having single days rejected in the middle of a block of holidays
- OCR no longer follow Terms and Conditions where leave booked before a roster is agreed will be shown as a holiday

Paul Thomas, Cardiff No 7 led a

call for the union to fight for union recognition in new fleet design, build and maintenance companies.

“We need a national campaign to gain full union recognition with these companies,” he said.

RMT president Sean Hoyle gave an account of the Scottish TUC conference which had taken place earlier that week, emphasising the importance of getting the union’s message on the European Union across.

“The EU is a neo-liberal model and that is why we oppose it,” he said.

RMT assistant general secretary Mick Lynch told conference that their grade were part of the biggest sector of the union. He thanked delegates for their activism but argued that with recruitment it could be built to be 50 per cent larger.

He explained that there are attempts by Network Rail to rewrite conditions of service. Referring specifically to Stood-Off Arrangements he said that the lack of universal implementation of the arrangements caused lots of problems.

“We will take whatever industrial action is needed over Stood-Off Arrangements,” he said.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash pointed out that the recent events with Carillion showed the inadequacy of outsourcing work.

He gave an overview of the union’s campaign work across the transport industries and a summary of some of the current

disputes.

“I am particularly proud of our members that are involved in disputes, particularly the long-running battle to keep the guard on the train.

“We are a busy union with a strong membership due to the hard work of our reps and activists. With a well organised

membership we have strong and stable finances and can fight the bosses on different fronts.

“Employers know who we are and what we are prepared to do. That puts us in a strong negotiating position from the start,” he said. ■

ORGANISE!

Join the day of action on **June 13**, Bob Crow’s birthday, to increase RMT membership at the workplace



The union has developed an organising strategy to increase membership levels in every sector and grade that the union organises in.

This strategy includes a branch organising day around June 13. The union also agreed for all branches and regions to include the day as part of their organising plans. Ask your branch secretary for more details and membership forms.

REMEMBERING D-DAY IN NORTH DEVON

North Devon played a pivotal role in the D-Day landings during the fight against fascism

Not many present-day holidaymakers would know that a little corner of North Devon played a key role in the build up to D-Day, the invasion of Normandy on June 6 1944 which began the final march against Nazism in Europe.

The beaches around Braunton, Woolacombe and Croyde Bay were used as training grounds for the invasion because of their similarity to those on the French coast, in particular those code-named Utah and Omaha, where US assault troops would land. The sand quality, beach gradient and tidal range were similar.

As a result the US Assault Training Centre was established and more than 100,000 US servicemen would practice and drill on the beaches as well as amid the sand dunes of Braunton Burrows.

The training centre was the only one of its kind in wartime Britain where soldiers learned, trained and practiced newly developed amphibious assault tactics to lead the assault across the beaches of Normandy on D-



Day also known as Operation Neptune.

Its formation came about through sheer necessity, following a war planning oversight which had assumed troops destined to lead the invasion of Europe would arrive in Britain already trained for their task. Realisation that this was not the case created a tense situation that had to be urgently rectified as the date for the invasion was only a few months

away.

This important piece of local history has been largely hidden for many years save for a little museum and local roads named after important Normandy sites such as Caen, the city that bore the brunt of the battles that raged following the invasion during Operation Overlord.

But next month is the 75th anniversary of the creation of the US Assault Training Centre in the area which took in what is today Unison's Croyde Bay holiday resort. To mark the event on Saturday June 2 2018 there will be a huge World War Two Vehicle rally at Saunton Sands.

Unison Croyde Bay manager Simon Willis became interested in the subject when recent renovations uncovered artefacts left by US troops all those years ago.

He donated the objects such as letters and ration tins to the local museum in Braunton which is a mine of information

of a time when steam trains brought in tens of thousands of US troops to be trained in landing tactics.

"Growing up around Braunton many local kids thought that Caen Road was just a misspelt version of Cane.

"However today there is growing interest in the history of the area particularly the preparations for D-Day which changed the course of history.

"Bunkers and other structures that were used for training at that time still dot the landscape.

"The local beauty spot Baggy Point was even used as a training ground for the assault of the cliffs at Pointe du Hoc," he said.

Pointe du Hoc was the highest point between Utah Beach and Omaha Beach, the two Normandy beaches that saw the most fighting. The Germans had fortified the area with bunkers and gun pits. On D-Day the US Army Ranger Assault Group, trained at Croyde Bay,



US tank lands at Woolaconbe beach



assaulted and captured Pointe du Hoc after scaling the 100 foot cliffs.

It is thought that the 500 plus Rangers that made it provided much needed assistance on the stalled Omaha Beach landing by outflanking the Nazi defences, thereby averting a complete disaster.

Local historian Neil Worth possesses a wealth of knowledge of these events and works closely with the museum which specialises in the railway, maritime, wartime and social history of the area including a working model of the railway

station as it was in the 1950s.

He was also involved in the creation of an oral archive collecting memories of people that witnessed the 'friendly' US invasion as well as an exhibition of artefacts and stories collected. Any RMT members with such memories or artefacts for donation should contact the museum.

He has collected many stories including the antics of young Americans on their nights out. The steam train that used to run from Barnstaple through Braunton and up to Morthoe village and Ilfracombe was

known as the 'booze train' as soldiers returning from town used to pull the emergency cord just outside the station.

The countryside would suddenly fill with inebriated GIs running back to camp to avoid paying the train fare.

Some of these memories appear on the informative *Spirits of the Sand* DVD which tells the story of North Devon's involvement in D-Day preparations.

One local Mrs Almond remembers as a very young girl cycling past the camp regularly with her friends and soldiers would often give them sweets and fruit.

On the eve of D-Day she remembers soldiers burying their possessions as they were only allowed to take their kits and dog tags for identification.

"They were burying letters and all sorts, one teenage GI even gave me a bracelet, but the soldiers never came back," she said.

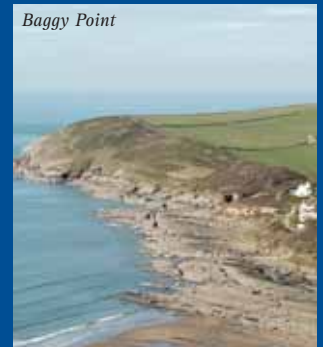
Odd to think that many of the possessions and effects of so

many young soldiers buried in such haste may still be there.

Spirits of the Sand DVD can be purchased from Braunton and District Museum, Caen Street, Braunton, EX33 1AA Telephone: 01271-816688 or Cobbaton Combat Collection Chittlehampton, EX37 9RZ Telephone: 01769 540740

RMT members get five per cent discount at Unison Croyde Bay holiday resort www.croydeunison.co.uk Quote RMT plus your membership number

Baggy Point



AID FOR CUBA GARDEN PARTY

The 16th annual RMT Garden Party for Cuba in association with Cuba Solidarity Campaign

Wednesday June 13, 2018. 7.00pm
Maritime House, Clapham, London SW4 0JW

Tickets
£15

RMT★CUBA SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

Free bar, buffet and music celebrating freedom for The Miami Five and solidarity with Cuba



WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP: left to right Nicki Sysum, Mary Jane Herbison, Mick Cash, Nicoleta Popa and Jennifer Aggrfy-Fynn

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

RMT women complete accredited leadership course in leadership in conjunction with RMT education centre

Ten RMT women have successfully completed a two-year fully accredited course at Northern College in leadership.

To celebrate 100 years of women winning the vote, the union teamed up with the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) to provide training in leadership skills for RMT women members in a trade union context.

The course included four residential modules and focused

on the key components of leadership skills required at all levels in a trade union environment.

RMT education officer Andy Gilchrist said that it was aimed at motivating members and teams, organising and leading campaigns, developing communication with members.

"These are all skills that can be learned by building leadership capabilities for the union by empowering

individuals.

"Courses such as this can greatly assist those members from under-represented groups within the union to learn the skills and gain confidence to progress within our movement generally.

"The proof is already being seen in the activities being taken up by course members and all acknowledged the course had not only provided new skills but also engendered a new

enthusiasm to work to strengthen the union and encourage more women members to get involved.

"Courses like this open doors to future leaders, by often demystifying what it takes to take up positions of leadership and instil confidence to seek election in the first place.

"This initial course was taken up to see if the course would be beneficial to future groups of women members and if

successful to seek to widen the opportunities to other groups within our union," he said.

Nicki Sysum, Gloucester branch, said that she had enjoyed the course and gained a lot of confidence as a result.

Nicoleta Popa, Wimbledon branch, also told RMT News that she had become a health and safety rep as a direct result of the confidence gained from completing the course.

Mary Jane Herbison, Glasgow No 2 branch, said that it had been a very positive experience and recommended other members take up the leadership challenge.

"I hope other can take this forward to enable them to learn to apply leadership theories in the workplace," she said.

Jennifer Aggrfy-Fynn, EPS branch said that it had been a real eye opener to learn the foundations of leadership skills.

"What I found interesting is that it is not about titles but about what actions you take to assist and engage with other people," she said.

Talking to the women at Unity House general secretary Mick Cash was very impressed and welcomed the initiative congratulating all those that took part.

"It is great to see our women members taking up courses like this to enable them to take up more leading roles in the work of the union," he said.

Andy Gilchrist said that he was hoping to expand the initiative through RMT's new partnership with East Riding College.

"I want to see many more members benefitting from such education which can make some significant contribution to ensuring that going forward our diversity of membership is reflected throughout our union," he said. ■

President's column



MURDER BY ANOTHER NAME

I sat down to write this month's article, only to be interrupted by the sickening reports of the Israeli state murdering unarmed protesters in Gaza.

Our impartial BBC were reporting that there had been 'clashes between the protesters and soldiers, that had left many dead', given the impression that those involved were equally to blame. The credibility of our media disappeared a long time ago, as all major media sources are controlled by the boss's club.

International groups have described the situation in Gaza as a bloodbath "the policy of Israeli authorities to fire irrespective of whether there is an immediate threat to life on Palestinian demonstrators in Gaza, caged in for a decade and under occupation for half a century, has resulted in a bloodbath that anyone could have foreseen"- (The Human Rights Watch).

Anyone wishing to show support can do so by joining the Palestine Solidarity Campaign at www.palestinecampaign.org.

Recently our government did what it does best, denying bursaries for nurses, even though we're currently 40,000 below the numbers needed, their argument may be that we need to save money in times of austerity. Funny that the taxpayers are [reportedly] being asked to pay £300, 000 for a wedding dress because a certain family have to live on benefits.

Not funny when you consider £220,000 would have been the extra cost to clad Grenfell Tower in non-combustible material. I think we know what side our government is on.

I attend several conferences, starting with our young members' in Portsmouth and I am happy to report that the future is in safe hands, with many of the delegates already more than able to replace the old guard. A special mention to Lorna Tooley and Matt Morris for running a tight conference.

I then moved on to Twickenham for our Supervisory and Associated Grades, another well run conference, well done to Michael

Campbell and others.

It was a privilege to attend the 25th anniversary evening of our Black and Ethnic Minority Members Conference in Cardiff, special mention to Glen Hart for all his hard work and again there were many others also.

Our Bus Workers followed in Ryde I.O.W and again, Keith Murphy and Paul Rossiter delivered a great conference.

That was followed by the Scottish Trade Union Congress in Aviemore where I got to spend time with some of the best comrades that I've met during my time as president, even if they do like to have the odd laugh at my expense.

Wigan next for Engineering with my good friend John Kenned as president, special mention to Mark Denny for arranging a great evening for the delegates (you can't beat a Wigan pie and a JAM tribute band!).

On to Reading, for our Station Staff and Associated Grades. Ross Marshall as ever the organiser, with Chris Riley and Reading branch helping out. Not sure if they've got over having to listen to me, Steve Hedley and Michelle Rodgers on the Karaoke.

Then Isle of Man, for our BGM Maritime Conference, chaired extremely well by Brian Reynolds.

All of our conferences are organising conferences, but they also give our members the opportunity to network, share good and bad stories and to learn how best to take the fight to the bosses.

"I am not blind to the shortcomings of our own people. I am not unaware that leaders betray, and sell out, and play false. But this knowledge does not outweigh the fact that my class, the working class, is exploited, driven, fought back with the weapon of starvation, with guns and with venal courts whenever they strike for conditions more human, more civilized for their children, and for their children's children"- Mary Harris Jones (Mother Jones), 1830- 1930.

In solidarity,

Sean Hoyle

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.

Remember...

- ✓ No health checks - guaranteed acceptance for UK residents aged 18-64
- ✓ Up to £50,000 cash lump sum
- ✓ No price increases
- ✓ Your premiums stay the same throughout your cover

Year 1 Cashback – get 10% of your first year's paid premiums back, as a thank you for choosing RMTProtect.



Simply visit:

www.rmtprotect.com/life

or call **0800 033 4184** for a free quote.

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 / Matter 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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OUR HISTORY

SOLIDARITY; Tony Benn addresses strikers



REMEMBERING THE P&O STRIKE

Thirty years ago over 2,000 seafarers were sacked after being on strike for over two months

The road to the industrial dispute began in January 1987 when P&O plc took over the European Ferry Operators Townsend Thorenson.

Two months later the Ferry 'Herald of Free Enterprise' overturned in the Belgium Port of Zeebrugge and 191 passengers and crew members lost their lives. Yet the new owners P&O pushed on with trying to maximise profits by cutting jobs, lengthening the remaining workers hours and cutting their pay.

In December 1987 the company told the National Union of Seamen (NUS) that it intended to reduce the annual

wage bill of £35 million by £6 million by cutting 500 out of 2,300 jobs and reducing earnings by an average of £25 a week.

It would also make seafarers work an extra one month a year and impose, in some cases, a work rota where some people would be working for 72 hours continuously.

The 2,300 seafarers refused to accept these ultimatums, voted to strike and stopped work on February 6 1988 - Many felt betrayed by a company to which some had literally given their lives, workers also asked why a company which had just

announced record profits, including £51.7 million from its European Ferries Group, needed to act in such a fashion.

Mass picketing by the seafarers, and some supporters had some success and a number of lorries booked on rival ferry operator Sealink were 'turned back'.

However, the deployment of very large numbers of police soon assisted the scab lorry and bus drivers to break the lines. However the NUS estimated that the financial damage caused to the company by the dispute was over £40 million.

It was a sum that P&O chairman, supporter of the

Conservative Party and personal friend of Margaret Thatcher, Sir Jeffrey Sterling was willing to spend in breaking the seafarers' organisation and working class resistance.

As a result the government requisitioned the union's funds and the strikers were finally forced to return to work in June 1989 while Lord Sterling was knighted.

In 1990 the National Union of Seamen amalgamated with the National Union of Railwaymen (NUR) to become the National Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers Union (RMT).



Retired members' advisory conference chair Tony Donaghey reports on their recent annual meeting in Doncaster

Conference opened by paying respect on the recent death of Brother Alex McFadden, life-long NUR and RMT member who was an active member of the retired section.

The RMT retired members advisory was set up about twenty five years ago to campaign and engage retired members in the union on retirement issues within our union and the wider national movement.

Around 50 delegates attended, discussed and debated the major problems existing for retired people including transport and the 3 crucial issue

of guards on trains.

Why do elderly and people with disabilities need guards on trains? Ageing is natural and we need more assistance particularly when travelling on public transport where pensioners and older use most to get around.

When British Rail first abolished guards on commuter trains some years ago, they didn't think through the impact on this section of our society and frequently these days there are no staff on stations or booking offices which adds to the problem.

Transport Consultant Peter

Rayner, who has spent most of his working life in the rail industry, acknowledged this lack of foresight in his address to conference and further added that the 2010 Disability Act of Parliament was being ignored and strongly suggested test cases of instances should be vigorously pursued.

Conference expressed solidarity with guards members who have been defending for the last two years safe train travel.

This year was the 10th anniversary of the Bus Pass and the 50th of the 1968 Transport Act and both were welcomed

but the continual reduction in rural bus services is a concern. It's all very well having a bus pass but more and more often there are no busses. Since 1984, when the provisions of the 1968 Act was deregulated, public transport has suffered and delegates thought it should be re-enacted.

Uniting the generations, Increase in State Pension Age, Older Peoples Commission, and Social Care, and the Citizen Rail Card were also discussed. Two members from the RMT young members section addressed conference.

MERSEY AWARD



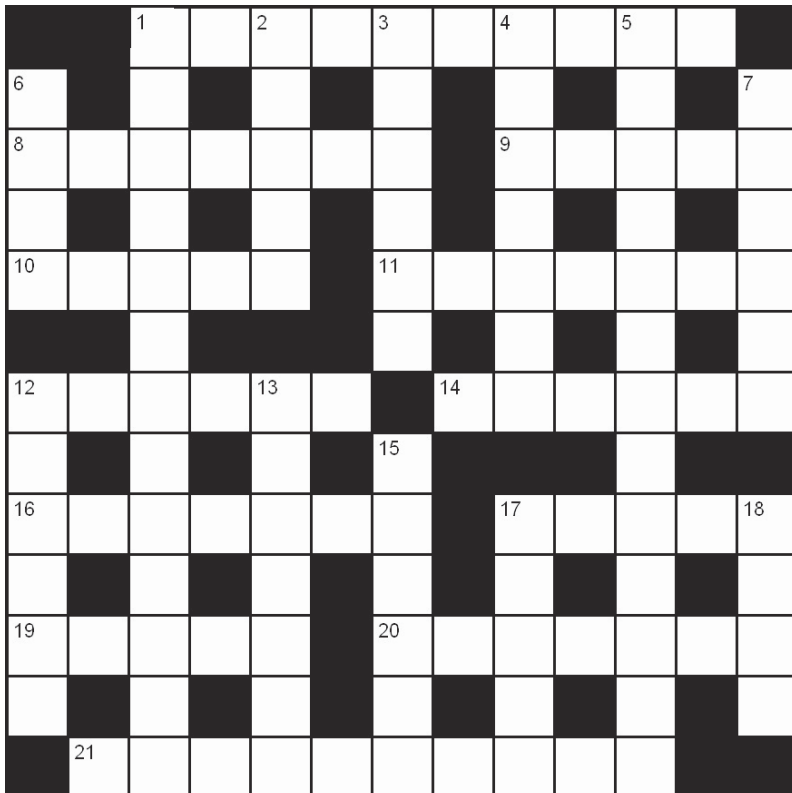
RMT general secretary Mick Cash presented Ronnie Hardman with his 40-year badge at the station grades conference. Ronnie works on Merseyrail and is a member of Central and North Mersey branch.

GLASGOW AWARD



Glasgow Shipping member Brian Reynolds received his 40-year badge and medal from George Lonie and RMT national secretary Steve Todd last month.

£50 PRIZE CROSSWORD



Last month's solution...



The winner of last month's prize crossword is Peter Shaw, Sheffield.

Send entries to Prize Crossword, RMT, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD by June 7 with your name and address.

Winner and solution in next issue.



Crossword sponsored by UIA

ACROSS

- 1 Not anticipated (10)
- 8 Locate (7)
- 9 Host (5)
- 10 Bind again (5)
- 11 Constantly present (7)
- 12 Wildcat (6)
- 14 Group of performers (6)
- 16 Oared vessel (7)
- 17 Wander (5)
- 19 Breathing device (5)
- 20 Look at (7)
- 21 Extremely pleasing (10)

DOWN

- 1 Fashionable (2,2,3,6)
- 2 Exhilarate (5)
- 3 Flycatcher (6)
- 4 West Country gorge (7)
- 5 Exclude from church (13)
- 6 Consumer (4)
- 7 Save (6)
- 12 Dull (6)
- 13 Too old (6)
- 15 Sorrowful (6)
- 17 Studious person (5)
- 18 Fine grained mineral (4)

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1 PERSONAL DETAILS.

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

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

3 **Your Employment.**

Employer		RMT Branch	
Job Description			

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

5 **Membership Status**

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

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

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

8 **Next of Kin**

Address

.....

.....

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

Your signature

Date

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To: The Manager	Bank/Building Society
Address	
	Postcode

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

Bank/Building Society account number

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

Branch Sort Code

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

Originator's Identification Number

9	7	4	2	8	1
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Reference Number

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

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Date

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