

# RMT *news*

Essential reading for today's transport worker

## ISLE OF MAN IN-HOUSE VICTORY



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[www.rmt.org.uk](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.rmtprotect.com)

## HOME INSURANCE

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

## HEALTH CASH PLAN

For a small monthly premium you can claim cash-back on dental, optical and therapy treatments. Visit  
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**Join RMT by visiting**  
**[www.rmt.org.uk](http://www.rmt.org.uk)**

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## EDITORIAL



# TAKING THE RAP

Rail staff are bearing the brunt of the chaos caused by the on-going and wholly avoidable timetable crisis as tempers fray across the country and the government continues its campaign by proxy to remove safety-critical guards from services.

Both Govia Thameslink and Arriva Rail North should be stripped of their franchises after performance measures revealed that that one in five trains are being delayed or cancelled – despite services already being axed under the “emergency timetable” fix approved by the government.

It is clear that the privateers are planning to shred the safety culture in the same way that they have shredded the timetables.

Yet Transport secretary Chris Grayling continues to deny any responsibility whilst placing the blame everywhere else except his own Department of Transport.

His constant attacks on the workforce and Network Rail, an organisation that Grayling has deliberately set out to undermine on ideological grounds, has to stop and we need a new approach which sees our railways as a vital public service rather than a one way ticket to the bank for greedy and incompetent train companies.

There is a real danger that the timetable chaos unleashed across the country fades from the headlines and just becomes accepted as the norm with both Chris Grayling and his contractors let off the hook. It is important that that is not allowed to happen.

It is clear as day that both Govia and Arriva are in breach of their franchise terms by any reasonable measure and to allow this shambles to just stagger on is wholly unacceptable.

In the meantime this union will continue to fight for passenger safety and against any extension of Driver-

Only Operation.

This union will also continue to fight against the bullying culture of London Underground managers after the company lost an important employment tribunal case, costing the taxpayer a six figure sum in the process.

Whilst we are delighted with the outcome, our member should never have been subjected to this travesty of justice which left him with an axe hanging over his head due to appalling mismanagement.

It once again proves that you need a strong trade union on your side when it's your name in the frame.

The upcoming 30th anniversary of the Piper Alpha disaster, which claimed the lives of 165 offshore workers and two seafarers, is also a reminder of the importance of trade unions in building a culture of safety.

Therefore we must welcome Health and Safety Executive's decision to use this anniversary to demand that all offshore oil and gas production operators in the North Sea do more to prevent dangerous releases of oil or gas.

We also welcome the Isle of Man government's decision to take ferry services in-house, a vindication of RMT's support for the public ownership of ferry services across the British Isles.

Finally the European Transport Federation has expressed huge frustration at the decision by MEPs to vote against road safety and for continued social dumping in the road sector across the EU.

As ETF president Frank Moreels said, MEPs have chosen the demands of business over quality jobs and the safety of road users while professional drivers will have less rest, less pay, with longer periods away from home –so much for Social Europe.

*Mick Cash*

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



Blackpool

# DEFEND THE GUARD

## RMT calls for Transport Secretary Chris Grayling to go before irreparable damage is done to Britain's railways

RMT has warned that if the current crisis engulfing huge swathes of Britain's railways isn't tackled as a matter of urgency it will leave a trail of lasting and irreparable damage.

Ill-conceived timetable changes, combined with staff shortages and the rank incompetence of Britain's profit-driven private rail companies, have reduced services on GTR, Northern and Trans Pennine Express to chaos with front line staff left to bear the brunt of passenger anger.

Instead of taking responsibility for his personal failure, the Transport Secretary Chris Grayling has instead chosen to prop up the private rail companies and launch an attack on Network Rail - an organisation that has been undermined by financial cuts and the axing of upgrading, renewal and electrification works imposed by Grayling himself.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the daily chaos

on Britain's railways was down to a toxic combination of corporate incompetence and political failure that can be traced directly to the door of Grayling.

"Instead of trying to blame everyone other than himself and his private operators he should accept responsibility and go.

"The constant attacks on the workforce and Network Rail, an organisation that Grayling has deliberately set out to

undermine at every turn on ideological grounds, have to stop and we need a new approach which sees our railways as a vital public service rather than a one way ticket to the bank for greedy and incompetent train companies," he said.

RMT members on Northern Rail stood rock solid and united once again and took further strike action this month in the long running dispute which is

about putting public safety and access before private profit on our railways.

The union has warned that Northern Rail is planning to shred the safety culture in the same way that they have shredded the timetables as it announced further strike action later this month.

A protest over rail safety and the franchise fiasco will also take place outside the Regional Transport Summit being held at



Leeds

the Hilton Hotel, Deansgate in Manchester on Monday June 25 starting at 8am.

Chris Grayling is due to speak at this conference as are regional mayors, Transport for the North and others responsible for the ongoing rail franchise fiasco and the plan to axe guards from Northern Rail and Merseyrail trains.

"It is ludicrous that we have been able to negotiate agreements in Wales and Scotland that lock in the guard guarantee but we are being blocked from reaching the same settlement across the North of England.

"A solution to this dispute is within our grasp but the German owned Arriva need to stop sticking their heads in the sand, get back round the table and work with the union to bolt it down.

"RMT members at Arriva Rail North have shown extraordinary resilience and determination in the fight for rail safety and we thank the public for their continuing support and understanding," said Mick Cash.

Further strike action on South Western Railway is planned while action on Greater Anglia has been suspended following an improved offer regarding guards on the train.

Mick Cash said that it was a good enough offer to be put to the membership and hoped the other companies would see sense and get around the table.

"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 Grayling stopped playing politics with passenger safety and started taking the issue seriously.

"He should be putting pressure on his rail contractors to reach a settlement rather than encouraging this cavalier approach to passenger safety and disabled access.

"RMT remains committed to the principle of genuine and meaningful talks in this dispute," he said.



Carlisle



Middlesbrough



Sheffield



Carlisle



Workington



Newcastle



Lime Street, Liverpool



Newcastle



# PICCADILLY LINE DRIVERS BALLOTTED

London Underground train operators on the Piccadilly line are being balloted for industrial action following the refusal of management to address long running concerns of ripping up agreements, bullying and lack of drivers.

RMT general secretary Mick

Cash said that, due to new Tory anti-union laws imposing minimum thresholds in voting numbers, it was important that members took part in the ballot to overcome this draconian legislation.

"We also need to send a clear message to LUL that

members have had enough of the daily abuses taking place and the refusal to allow RMT reps to carry out their duties," he said.

Issues involved include insufficient driver numbers and unacceptable staffing levels on night tube, refusal to adhere to

framework agreements, obstruction of reps to carry out trade union duties, and growing bullying and harassment by management.

The ballot closes on June 21 and the union remains available for talks.



## JUBILEE LINE DRIVERS' STRIKE SUSPENDED

Drivers on the Jubilee Line suspended strike action this month following ACAS talks over the imposition of new timetables that ride roughshod over current rostering agreements.

After an overwhelming vote for action driver members strikes were planned for this month but new proposals were tabled following 12 hours of talks.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that it was outrageous that tube managers had tried to bulldoze through timetable changes without agreement that ride roughshod over existing rostering agreements.

"It is symptomatic of a management that is out of control and hell bent on imposing change through diktat rather than through the established negotiating machinery.

"Drivers are angry at the impact on work-life balance and rightly see this move as the thin end of a very long wedge that could see processes and agreements unilaterally.

"We can only hope that tube management will fully reverse the imposition of these changes and to start talking seriously with the unions rather than wading in with the big stick," he said. ■

## TRANSPLANT MEMBERS VOTE FOR STRIKE ACTION

Members working for tube train maintenance company Transplant have voted by over 90 per cent on a massive turnout for industrial action over pay parity and train preparation payments.

Members have already taken part in industrial action including an overtime and rest day working ban but due to new draconian anti-union legislation in the 2016 Trade Union Act the strike mandate had to be renewed.

Transplant, formerly a division of Tube Lines Limited who are now an internal

supplier and owned by Transport for London, is currently demanding that staff carry out train preparation duties not in their contracts without any further payments.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash congratulated members for turning out in such numbers to defeat unjust Tory anti-union laws and to continue the battle for workplace justice.

"The union is ready to negotiate and we have a further mandate to take further industrial action, the ball is firmly in the company's court," he said. ■

# END LONDON UNDERGROUND BULLYING

## LUL employment tribunal loss wake-up call to end culture of bullying staff

RMT has called on London Underground to end the culture of picking on staff and misusing procedures after the company lost an important employment tribunal case, costing the taxpayer a six figure sum in the process.

The driver in question was re-instated by LU at a resolution meeting with the Employment Tribunal Judge and London Underground management recently.

Not only has LUL re-instated the member back to his driver position but they have also agreed to back pay all his wages and pay his legal costs plus compensation. All due to the fact that trumped up charges were levelled at him with procedures bent and misused to try and make them stick.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that RMT was delighted with the outcome of the case but the member should never have been subjected to

this travesty of justice from the start which left him with an axe hanging over his head due to appalling mismanagement by London Underground.

"The victory, which will cost the London taxpayer a packet due to the vindictive attitude of the company, is ringing out

across the combine as staff take note of both the background and outcome. It proves that you need a strong trade union on your side when it's your name in the management frame.

"The whole debacle also serves as a wake-up call to London Underground to end the

bullying culture which is rife throughout the company and stop setting up and picking off individual staff.

"The attempt to rule by fear has been exposed by this case and RMT is demanding it is called to a halt immediately," he said. ■

## NATIONALISE NORTHLINK



RMT activists and officials from across Scotland took the union's Nationalise Northlink campaign and demands around the Scottish government's Fair Work Framework to the SNP conference in Aberdeen this month. Over 1,500 leaflets and postcards of the campaigns were distributed to delegates and many positive discussions took place.

# POLITICAL STRATEGY AGREED



## RMT special general meeting (SGM) agrees to align union towards Labour whilst remaining unaffiliated

The RMT special general meeting held in Doncaster at the end of May agreed to align the union towards Labour and encourage its members to be active in the party whilst remaining unaffiliated.

Following a consultation with union branches and regional councils an RMT SGM agreed a recommendation from the union's national executive committee to align the union towards the Labour Party and encourage its 80,000 plus members to be active in the Labour Party, whilst remaining unaffiliated.

The SGM also adopted a recommendation from the NEC that will allow the unions 200 plus branches and regional councils to use their political funds to back Labour at elections, whilst Labour continues to support key RMT policies on transport and trade union rights.

RMT branches are also encouraged to develop relations with local Labour Parties. The meeting agreed that the union

should consider what other steps it can take to support, defend, and develop the socialist advances that have been made within the Labour Party. SGM made specific note of the huge progress that has been made within Labour around the adoption of core RMT policies including public ownership, workers' rights and the support for the campaign to keep the guard on the train.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the consultation had shown that the views of within the union were finely balanced and the SGM had decided that whilst we do not support affiliation at this current time there is the potential for the union to affiliate to the Labour Party at a future date if there is clearer support for this.

"Many of our members have reacted angrily to constant attempts by a hard core of Labour MPs to undermine Jeremy Corbyn and the radical progressive changes he has made to Labour.

"In contrast there is a clear desire amongst RMT members to support Jeremy Corbyn and the left leadership of the Labour Party and that is why we are now be putting in place other concrete steps to throw the weight of RMT behind supporting the socialist

advances that have been made in the Labour Party, this will include aligning ourselves towards Labour, encouraging members to be active in Labour and allowing our branches and regions to fund Labour candidates," he said.



Mick Cash with Jeremy Corbyn at last years AGM

# EU SOCIAL DUMPING ROLLS ON



## MEPs vote to legalise wage discrimination and reduce rest time in the road sector

The European Parliament Transport Committee recently voted against road safety and for social dumping for Europe's three million professional drivers.

The Committee's amendments to the EU Mobility package would confirm the exclusion of road workers from the new EU Directive on Posted Workers – denying drivers the right to fair pay when working across borders.

They would also mean less rest every month, with employers able to keep drivers on the road for three weeks with no more than 24 hours' rest increasing the risk of fatigue-related accidents.

European Transport Federation president Frank Moreels expressed huge frustration at the decision to reduce drivers' rest time.

"MEPs have chosen the demands of business over the quality of jobs and the safety of road users. If this decision stands, professional drivers will have less rest per month, with longer periods away from home.

"That means more tired drivers, and we know that fatigue on the road kills. How does this inspire faith in the European project?" he asked.

ETF general secretary Eduardo Chagas highlighted the backward step on sleeping in vehicles.

"It is shocking that MEPs have voted to overturn a recent ECJ ruling against drivers spending their long breaks in their vehicle.

"Drivers now face many more weekends spent in lorry and coach parks far from home, cooking on the road or in their cabins," he said.

A BBC investigation last year found that drivers from poorer countries were being brought into Western Europe by lorry firms based in Eastern Europe paying less than three pounds an hour.

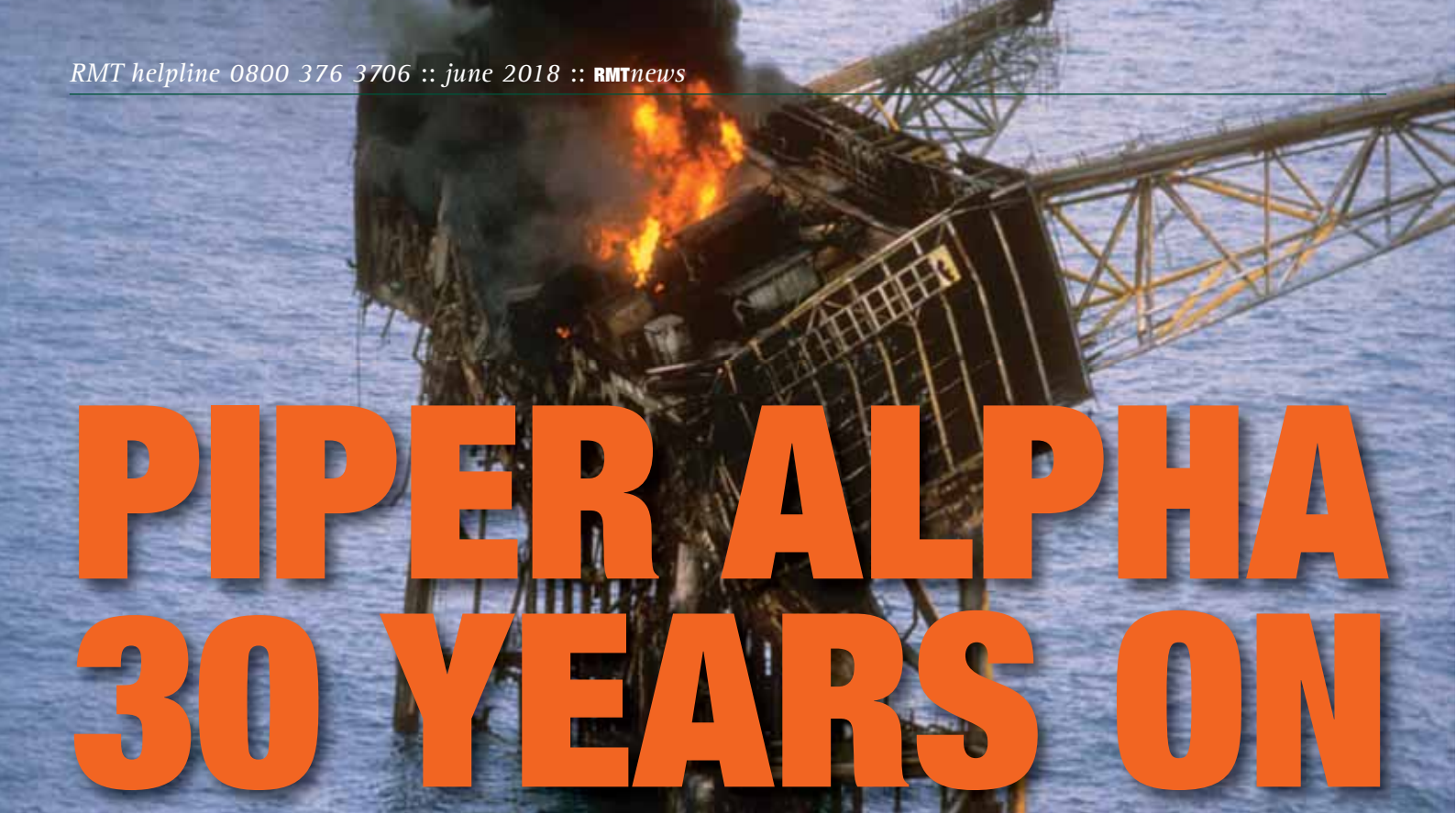
RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that free movement provisions in the EU single market was allowing widespread social dumping to flourish in the road transport sector as well as the maritime sector.

"Any EU legislation that allegedly prevents social dumping is just window dressing and is being ignored with impunity.

"It is glaringly obvious that there are no controls in place or sanctions against companies that actively encourage social dumping on an industrial scale in as relentless drive to the bottom in the pursuit of corporate profits," he said.

This process of social dumping is growing within the EU as a result of the EU's 'four freedoms' – the complete free movement of capital, goods, services and labour within the EU. Employers have been using these so-called 'freedoms' by moving workers from eastern states to batter down wage levels in western states.

This has been backed up by various EU court rulings in favour of business rights in cases such as Laval, Viking and Rüffert which, in various ways, undermine the rights of workers to protect their wages and conditions.



# PIPER ALPHA 30 YEARS ON

## HSE demands more action to prevent the release of oil or gas in the North Sea

July 6, 2018 marks the 30th anniversary of the Piper Alpha disaster which claimed the lives of 165 offshore workers and two seafarers.

The explosion in 1988 that triggered the Piper Alpha disaster was due to gas leaking from a pipe that had been inadequately closed off following maintenance work.

To mark the anniversary, the director of the Health and Safety Executive's energy division Chris Flint has written to all offshore oil and gas production operators in the North Sea to demand more action on preventing the accidental release of oil or gas.

Last year, ConocoPhillips, one of the world's largest independent oil and gas exploration and production companies, was fined £3m after gas leaks on a gas platform off the Lincolnshire coast put workers' lives in danger.

Another major release in the North Sea occurred on Total's offshore Elgin platform in 2012, resulting in a fine of £1.125m in December 2015.

The HSE says that, although

progress has been made in reducing the number of hydrocarbon releases (HCRs), they continue to occur, and that more should be done to tackle them.

The letter requires operators to complete a self-assessment on HCR risks, then relay these to the HSE by 20 July 2018, together with a summary of their improvement plans and actions.

"HCRs remain a concern, particularly major HCRs because of their greater potential to lead to fires, explosions and multiple losses of life. There have been several such releases in recent years that have come perilously close to disaster"

Mr Flint said that every HCR was a safety threat, as it represented a failure in an operator's management of its risks.

"HCRs remain a concern, particularly major HCRs because of their greater potential to lead to fires, explosions and multiple losses of life.

"There have been several such releases in recent years that have come perilously close

to disaster," he said.

He said that operators should learn from incidents across the process industries, both onshore and offshore, to identify where improvements can be made.

"Experience from our investigations is that HCRs typically happen because there have been failings across the board.

"Poor plant condition and breaches of procedures are often immediate causes, but beneath that we often find a lack of leadership, a poor safety culture, and evidence that weaknesses have existed for some time, but haven't been picked up through audit, assurance and review and then dealt with," he said.

The letter references revised HSE guidance on inspecting for loss of containment, and a new HCR prevention document produced by the Step Change in Safety organisation, set up to improve safety in 1997.

"If you get the safety culture right, staff will be much more likely to spot hazards, challenge when standards aren't right, and be engaged in improvement.

"And if you have an effective

system of monitoring and audit in place, leadership will know which systems need fixing, and can target their efforts to prevent the incidents occurring in the first place," he said.

The self-assessment should include a review of their "process safety leadership", and auditing their safety management systems against the recognised process safety management standard.

The HSE has committed to feeding back significant findings to the industry later in the year.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash welcomed the intervention by HSE at a time when the pressure on the off shore workforce is immense in terms of cuts, increased workload and increased working hours.

"We have come close on a few occasions and it's often been luck as opposed to good management that a disaster was avoided.

"It is appropriate that HSE should issue a statement in the terms they have as it will help to focus minds and remind everyone they must remain vigilant," he said. ■

# FIGHTING FOR OFFSHORE WORKERS

## Offshore organising conference welcomes fatigue report findings on three weeks on/three weeks off rotas

Delegates to the 2018 offshore shipping grades industrial organising conference welcomed a hard-hitting report that found that spending three weeks at a time offshore left many oil workers feeling they are suffering substantial fatigue and more likely to experience psychological distress.

The Robert Gordon University report, commissioned in partnership with Acas and the offshore unions including RMT, suggested that many found it more difficult to recover from the new three weeks on/three weeks off rota pattern.

The previous rota system was two weeks on/three weeks off and the changes to working patterns were brought in to save money.

RMT national secretary, Steve Todd said that the report was a timely reminder of the shocking approach oil and gas companies and their contractors had taken to industrial relations since the oil price fell in 2014.

"Three-weeks on three-weeks off, now worked by a majority of offshore contractors, compared to only 17 per cent a decade ago, is clearly driving a deterioration in the work-life balance amongst offshore staff.

"Yet it has never been subject to full consultation between the workforce, their trade unions, oil companies and employers.

"The practice is regarded as risky by the HSE and is not used in the Norwegian sector which is also contending with the impact on costs from the collapse in oil prices in recent years.

"We continue to completely oppose this shift pattern and its



imposition on the contractor workforce and will use this report to spell out to politicians, regulators and the public the liberties that continue to be taken by some oil companies and their contractors - 3-on 3-off is not for RMT," he said.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that offshore workers' rights had suffered during the recent down turn in the oil and gas industry and this report is an important measure of the extent to which employers had imposed terms and conditions of the contractor workforce which were badly affecting work-life balance, as well as fundamental employment rights.

"This report is a wake-up call to the whole sector but, vitally, the government and the Oil and Gas Authority must start putting this industry on a sustainable footing and not continue with day rates, 3-on 3-off and other exploitative employment practices which sees jobs, skills and tax revenue flowing out of the UK," he said.

Delegates also called for the standardisation of Diving Decompression and Excursion tables for all Companies operating within the UK Continental Shelf.

David Marshall, North East Shipping said that currently, each company used its own tables and there have been reported decompression

incidents using 'Quick Tables' to the detriment of divers.

"If the tables were standardised, it would remove any such advantage with each Company having to make the same allowance during their bidding process for the job. The Norwegian Union Industr Energi is active already in this area," he said.

Conference called for a joint campaign with IE to standardise tables and for RMT members to assist in providing documentation and undocumented issues they have experience with their tables.

Delegates were also concerned that some companies did not correctly acknowledge the logging of diving lock outs and what is defined as a lock out.

"We understand that some employers are refusing to let employees record lock outs to use as evidence to take them to the next pay grade level in the ODIA agreement.

"The definition of a lock out is as follows, working diver leaving the closed diving bell in the water. This happens twice in a normal bell run, but as mentioned certain companies are only allowing divers to log one per bell run.

"We believe that a diver should be allowed to count every lock out that they do and not be dictated to by certain

Companies in the ODIA agreement," said David Marshall.

Conference called on the union to combat such 'rogue' activities and involve the ODIA to prevent such a flagrant disregard for pay, terms and conditions.

Delegates were also concerned that offshore diving companies are abusing the trainee rate system in the ODIA agreement and called on the union to initiate a campaign to highlight any or all companies that were doing so.

Conference also called on the union to increase its efforts on recruitment and called for people to attend all heliports at Aberdeen, Humberside, Norwich and Blackpool at least every month.

Delegates also noted that members were experiencing increasing problems after being certified fit to return to work by their doctors.

They were subsequently found to be 'unfit' for offshore work by a company doctor and more and more GPs were refusing to issue a sickness certificate where they have already deemed a member to be fit.

Conference called on the union to lobby the OGUK to protect members from being in a no pay situation.

# FIGHTING FOR THE SHIPPING INDUSTRY

*Delegates to RMT's Shipping BGM are joined by Isle of Man Infrastructure Minister Ray Hamer to mark the historic breakthrough in the public ownership of the Steam Packet.*

## Isle of Man ferries taken in-house as 2018 Docks and Shipping grades meet in Douglas

As the RMT docks and shipping bi-annual general meeting met in Douglas news came in that the Isle of Man government was to take the lifeline Isle of Man Steam Packet Company (IoMSP) into public ownership.

Speaking at conference RMT national secretary Steve Todd said that it was good news for RMT members and passengers that the IoMSP, currently owned by Portuguese financiers Banco Espirito Santo, was being taken into the public ownership.

"We have been in regular contact with the Manx Government over the future of the Steam Packet and this was one of the best options on the table, although we will need to nail down the terms of the transfer to ensure that terms and conditions, including pensions of our members, are not adversely affected.

"We also need to secure commitment around the training of the next generation of Manx and UK seafarers who will deliver the Isle of Man Steam Packet services for islanders and visitors for the decades to come, on new vessels.

"We have developed a good working relationship the Minister for Infrastructure Ray Hamer with whom to discuss this very promising development," he said.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the Isle of Man government's decision was a vindication of RMT's support for public ownership and operation of ferry services across the British Isles.

"We will take soundings from our members on the Steam Packet and look to work with the Manx government to provide a publicly operated Isle of Man Steam Packet fleet that is properly invested in, both in terms of crew and vessels to fight back against the challenges from aviation and low cost operators, who must continue to be excluded from any new Strategic Sea Services Agreement," he said.

This development was tempered by the fact that the next public contract for the Northern Isles Ferry services from the mainland to Orkney and Shetland will now be put out to tender.

The union was disappointed by the Scottish government's reluctance to take the Northern Isles contract in-house on a permanent basis.

"We will continue the fight to release lifeline Scottish ferry services from the pro-private restrictions of EU tendering requirements and for full protection of our members' jobs, pensions and terms and

conditions as we enter another expensive and unnecessary tendering process.

"We look forward to a positive campaign in support of the public sector bid to Nationalise NorthLink in the long-term interests of passengers, workers, communities, businesses and taxpayers on Orkney, Shetland and mainland Scotland," said Mick Cash.

RMT shipping member Brian Reynolds was elected to chair the BGM and got events under way with a packed agenda, including 34 motions and a range of guest speakers, showing that the shipping side of the union remains vibrant and forward looking with a work programme to match.

Steve Todd introduced his report and took delegates through the extensive range of activities of the maritime sector of the union over the past two years. He focussed in on a number of core areas where RMT has targeted the resources of the SOS2020 campaign, notably Condor Ferries and the Ships of Shame in Scottish waters with the union's success in ramming the message home demonstrated in the victory in enforcing the National Minimum Wage on Seatruck freight vessels chartered by

Serco on the Northern Isles contract.

Steve also paid tribute to members on Orkney Ferries who, after a long campaign of industrial action, managed to secure an acceptable pay offer from the company. Members at the Royal Fleet Auxiliary meanwhile still find themselves subject to the Government's one per cent pay cap with the union determined to break that austerity ceiling and secure a fair deal on the RFA in the current round of negotiations.

Delegates thanked Steve Todd for his report back and then moved on to the first block of motions, endorsing the work that has gone into the Nationalise Northlink campaign and the recent successes on both CalMac and P&O Ferries in terms of apprenticeship schemes, work that now needs to be rolled forwards alongside the broader objectives of SOS2020.

Belfast Shipping's motion on lifeboat safety brought a particularly strong response from the BGM floor. Pointing out that it is a disgrace in this day and age that RMT members were still being expected to put life and limb at risk with outdated, so-called safety training that is known to result in 70 per cent of deaths at sea.

The successful motion called for a campaign to mirror the much safer practices now followed in Australia as a result of union pressure.

BGM was delighted to welcome Jackie Smith the meeting, the ITF's Maritime Co-ordinator. She outlined the ITF's on-going campaign work around the Flags Of Convenience, pointing out that in the past two years inspectors had clawed back over \$80 million around the globe in unpaid wages, money which would otherwise have found its way into the pockets of the shareholders in the shipping companies. Jackie pointed out how the ITF's work neatly dovetails with RMT's own SOS2020 campaign.

Jackie was followed by assistant national secretary Mark Carden who gave a full briefing on the SOS2020 activities to date and the plans for the future which include taking the message on the Condor Ferries poverty pay

scandal direct to the Channel Islands in the next protest. Mark also thanked Head Office RMT staff for their assistance in developing and delivering the campaign.

Further motions were taken covering the full breath of the union agenda across the industry. Both Douglas Shipping and Liverpool Shipping drew attention to the various ways that the misuse of officer grades is being used to undermine the ratings grade. Both motions were carried unanimously, committing the union to future campaigning work on the issue.

Dan Henderson, Glasgow Shipping gave the BGM a presentation on his work at CalMac on mental health awareness. Dan works with a number of strategic partners and has been centrally involved in developing a three day course aimed at reps and line managers, tackling stigma and discrimination in the workplace on mental health issues.

Dan talked about how mental

health issues, and their impact of productivity, are usually missing from the radar when it comes to sickness absence monitoring and how the CalMac project is designed to make people feel comfortable addressing the issues and works to break down the usual atmosphere of negativity.

Delegates were pleased to have the opportunity to join the Island's Infrastructure Minister Ray Hamer for a picture down at the Steam Packet terminal with General Secretary Mick Cash and Regional Organiser Ken Usher, marking the historic move on public ownership.

Addressing the BGM in its final session Mick Cash thanked delegates and their branches for their hard work which has not only seen the union chalking up some important victories but which has also seen us putting the maritime industry firmly back on the national agenda under the banner of the SOS2020 campaign.



Jackie Smith



Steve Todd

## MORE UK RATINGS – NOT ENOUGH

RMT broadly welcomed government's new figures outlining the number of Ratings and Officers in the UK shipping industry but said that it was not enough.

The newly-released Department for Transport's Seafarer Statistics 2017 showed another small increase (950) to 9,830 in the number of UK Ratings working at sea.

These figures, based on the UK Chamber of Shipping's survey of its members, cover the year to June 2017 and include Royal Fleet Auxiliary seafarers. The main findings of note for RMT members were:

- The number of UK Ratings increased by 950 to 9,830. The total number of UK seafarers (Ratings and Officers) increased three per cent to 23,760.
- Between 2015 and 2017 the total number of Ratings increased by 9,030 (16 per

cent) to 65,260. Ratings from non-EEA countries accounted for nearly half (4,290) of that increase in employment. Ratings from other EEA countries accounted for 1,640 of those jobs.

- The number of Ratings of 'unknown' nationality working for UK Chamber of Shipping member companies more than doubled to 3,790.
- 53 per cent of total UK Ratings are aged 40 years or over, with that figure rising dramatically amongst deck (73 per cent) and engine (74 per cent) ratings.
- The number of UK Ratings in the deck and engine departments increased, although there was a fall in the number of Catering/Hotel/OBS department Ratings.
- Ratings from non-EEA countries held nearly 70 per

cent (45,160) of the jobs on merchant vessels in the UK shipping industry.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that increases in the number of ratings were always welcome, although most of the 9,000 plus Ratings jobs created since 2015 have gone to non-UK seafarers.

"The priority remains for the government to introduce regulations to apply and enforce the National Minimum Wage for seafarers, as they have committed to do.

"Seafarers, including the record number of UK Ratings in training, need employment and anti-discrimination reforms to improve their chances of getting a job in the maritime industry.

"Brexit is an opportunity to provide the level playing field for UK seafarers to compete for work, which is the only way to repair our maritime skills base."

RMT national secretary Steve

Todd stated that it was more weak growth for UK ratings which was not sufficient to avoid a skills deficit by the start of the next decade when thousands of ratings at work today will retire or leave the industry.

"It's worth noting that the figures from the Chamber of Shipping confirm that UK ratings only held 15 per cent of the 65,260 Ratings jobs amongst their members. Most of the growth has been amongst non-EEA seafarer Ratings, who now hold nearly 70 per cent of Ratings jobs at UK Chamber of Shipping companies.

"This is no way to prepare for a future which sees industry demand for Ratings increasing significantly.

"The government must work with RMT to force the industry into action which puts employment and training in the UK shipping industry on a more sustainable basis," he said. ■



# FIGHTING FOR CLEANERS

Well-attended cleaning grades conference called on the union to fight out-sourcing, zero-hours contracts, low pay and lack of sick pay

The second ever national industrial organising conference of transport cleaning workers was opened in Cardiff by conference president Shaun McCrudden.

RMT assistant general secretary Mick Lynch congratulated the many new faces in attendance and explained his role and how the officers, the executive, formulates policy. Mick also explained the role of conference and how it provides an opportunity for cleaners to make demands of the union and to shape future strategy.

He said that the union "felt it was important, due to the changes within the industry with sub-contractors, that this grade faces issues with out-sourcing, zero-hours contracts, low pay and no sick pay, and that these present new challenges to the union as these problems didn't exist when we worked with overarching transport bodies.

"You used to be able to use these jobs as springboards to promotion within the industry, but not anymore.

"Cleaners are working for an out-sourced company and there is no way to work up through the grades as there are many different employers.

"It was in recognition of these challenges that led to the formation of this conference and for the cleaning workers to make demands of the union through its machinery and to recognise the cleaning grades.

"The key function of this new conference is to discuss how we organise and how we can recruit more members and then ensure that they are fully trained so that they can deal with employers," he said.

Dave Marshall of the RMT organising unit chaired a session where delegates discussed how best to organise cleaners and look at the reasons why cleaners maybe don't join the union.

Delegates called for the end of discrimination against all cleaning grades that are employed by train operating company sub-contractors and

who do not receive a free travel privilege.

David Bossons, Crewe No. 1 said that all staff should be entitled to this privilege.

Anis Boukhalfa, Finsbury Park added: "On London Underground, on ABM contracts, the percentage of cleaners within the union is low and we don't have many members.

"Free travel is a big ask and if the unions try and get that one then huge numbers of cleaners will want to join and would be a big, big win," he said.

Tim Butler, York and District added that Northern did give free travel because cleaning is in-house.

"But this should be for all staff as we all wear the uniforms, agency staff are denied this privilege and the union policy is for free travel for all," he said.

Tim Butler also called for a reduction of hours in the working week.

"We are lucky at Northern as our cleaners are in-house but we do a 37-hour week rather than 35 like everyone else; all grades need to fight together to ensure that this grade gets the same entitlements as everyone else, this is for every grade as our discipline must be to support everyone," he said.

Anis Boukhalfa called on the union to campaign to make it easier for migrant workers to gain a permanent right to work in the UK.

"Migrant cleaners are discriminated against and the union needs to create a procedure to fight this issue" he said.

Vanessa Roberts, South East Essex asked that "the union write to all branches to remind them to make all efforts to involve cleaners in branch meetings and activities.

Her branch called on the union to make sure that all wage claims for cleaners included a demand for company sick pay.

Viktorija Aleksandrova, East Ham supported this call.

"Everybody knows our job

but we are exposed to dust, bacteria and faeces and we get abused both verbally and physically and sometimes it makes me want to cry when we are treated like this.

"I work in an open space and sometimes get flu, I have also hurt my back but I still have to do my job.

"I get stressed about it and it is not right that in a civilised country I don't get sick pay.

"We cannot afford to take time off and that is why I want the union to push forward on this issue," he said.

Delegates also called on the union to do more to end the scourge of out-sourcing cleaning contracts and for them to be taken back in-house.

Mohamed Said, East Ham said that London Mayor Sadiq

Khan had handed the cleaning contract on London Underground to ABM, who got the tender on the basis of being the lowest bidder.

Mick Lynch closed conference with a call to mobilise cleaners in order to improve their conditions and pay at work.

"We've got to make it the year of the cleaner and march down to City Hall and mass mobilise so that these issues are addressed and that will lead to in-sourcing.

"Winning sick pay will lead to holiday pay which will lead to higher pay.

"Higher pay will lead to employers taking cleaning contracts back in-house as it is no longer cheaper to do so," he said. ■

## A CLEANERS' CHARTER

Transport industry cleaners must have dignity and respect at work

- A living wage, as a minimum at entry, rising to at least £10 per hour at today's prices
- A pay increase each year and every year
- A proper career path and encouragement to apply for other jobs in the industry
- A decent pension
- Free travel
- Additional payments for unsociable hours and bank holidays
- A minimum of 20 days basic annual leave plus eight bank holidays – aiming for the railway industry's average of 32 days per year
- A fair sick pay scheme
- A 35-hour week without loss of pay
- Clean and properly equipped mess rooms
- Provision of uniforms and safety wear
- Full employment rights – no 'third party' sackings
- Direct employment, an end to contracting-out of cleaning



# ORGANISING ON THE ELIZABETH LINE

## RMT organises on one of the largest rail projects in Europe that will run from Essex to Berkshire through London

RMT is the main union representing staff on what will become known as the Elizabeth line when it becomes fully operational by the end of next year.

Costing around £15 billion and stretching over 80 miles, the route will operate through London connecting Heathrow to Shenfield and Abbey Wood in the east and Reading in the

west.

Currently known as MTR Crossrail, the line will link existing overground railway infrastructure in the east and west with a brand new underground Central Operating Section (COS).

MTR Crossrail commenced services from Liverpool Street to Shenfield in June 2015 under the banner Transport for London

(TfL) Rail and involved the TUPEing of staff from Abellio Greater Anglia on the first day of operations.

Similarly MTR Crossrail began services in the west under the same TfL Rail banner from Paddington to Heathrow last month.

By December 2018 trains will be running through 10 brand new stations open through

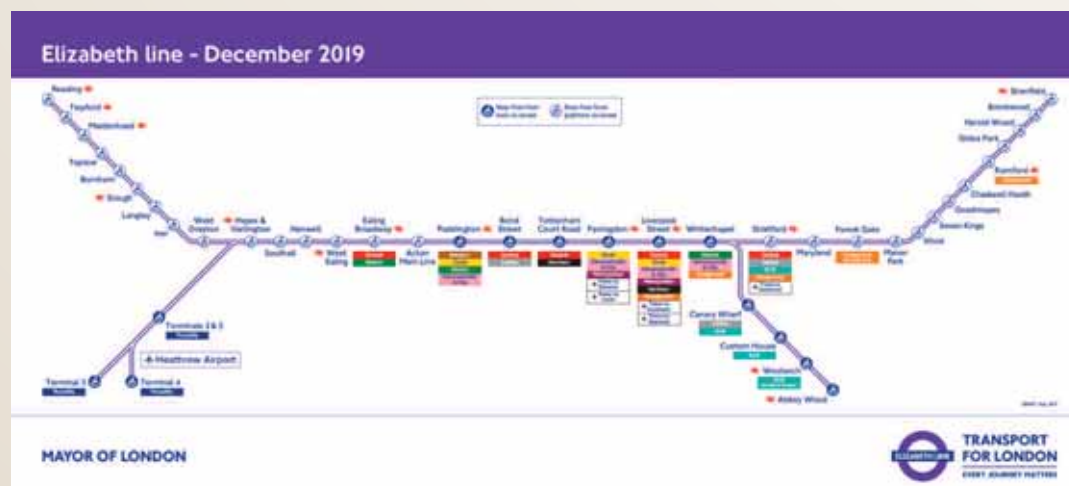
central London from Paddington to Woolwich through 15 miles of brand new tunnel.

By next May the rebranded Elizabeth line will be running through services from Paddington to Shenfield and by December 2019 it becomes a fully integrated railway.

From the beginning MTR Crossrail managing director Steve Murphy sent out a clear message to managers and reps that MTR Crossrail endorsed the important role that unions play, a message that has been reinforced in training programmes.

RMT regional organiser Peter Skelly, who retires this month, welcomed this approach when he began work with the company in 2015 on a new collective bargaining agreement which would be fit for purpose for smooth industrial relations.

"After some teething troubles we agreed the number of reps



and the machinery which involved local meetings with local reps and senior managers, functional meetings with functional reps and heads of department and Company council with company council reps and the executive team.

"Alongside this we have local safety meetings and joint safety committee with the executive team, safety reps attending both.

"There are a number of other forums where we have representatives which includes a pension forum, policy working group and learning reps," he said.

As a result of these negotiations the company introduced a final salary pension scheme, unusual in this day and age when employers are looking to close them in order to save money.

MTR Crossrail HR director Alison Bell said that starting the company was an interesting exercise as, unlike most franchises, it was not taking over an entity as it had been awarded the concession.

"This was a whole new business and everything had to be set up from scratch so we had to request to open up a

section of the Railway Pension Scheme.

"This was successful of course and as a result, after completing two years, staff in the defined contribution scheme can then transfer if they wish into the superior defined benefit scheme," she said.

RMT rep Christine Willett, area ticket office relief (MTR East), reiterated the advantages of developing policy with a brand new operation.

"We pushed very hard for disability access for passengers and cutting edge technology has been used right along the line.

"We also have achieved a menopause policy for staff that will be a bench mark for the industry and I shall be sharing our experiences in these areas to a TUC transport summit in the autumn," she said.

Barry Appleton, platform relief (MTR East) said that the union had campaigned for fully staffed stations and for a duty of care for platform staff.

"Stations will be staffed 15 minutes before the first train of the day and 15 minutes after the last one.

"Also we have a very pro-active policy of reporting abuse

with the threat of prosecuting offenders and we have seen assaults dropping as a result," he said.

Oluwarotimi Ajayi, Ealing Broadway station staff (MTR West), is one of the reps operating on the newly-opened west part of the project.

"We are putting new reps in place in order to take a full part in the collective bargaining machinery," he said.

RMT reps have also been recruiting agency staff working for STM Security on the Stratford to Shenfield contract (MTR East) involving around 160 agency workers.

After a lot of hard work and using the CAC procedure the union gained an overwhelming vote in favour of RMT recognition.

Two reps have now been elected and the first wage negotiation meeting has taken place with the agency with Peter Skelly as lead officer.

Dave Marshall of the RMT organising unit has reported that since this campaign 30 gate line jobs that were filled by agency workers have now been taken in-house.

"On all parts of the MTR

Crossrail operation RMT is the largest union, setting the agenda and organising both direct and agency staff.

"Branch activists and local reps make regular visits right along all parts of the operation recruiting, organising and representing all grades of staff.

"A meeting was held recently on the west side of the contract to recruit and organise STM agency workers to repeat the recognition success we have had with STM on the east of the contract," he said.

The company has also confirmed that it will not generally be using agency staff on central operating section and is currently recruiting 150 more staff in a workforce which is expected to reach over 1,150 when operating at full capacity.



ORGANISED: RMT rep Oluwarotimi Ajayi, Christine Willett, retiring regional organiser Peter Skelly and RMT rep Barry Appleton



# SUICIDE ON OUR RAIL NETWORK IS NOT INEVITABLE

Many members will remember when a suicide on the railway was considered the norm, part of the daily routine and accepted by the industry as such.

Sadly suicides still take place on the network, on average 252 per annum but there's no longer that inevitability about them. The industry has woken up to the fact that it has and can play

a part in not only stopping deaths on the railway but in society as whole.

That change in thinking started back in 2010 when industry partners came together and backed a move to have Network Rail oversee a programme of work to prevent suicides on the railway for the good of all. Today a dedicated team of five still continue that

work in a close partnership with Samaritans and a British Transport Police Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Unit, established in 2013.

RMT's AGM in 2017 debated and carried a resolution calling on the union to fully engage with the rail industry to help reduce the numbers of people taking their lives on the network. Not only are incidents

like this a personal tragedy for the individual involved but the event can also have a debilitating effect on railway workers directly involved and called upon to deal with them in their aftermath.

A Samaritans rail team has been in place since the start of the programme and for the first couple of years guided the industry in its understanding

and management of suicide prevention and postvention measures. Then in 2012 Network Rail introduced a full time programme manager, Ian Stevens to oversee the industry's response to the challenge suicides present it with.

Whilst Ian and his team are employed by Network Rail they are very much an industry resource with a focus on the future, essentially looking at initiatives to reduce the number of suicides over the long term whilst Train Operators and Network Rail routes look to meet the challenge in the short term.

In the time Ian has been leading the programme he says that he has seen a shift in emphasis behind the industry's support for it. "When I first came into the role there was a focus on the delay and financial impact of suicides on the operational railway. There was also of course consideration for those involved in these terrible events but at times that appeared secondary. Now it is very much the other way around – our people come first no matter who they work."

The programme has achieved many great things to date and has won a significant number of awards. Both at home and abroad it is seen as a world leader in the prevention of suicide in public spaces. Its greatest achievement in Ian's eyes though is how it shows that railway people still care for one another.

Samaritans has been providing a listening service to those in need of emotional support for over 60 years through their 201 branches across the UK & ROI. This support has grown from a telephone service, to providing face-to-face support in branches and in local communities, in schools, hospitals and in prisons, and providing support via text and email. Samaritans are also involved in guiding the media to improve responsible reporting of suicide and influencing government policy.

This experience in the suicide



*SUICIDE PREVENTION: Mid-platform fencing (here at Wimbledon) is proving to be one of the most effective physical barriers to those considering taking their lives on the railway*

prevention field was a key factor in Samaritans partnering with the rail industry. A programme management and training team deliver a range of services to rail companies across Great Britain to help prevent suicides, and to support rail staff and passengers affected by traumatic rail incidents. Samaritans deliver a help-seeking communications campaign to reach those most at risk of suicide, face-to-face post incident support for staff and passengers after traumatic rail incidents, and work closely with rail companies to develop and deliver suicide prevention plans.

In addition a key part of Samaritans rail partnership work is delivering the award-winning Managing Suicidal Contacts and Trauma Support Training courses, to staff operating in higher risk roles and/or in higher risk rail locations. Since 2010, over 16000 rail staff have been trained with the skills to identify and sensitively manage someone who may be at risk of suicide on the railway (or elsewhere). And over 2000 have been trained in Trauma Support Training, gaining a greater understanding of how trauma can affect people differently, and how to support team members who may be suffering from it. This has been

particularly well received by driver managers and drivers, as well as local and mobile operations managers and station teams.

Ola Rzepczynska, Samaritans Strategic Programme Manager for the rail programme, says: "Suicide affects so many people at home or in the workplace. It is a source of worry for many of us, but is something we find very difficult to understand and therefore talk about. Our training courses get incredible feedback from all who go on them, and a large part of that is down to giving delegates a better understanding of how someone may reach a point of crisis, how it can happen to any of us, and most importantly reassuring them that there is a

way back. Often just giving someone the time and space to talk and being there to listen can be enough. This is the underlying principle of Samaritans listening service, which has been lifesaving for so many people for over 60 years".

RMT believe that the best way of reducing suicides on the railway is to ensure that all front line facing rail staff should be able to access training and support provided by their employer to enable them to successfully identify those who may be at risk of taking their lives on the railway. RMT hope through their cooperation and support that our members can play a vital role in reducing the incidence of suicide on the railway. ■

## HELPING YOURSELF AND OTHERS

If you need someone to talk to, Samaritans are there to listen. Call free on 116 123, anytime. Or visit [samaritans.org](http://samaritans.org). If you're worried about someone and don't know how to help them, visit [samaritans.org](http://samaritans.org) and search 'how to start a difficult conversation'.

Samaritans and Network Rail will be working with RMT to set up training sessions at the Doncaster training centre later on this year. More details to follow.



**YOUR UNION. YOUR RIGHTS.  
YOUR LEGAL SERVICE.**



# Injured? we'll fight for you.

## Five reasons to take advantage of the **RMT Legal Service** :

- 1 100% compensation guarantee\*
- 2 No legal fees
- 3 Work-related personal injury representation
- 4 Non-work related personal injury representation – on the roads and on holiday\*\*
- 5 Family member cover if they're hurt.

**Members in England and Wales**  
call free on **0845 712 5495**

**Members in Scotland**  
call free on **0800 328 104**

**Lines open 8am – 8pm Monday to Friday**  
(excluding Public Holidays)

**Lines open 9am – 5pm Saturday and Sunday**

For emergency, 24 hour criminal law advice  
call **075659118181** (England and Wales)  
or **0800 328 1014** (Scotland)

**But don't just take our word for it.**

“The RMT Legal Service has been fantastic. It shows that RMT membership is worth every penny.”

**RMT member, work accident claimant**

\*Within the union scheme. Terms and conditions apply. Claims must be brought within three years of the date of an accident or diagnosis. Exceptions do apply, please contact us for advice on whether or not you have a claim. \*\*Where claims can be pursued in UK courts.

## LEGAL

# FEEDING FAT CATS



## The government is seeking to penalise the innocent by introducing the Civil Liability Bill

The government has recently introduced a Civil Liability Bill into parliament which will deny access to justice to hundreds of thousands of people injured at work or on the roads every year.

Currently, anyone who is injured in a workplace accident or on the road can claim back the cost of getting legal help to advise them on a possible claim if their injuries are worth more than £1,000, which is the position for the vast majority of cases. It is only very few claims that are below the £1,000 'small claims limit', which means that only a small number of people have to take on the insurers on their own or pay for a lawyer from money that is meant to be compensation for their injuries and losses.

On the face of it the Bill is about whiplash claims but the government are going to use hidden powers to increase the small claims limit from £1,000 to £5,000 for all road traffic accident cases and from £1,000 to £2,000 for all other cases, including accidents at work. £2,000 is a lot of money for most workers, let alone £5,000, yet the government think it's OK to leave people injured through no fault of their own to fight well-funded insurers on their own.

It is estimated that up to a million people every year would be left on their own and trade union legal services will be undermined if the bill goes ahead. From the person injured at work who could have lost several months' pay to cyclists, pedestrians and even children, the injured will be left to fight a legal battle they financially cannot afford against those who can.

The government is intending to turn over law that has stood for generations – that the person who caused the injury should pick up the bill to ensure they get legal help and proper compensation – because they say there has been an increase in the number of false claims:

The government is claiming the Bill will enable insurers to cut consumers' motor insurance premiums by reducing so-called 'fraudulent' claims. However, there is no independent evidence of a problem of fraud from people injured on the roads – in fact the only statistics on fraud come from the insurers themselves! If there really was a problem with fraud why did insurers pay out in 99% of all road traffic claims last year?

And there is no suggestion of fraud from people injured at

work whose claims have nothing to do with motor premiums anyway.

The government is claiming there is a problem with too many people seeking damages for whiplash injuries in road traffic accidents. However, whiplash has nothing to do with people injured at work, but the government is using a 'crisis' ramped up by the insurers to take away rights from everyone.

The government is claiming that there are a 'high number of claims' which need to be reduced, however claims costs have fallen by 42 per cent in the last six years (on the Association British Insurers' own figures) meaning the insurers have saved over £8 billion and the Compensation Recovery Unit shows that all claims are down in 2017.

The government is claiming that the Bill will save money for consumers. This is despite the insurers saving an astonishing £11 billion in the last six years yet premiums are higher now than ever.

The government have kept quiet about their admission in the Bill's impact assessment that the changes will take £6m every year from the NHS and £140 million every year from the taxpayer, while generously

providing an extra £1.3 billion profit every year to the insurers.

The government is claiming there would be savings for motorists. First these savings were £50, then they were 'about £40' and in the latest Queen's Speech they were 'about £35'. The truth is that Insurers cannot be trusted to pass on savings to motorists. They have broken previous similar promises to reduce premiums in the past. The government has already gone on record to say that they won't even force insurers to do so.

The truth is that the government's cries of 'compensation culture' in whiplash injuries on the roads is actually a fig leaf to distract people from the government's true intentions: to attack access to justice for all injured people, including workers and to pass £ billions to their rich mates in the insurance industry.

These insurer-backed proposals can still be stopped. Help us defeat them. Put pressure on the government to think again by writing to your MP – there is a pre drafted letter at <http://www.feedingfatcats.co.uk>.

Follow @FeedingFatCats on Twitter and support our campaign. ■



# DISABLED MEMBERS BUILD SOLIDARITY

## Disabled members' conference hear's powerful message of solidarity from Disabled People Against Cuts (DPAC)

Disabled RMT members from around the country met recently to discuss workplace issues and agree strategies for challenging discrimination.

This was the second annual RMT disabled members' conference which brought together twenty delegates, twice as many as last year.

Branches submitted five motions and conference thoroughly debated and carried them all. This included a detailed plan for union action on mental health, training courses to be held in accessible venues; fighting funding cuts for disabled children, criticising 'pity campaigning' by charities and asking the union to ensure that reps stick to union policy when representing members accused of discrimination.

Delegates also took part in a series of workshops, looking at how RMT can become more accessible; mental health; the social model of disability;

mental health; and representing disabled members.

Conference elected Janine Booth as chair of RMT's disabled members' advisory committee and Becca Masters as vice-chair and voted to hold next year's conference in Plymouth.

Paula Peters of Disabled People Against Cuts (DPAC) told delegates that after eight years of brutal Tory austerity, including £28.4bn in social care spending cuts and horrendous benefit cuts, disabled people

found ourselves in a battle for the right to exist.

In 2016, after four years of DPAC campaigning, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities committee ruled that the UK was guilty of grave and systematic human rights violations towards disabled people.

In 2017 DPAC and others presented further evidence and the UN committee stated that the impact of the cuts were a human catastrophe on disabled

people's lives.

"Due to horrendous benefits assessments, 590 people have taken their own lives," she said.

In April, DPAC held a day of action against Universal Credit, with street actions across the UK. Activists occupied the lobby area of Parliament, turning it into a 'crime scene' because Universal Credit is a crime against claimants.

"Disabled people will be plunged further into poverty with the abolition of severe disability allowance, many



DPAC supporting RMT action in defence of the guard

losing over £40 a week. The 'rape clause' will cause distress to women and trap them in abusive relationships.

"As disabled passengers, we know that driver-only operated trains and the removal of platform staff severely impacts on our freedom to travel and puts our safety at risk.

"A driver can't get us off and on the train and often can't see one end of the train to another. Southern Rail has rolled back the turn-up-and-go scheme, so we have to book assisted travel 24 hours in advance.

"My two local train stations in Orpington have had their funding for accessible lifts put back to 2022, with no guarantee of the funding even then.

"With Southern, Northern, Greater Anglia and South Western removing guards, we must continue the campaign against driver-only operation. The fight to keep guards on the train is everyone's fight," she said.

DPAC has joined many RMT picket lines and has thanked the union for the fight it is mounting.

"This government thought that disabled people would take these cuts lying down.

"They were wrong and John McDonnell, a great supporter of DPAC, said that change does not take place in parliament, it takes place on the streets, in our communities.

"When you have a government which is not listening, you are left with little choice. "So we block roads, we occupy buildings and we speak out in solidarity with trade unions.

"We trashed the reputation of ATOS and the Work Capability Assessment, we highlighted the human cost of the cuts, we took the government on in court, and we brought about the UN inquiry.

"Let's learn from one another, share new ideas, have discussions and build networks and let's get the Tories out and put an end to austerity," she said to applause. ■

## President's column



# CONTINUING WITH OUR POLITICAL STRATEGY

On May 30, we held our Special General Meeting in Doncaster to decide whether to affiliate to the Labour Party or continue with the current political strategy.

The wide consultation, which took place with our branches and regional councils, proved to be inconclusive. Therefore, our Supreme Governing Body took this position to mean 'no change' from the status quo.

I would like to place on record my thanks to all the delegates that took part in the debate, and also for conducting themselves in a respectful and comradely way.

Now is the time to move forward and refocus our sights on the many fights we have ahead of us – and demonstrate exactly what a fighting democratic union should look like.

Recently we have seen the unacceptable face of politics, whereby a humanitarian catastrophe was only narrowly averted by the goodwill of some. The rescue vessel Aquarius picked up 629 men, women and children from the Mediterranean Sea. There were over one hundred children, as well as pregnant women onboard, and many others were suffering from critical chemical burns and/or hypothermia. All were found to be suffering from considerable levels of distress.

As these desperate souls were discovered in Italian waters you would expect international rules to be followed, whereby they would be landed safely and their medical needs attended to – regardless of their right to stay or not. However, the newly elected far-right Italian Interior Minister, Matteo Salvini, had other ideas and they were denied entry.

With Medecins Sans Frontieres [Doctors without Borders] reporting that food and water would soon run out, the Spanish Socialist Prime Minister, Pedro Sanchez, offered to allow the Aquarius passage to dock in Valencia, stating, "it was an obligation to do so". Have we really got to the stage where we're willing to allow people

to die, in order to make our political points?

By time you read this article I hopefully will have completed my challenge of abseiling down the Spinnaker Tower in Portsmouth.

The plan is, on June 17 [Father's Day], I will be abseiling 560 ft, down the Spinnaker Tower. In doing so, I hope to raise public awareness of our Train Guards and the key Safety Critical role they play every day on our trains.

The current Tory government and the train operating companies are united in their aim remove the Safety Critical function which the guard provides, a move that can only place additional risk upon the safety and accessibility of the traveling public.

With thousands of stations unstaffed around the country, passengers with disabilities will no longer be able to turn up and travel as and when they would like.

So, with the safety of our traveling public in mind, we've been in dispute for over two years this has placed additional hardship upon many of our members. I hope therefore to raise as much money as possible for our Disputes Fund. You can support me via the JustGiving link below – the page will remain open after the event.

[https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/sean-hoyle?utm\\_id=1&utm\\_term=B69zmJnPK](https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/sean-hoyle?utm_id=1&utm_term=B69zmJnPK)

We have been able to make some solidarity payments to striking members from time to time and I would ask that all branches find the time to arrange a fundraising event in order to ensure that support continues to be available when appropriate.

As I'm writing this on Bob Crow's birthday its only right that I quote him this month.

"If you fight you won't always win. But if you don't fight you will always lose"

In Solidarity  
Sean Hoyle



*Delegates with local MP Sandy Martin*

# FIGHTING FOR EQUALITY

RMT's LGBT+ conference backs  
Black Pride and calls for ban on  
'cure' therapy in fight for equality

A well-attended Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender plus conference meeting in Ipswich backed calls for the union to sponsor Black Pride, the campaign that supports the black and ethnic minority LGBT+ community.

UK Black Pride director Phyllis Opoku-Gyimah addressed conference and spoke of her work as an active trade unionist promoting equality on all levels.

UK Black Pride promotes unity and co-operation among all Black people of African, Asian, Caribbean, Middle Eastern and Latin American descent, as well as their friends and families, who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender.

She is affectionately known as 'Lady Phyll' due to her decision to reject an MBE to protest Britain's role in formulating anti-LGBT laws across its former empire which are still in force.

As a result of her campaigning she cannot travel to many African countries.

"Many people face kinds of prejudice be it gender, you, colour or class but we must develop an intersectionality which links up these struggles as part of the same struggle.

"We can't have a hierarchy of equality but build a grow solidarity in union with each other," she said.

She left delegates with a quote from civil rights activist and poet Audre Lorde: "I write for those women who do not speak, for those who do not have a voice because they were so terrified, because we are taught to respect fear more than ourselves. We've been taught that silence would save us, but it won't".

George Duane, Neasden branch called for full RMT support for Black Pride and its annual celebration in Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens for a picnic, live music and spoken word, this year on July 9.

"It is imperative that we as a trade union take a stand as there are still many in the BAME community that face

discrimination for being LGBT," he said.

Conference was appalled that it was still legal for unregulated persons and faith groups to attempt to 'cure' lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people in the UK.

Paul Penny, Central Line East said that practitioners of so-called conversion therapy work on the premise that LGBT people can be 'cured' through the use of prayer therapy, electroshock, starvation, and other horrific techniques and punishments.

"Conversion therapy is usually religiously motivated and the goal of practitioners is to change a person's sexuality or gender identity to fit heterosexual expectations.

"The law clearly needs to be changed to ban the practice of conversion therapy," he said.

Delegates called on the union to mobilise the RMT Parliamentary Group to address this issue to bring about a change in the law.

Local MP Sandy Martins, a member of LGBT Labour, backed the call and made the point that all the evidence showed that it didn't work anyway.

"It is cruel, degrading and damaging," he said.

Conference also called on the union to highlight the plight of LGBT asylum seekers in the UK and ensure that the British government upheld its obligations under the 1951 UN Convention.

Delegates noted that around the world, many people continued to face discrimination and violence on a daily basis on account of their sexual orientation or gender identity and many are forced to flee their homelands in search of protection in other countries.

The UK Home Office is responsible for deciding whether asylum applicants should be recognised as a refugee under the terms of the convention.

Back in 2010 the UK Supreme Court judges said that: "To compel a homosexual person to pretend that [their] sexuality does not exist or suppress the behaviour by which to manifest itself is to deny his

UK Black Pride director  
Phyllis Opoku-Gyimah



fundamental right to be who he is".

However many LGBT asylum seekers have been deported to countries including Iran, Nigeria, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, where they face serious mistreatment and even death.

Between October 2015 and September 2016 just 289 asylum applications were granted out of 1,436 claims relating to sexual orientation.

Paul Penny said that it was shameful and cruel betrayal of LGBT asylum seekers seeking safety from persecution.

"It is even more galling that many are fleeing persecution from countries that retain old anti-LGBT laws imposed by the British during colonial rule," he said.

Delegates called on the union to raise this matter with the RMT Parliamentary Group MPs and request them to intervene and call the UK Home office to account.

Other motions called for the urgent reform of the the Gender Recognition Act (GRA) 2004 as it contained processes and language that are questionable. Delegates also backed a call for the term Mx to be included on the RMT membership form in future as it is a non-gender specific title that can be used by anyone regardless of gender or marital status.

Conference was also addressed by two guest speakers from Amnesty international UK, Ryan Stalley, LGBTI Network campaigns officer and Shane Enright community organiser and global trade union adviser. Both their well-received contributions can be read overleaf.

Conference thanked Ipswich branch, particularly branch secretary James Deery, for helping make the arrangements for an excellent conference and to John Stack for his work as chair over the past year.

# MAKING COMMON CAUSE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

## Amnesty International UK's trade union campaigner Shane Enright explains the work of the organisation

Amnesty International counts on more than seven million supporters around the world and we have national sections in almost seventy countries.

The Amnesty UK section, in the country where our movement was founded, is amongst the largest and unions are crucial part of our community.

In the UK we are proud of this unique partnership with unions, who are affiliate members, nationally regionally and locally, playing an active part in the life of our movement and making common cause with us. Next year Amnesty International UK will be marking the fortieth anniversary of our trade union network.

Trade unions are, of course, primarily human rights organisations: defending workers' rights and rights at work. But the mandate and the vision of unions has always been much wider; encompassing social justice goals and defending the weak against the powerful in your communities.

Over these years our union partnerships have led to considerable progress on human rights; it is thanks to unions in the UK that the Labour Party supported an Arms Trade Treaty when in government and built momentum until the UN adopted the landmark Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), regulating the international trade in conventional arms.

Thanks to the support of British unions, including RMT, we were able to secure government funding to underpin a hugely ambitious programme of human rights education to tackle Female

Genital Mutilation and early and forced marriage in Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone and Senegal by empowering women and girls in their communities.

Unions, of course, have been human rights champions since long before Amnesty was formed. You led the way in tackling LGBT discrimination not only in the workplace but in our communities too. It is true to say that, today, unions are the strongest voices for LGBT rights at home, and champions of LGBT rights abroad.

We live in challenging times for human rights. All over the world we are seeing a growing push back against human rights and a rising tide nationalistic populism, amid growing economic and social inequality. We are witnessing callous and dangerous policies from the government which have bequeathed us a Windrush generation scarred by a hostile environment immigration policy, and a deregulatory culture which can only have aided and abetted the scandal which was the Grenfell Tower calamity.

That is why we need more than ever to come together. We need to come together to tackle the global refugee crisis. We need to mobilise together to ensure that British arms aren't used to bomb civilians in Yemen, we need to organise in our communities to welcome refugees and to confront racism and xenophobia. In all this important work we stand shoulder to shoulder with our trade union friends.

And, of course, we need to redouble our efforts to ensure workers' rights are respected. Let

there be no doubt: the right to form and join trade unions, the right to collective bargaining and the right to strike are all universal human rights. These are contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, whose 70th anniversary is this year.

Workers' rights are ever more critical as economic and social inequality grows. That is why Amnesty UK objected to the Trade Union Bill and gave evidence in parliament about its pernicious effects. That is why we are standing alongside trade unionists at risk wherever in the world they are under threat.

This year we have launched a major campaign in defence of the brave trade unionist of the Tehran bus workers' union, who alongside the teacher trade unionists of Iran are under threat. In this major campaign we are working closely alongside the International Transport Workers' Federation and Education International, to ensure that the widest possible impact that is what making common cause looks like: we hope you will join us.

And it is not only action for individuals where Amnesty's campaigning has made a difference. Over the past year your support and the tireless efforts of activists around the world have changed laws and protected communities across the world.

Of course, the struggle for human rights is a story of successes as well as setbacks, it is activists and supporters like you that are making the difference.

Amnesty's actions helped to release more than 650 wrongly



imprisoned people last year.

Last year we witnessed the release of Mahdi Abu Dheeb, jailed for organising a teachers' strike in Bahrain, and he remains free today, undoubtedly because we have kept the spotlight firmly on his plight. And at last we received overdue news at the start of the year that, after 40 months of preventive detention, Colombian trade union leader Huber Ballesteros is also finally free.

The challenges of today are pressing. We need to stand up to US President Trump's refugee travel ban. We need to respond to racism and xenophobia by declaring that we are "against hate".

The task list is long: We need to be on the frontlines with the brave human rights defenders who are risking their freedom and security to assert our universal values of tolerance and respect for the rights of all human beings. We need to defend workers' rights at home and abroad.

We hope that you will join with us to make common cause for human rights. ■

You can find out more at [www.amnesty.org.uk/tradecunions](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/tradecunions)

# FIGHTING FOR LGBTI RIGHTS

## Amnesty UK's LGBTI Network campaigns officer Ryan Stalley explains the work of the organisation

Amnesty International works and campaigns on behalf of individuals who experience violations of their human rights, including those who face discrimination, harassment and violence because of their real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

All over the world, people experience horrific treatment and abuse because of who they love or how they identify.

Over 70 countries worldwide continue to criminalise same-sex relationships, including 45 in which sexual relationships between women are outlawed. In Iran, Sudan, Saudi Arabia and Yemen, homosexuality is punishable by death. The same applies in parts of Somalia and northern Nigeria. There are also some countries where homosexuality has been decriminalised but where LGBTI people still face huge problems. In Egypt for example, same-sex relations are technically legal, but last year saw a huge homophobic crackdown take place.

The story is no better for trans people. The Trans Murder Monitoring Project, an initiative that analyses homicides of trans people, recorded that between 2007 and 2014, there were over 1700 murders of trans people globally. Due to systematic marginalization and humiliation, studies in the United States and Canada have also found high rates of suicide among trans people.

High suicide rates have also been found in Europe, a region where trans people face discrimination and hostility in society and law. In 2014, Amnesty commissioned a report called 'The State Decides Who I am', documenting some of the barriers faced by trans people wishing to legally change their

gender, which range from having to receive mental health diagnosis, undergo sterilisation as well as other medical treatments. This is a violation of human rights.

The rights of intersex people are often disregarded and discarded too. Intersex people have genital, chromosomal or hormonal characteristics that do not correspond to the given standards for 'male' or 'female'. Because of this, intersex people can face stigmatisation, discrimination and violence from birth. In Uganda, Kenya, South Asia, and China, infanticides and abortions have been reported. Medical interventions to modify the sex characteristics of intersex people also take place in many countries. Amnesty released a report in May 2017, called 'First, Do No Harm' which found intersex children in Germany and Denmark are subject to invasive, non-emergency, irreversible surgery to fit gender stereotypes.

The above is only a glimpse into the situation faced by LGBTI people across the world. To give the full picture would require many articles. And despite progress, there is still no country in the world where LGBTI people are free from stigmatisation, discrimination or violence. Even in the UK, where huge strides have been made towards equality, our community still needs to fight to ensure our rights are secured, protected and respected.

This is why Amnesty exists and why we continue to campaign. We're currently fighting with Sakris Kupila – who is going to speaking at the next TUC LGBT conference in July – and the trans community in Finland. Whilst there has been much progress in Europe



since we released the report – 'The State Decides Who I am' – which I mentioned earlier with regards to the legalities of legally changing a person's gender, discrimination continues. Sakris is being denied legal gender recognition because he refuses to undergo a humiliating process that involves a mental disorder diagnosis and enforced sterilisation. He is calling for reform of Finland's gender recognition procedures, which violate the rights of trans people to be free from cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, to the highest attainable standard of health, to privacy, and to recognition as a person before the law. We're campaigning for this alongside him.

We also continue to call for an impartial investigation into the horrific abduction, torture and killing of gay men in Chechnya and are working with intersex organisations to raise awareness of the human rights abuse suffered by intersex people. We also want to ensure that people fleeing their country through fear of discrimination or persecution because of their sexual orientation or gender identity don't face unjust treatment when claiming

asylum here in the UK and not treated unfairly by the system.

You can join us in this fight by signing up to Amnesty UK's LGBTI Network for free here. By signing up, you'll receive monthly updates about our work and how you can take action on our campaigns. You can also follow us on Twitter and Facebook.

The trade union movement has a proud history of supporting the rights of LGBTI people. By continuing to work together and standing shoulder to shoulder in the fights against injustice, we can be a force for the change in the world. It is worth recalling that in the late seventies, industrial tribunals set precedents that made it legal for UK employers to sack LGBT employees because of their sexuality.

It is the steadfast commitment of UK unions that forced the government to protect LGBT employees at work. In many countries, such blatant workplace discrimination, harassment and victimisation is still perfectly legal. It is our unions, locally, nationally and globally that have the opportunity to stand up for the LGBT members wherever we work. ■



# ON THE CRAB AND WINKLE

## Popular Kentish cycle path runs along the bed of one of the world's first railway lines

The Canterbury and Whitstable Railway, the 'Crab and Winkle Line' as it became known, was one of the world's earliest railways, opened in 1830 between Canterbury and Whitstable in Kent, England.

Built by engineers George Stephenson and Joseph Locke over three steep gradients, it boosted the world's first railway bridge, the world's first railway tunnel – 828-yards under Tyler's Hill – and the world's first season ticket was issued on the line in 1834.

The line was even inspected by Isambard Kingdom Brunel in 1835 to silence criticism of his proposals for the Great Western Railway, particularly the perceived problems of working a tunnel on a steep gradient, which Brunel wished to do at Box

Tunnel.

Despite this illustrious history, the line never prospered and suffered setbacks from competing lines including the Chatham and Dover Railway opened in 1860 running trains to London.

The line finally closed to passengers in 1931. It continued to carry coal, grain and munitions to the harbour during World War II. By 1948, Whitstable Harbour had fallen into disuse and what was left of the line's trade had disappeared and finally closed for goods in 1952.

However it was re-opened for several weeks in 1953 after the great floods cut the main coastal line before the line was finally taken up.

Local RMT member Glenn Craddock and his parents are

fans of the Crab and Winkle and he cycles the seven mile long path opened in 1999 along part of the original trackbed.

His Mum is from Whitstable and his Dad is from Canterbury who remembers sleeping in Tyler's Hill tunnel as a toddler along with hundreds of others sheltering from incendiary bombs dropped by the German Luftwaffe during the Blitz.

Glenn also remembers messing about in the tunnel when he was a kid. However today it is sealed up following severe subsidence in 1974 after The University of Kent built on the top of the hill having been wrongfully advised that it was safe to build over the tunnel.

"It is a shame that such an old and pioneering structure is now closed because its

significance to Britain's transport heritage, as the first of its kind, cannot be overestimated.

"In fact most of the rail infrastructure has been removed except for The Goods Shed at the start of the path at Canterbury West station which was been restored as the country's first six-day farmers' market and restaurant.

"The world's oldest railway bridge in Whitstable was also knocked down in 1971 to make way for cars and by 1997 the whole route was disused, overgrown and almost entirely forgotten.

"But today it is a lovely bike ride through some beautiful countryside with a bit of unique railway history thrown in," he says before saddling up.



# CAL MAC AWARD



George Lonie presented Lenny White with his 40-year badge. Lenny joined the merchant navy in May 1977 at Plymouth harbour on the R.R.S. Shackleton as galley boy then pantry boy.

He was promoted at the grand old age of 18 to assistant steward with the national environment research council

(NERC) ships at Barry docks. He joined the Sealink Ships as assistant steward then lounge Steward Then over 25 years ago he joined CalMac on the MV Sullivan where he was third man in the galley and the Chief Cook was a guy called George Lonie and then he joined the MV Hebridean isle and the rest is history. ■

## EAST COAST POEM

### WE TOLD YOU SO

*They tried so very, very hard, to convince us all was well  
It's just business as usual, was the mantra from east coast hell  
It was like a broken record, the same words every day  
But Dave your words are hollow, no one listens to what you say*

*Failing Grayling was reluctant, to take the franchise back  
But in the end he had no option, but to give his mates the sack  
But it's not a Failing Railway, it's just had all bad luck  
Excuse and more excuses, let's just pass the buck*

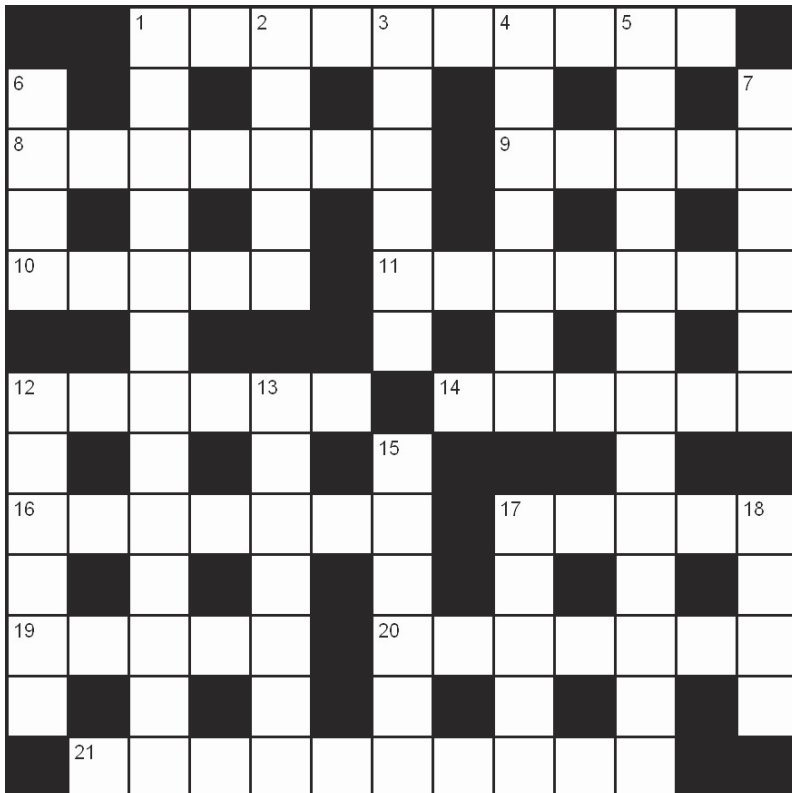
*But he had to say the words, we all were waiting for  
The East Coast virgin franchise deal, is going to be no more  
It returns to public ownership, on the 24th of June  
And a cheer went up from all the staff, it's not a day too soon*

*It could have been so different, had you been honest about your aims  
But all you really wanted, was more ill-gotten gains  
You played us off against each other, that just confirmed our fears  
Same grade same work, but pay scales, on two different tiers*

*Some of you won't like this, because you very seldom do  
But it's only words put down in verse, and one person's view  
But if you're really honest, it's because you really know  
Not only is it true, but you know WE TOLD YOU SO.*

John Stewart  
Leeds City branch secretary

# £50 PRIZE CROSSWORD



## Last month's solution...



The winner of last month's prize crossword is William Tunstall, Huddersfield.

Send entries to Prize Crossword, RMT, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD by July 13 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)

# FIGHTING FOR PARKINSON'S UK

RMT member and Network Rail Track Quality Supervisor Neil Wightman is taking on a year of challenges to raise funds for Parkinson's UK.

He's doing nine Tough Mudders, two MacTuff's, two Tartan Warriors, a Badass Mucker, a Winter Wolf Run, the Great Glencoe Challenge, the Cumbernauld 10k and a Santa Dash.

Neil's been inspired to support the charity by his Dad – Bert Wightman – who has been living with Parkinson's since 2016. Bert worked in the railway for 42 years finishing as the Area Signalling and Telecommunications Engineer for Scotland East.

Neil, based at Glasgow Maintenance Delivery Unit in

Cowlairs, said that the railway was a strong presence in his family.

"As well as my Dad and I, my brother and nephew also work in the industry. As a happy coincidence the combined distance of all my events works out at roughly 160 miles, which is the equivalent of running from one end of the section that I cover to the other, Glasgow North covers from Drumgelloch near Airdrie, to Mallaig at the end of the West Highland Line.

"My wife Clair, daughter Abbie and son Logan are also joining in on some of the events so it's a real family affair. The charity does lots of great work to support people like Dad and I'm delighted to be able to do something that helps them out.

"I'm just halfway through my



programme of events and I'm delighted to have passed my original target of £1,000. £1,175 so far – all thanks to the support of family, friends and complete strangers who have been so generous.

Jan Mattison, West Scotland

Regional Fundraiser for Parkinson's UK, thanked Neil for taking on this tough year of challenges. ■

You can catch up with Neil's progress and support him at [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/neil-wightman](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/neil-wightman)

## MANX AWARDS

Terry Campbell, Ken Usher, Frank Fearon and Peter Jones all joined the Manx Viking together in 1979. The members of the Port Committee at that time included former national secretary Tony Santamera, Peter Wilkinson together with the late Tommy Keefe and Hughie O'Loughlan.

In 1985 Manx Line took over the Isle of Man Steam Packet Co which continued to trade using the Historic brand name. Due to various changes the above 'rat pack' were subsequently elected at varying times as the replacement PC, until their respective retirement from the then IOMSP Co.

Each of them were stalwarts in the 1986 Peveril dispute and the subsequent '87 dispute' which commenced on December 26 running into February '88 when the NUS called a national ferry dispute following a special meeting held in Morcambe on January 30 1988.

All ports voted to commence their action and stop ships from February 2 1988, as a national dispute, with the exception of Dover who came out not in support of that national action but in defence of their own issues with P&Os proposals to cut jobs received less than a year after the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster. ■



311 YEARS SERVICE: Left to right Terry Campbell, 40 plus years in the union, regional organiser Ken Usher, 42 years and still going, Frank Fearon, 52 years, Mick Cash (40 years), Steve Todd, 47 years and Peter Jones, 50 years.

### LETTERS

#### REMEMBERING D-DAY

Dear editor,

I just had to write to say how much I enjoyed reading Remembering D-Day in North Devon in last month's issue of RMT News.

It brought back such happy memories of the many years on holiday in Croyde. We'd walk over Baggy Point and I knew the

beaches were used to practice for D-Day. However I didn't know all the details in your article. It was so interesting – congratulations to the writer.

Once again thank you for a very interesting read.

Yours faithfully, Mrs P Regan



# RMT CREDIT UNION LTD.

Finance Department, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER

## RMT CREDIT UNION APPLICATION FORM — please complete your application along with the attached Direct Debit.

Please use **BLOCK CAPITALS** and **black ink**.

### 1 PERSONAL DETAILS.

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

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

### 3 Your Employment.

|                 |  |            |  |
|-----------------|--|------------|--|
| Employer        |  | RMT Branch |  |
| Job Description |  |            |  |

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

### 5 Membership Status

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

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

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

8 **Next of Kin** .....

**Address** .....

.....  
.....

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

Your signature

Date

**We are checking new member identification electronically. To do this, we now carry out searches with credit reference agencies who supply us with relevant detail including information from the Electoral Register. The searches will not be used by other lenders to assess your ability to obtain credit.**

**I agree to my identity being checked electronically** ☐

*If we cannot verify your identity and address by this method, we will ask you to provide paper documentation instead. Full details of these can be supplied to you by calling 020 7529 8835.*



## Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit



Please fill in the whole form including official use box using a ball point pen and Send to: RMT Credit Union Ltd., 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD

Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society

|                 |                       |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| To: The Manager | Bank/Building Society |
| Address         |                       |
|                 | Postcode              |

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

Bank/Building Society account number

Branch Sort Code

Originator's Identification Number

Reference Number

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

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society.

Please pay RMT Credit Union Ltd Direct Debits for the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with RMT Credit Union Ltd, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature(s)

Date

Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit Instructions from some types of account

This guarantee should be detached and retained by the Payer.

### The Direct Debit Guarantee

- This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits.
- If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit RMT Credit Union Ltd will notify you seven working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed.
- If you request RMT Credit Union Ltd to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request.
- If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit, by RMT Credit Union Ltd or your bank or building society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society. — If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when RMT Credit Union Ltd asks you to.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.





Britain's Largest Specialist Transport Union

# Fighting for safe and accessible railways FOR ALL!



## Rail staff told: Don't help the disabled if it makes us late

by ALAN JONES

RAIL bosses have been accused of limiting disabled passengers in a drive to cut delays as they introduce new timetables.

Southern Rail parent company Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) has told staff not to help people of reduced mobility on to trains if there is a chance it might delay the service, says the Rail, Maritime and Transport union.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said: "They are introducing a policy which effectively means disabled people will not be assisted on to the train and allowed to travel."

He called the move "outrageous" and said it was against the Disabled People's Protection Policy "which requires them to ensure assistance is available".

Mr Cash added: "If this is not bad enough, in respect of anyone having a seizure whilst on a train, the guidance says: 'Explain that your first priority is care for the individual, but not taking action will cause thousands of other passengers to be stuck... Move the ill passenger from the train as quickly as possible'."

"This is truly shocking advice and an insult to all passengers," he said, and called for the rail company to be stripped of its franchise.

GTR, which also runs Great Northern, said it placed a "priority on making our services accessible to all" and actively

encouraged people with restricted mobility to use its trains.

However, it added: "If any passenger with accessibility needs or not - arrives late at a station with insufficient time to board, then we can't hold the train at the platform."

Part of our responsibility is to make sure each service leaves on time to avoid knock-on delays, skipped station stops and cancellations to dozens of other services which would affect thousands of other passengers, many of whom may also be disabled.

It added: "In central London between London Bridge and St Pancras, we've done away with the need for a ramp, by installing humps on every platform to give level access, manned by a member of staff throughout the day."

The company is introducing a new timetable from Sunday, rescheduling trains to bring in 400 extra services a day.

### WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?

Text the word **IEWS** followed by your comment, name and where you live to **65700**.

Standard network charges apply

**"The only way to guarantee disabled access on Britain's railways is to guarantee there's a guard on the train..."**

Mick Cash, RMT General Secretary

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