

RMT *news*

Essential reading for today's transport worker

A MITIE WIN!



INSIDE THIS ISSUE...



ORGANISING AT LUMO
PAGE 4



RFA PAY WIN
PAGE 8



WOMEN IN THE UNION
PAGE 10



AGM 2026 LIVERPOOL
PAGE 15



www.rmt.org.uk

WORKING FOR YOU

Use the QR code to join to get help at work and save money

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

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

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

CAMPAIGNING

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

PERSONAL INJURIES

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

INDUSTRIAL DISEASES

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

EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNALS

Should a member find themselves unfairly

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

ACCIDENT BENEFIT

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

RETIREMENT BENEFIT

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

TAX AND WILL PREPARATION

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

DEMOTION COMPENSATION

Payable to any member who is experiencing loss of wages through being permanently demoted or downgraded as a result of illness or injury.

Payment of £300 provided that member reports this to branch secretary within 12 weeks.

ORPHAN FUND

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

RMT CREDIT UNION

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

ONLINE SHOPPING DISCOUNTS

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

FINES POOL

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

BEREAVEMENT BENEFIT

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

CASHBACK PREPAID CARD

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

FREE £5,000 ACCIDENTAL DEATH COVER

As a benefit of your RMT membership you can register for £5,000 Free Accidental Death Cover. Cover is for UK residents aged 18-69. 12 months free cover.

Annually renewable and always FREE. This policy is underwritten by Stonebridge International Insurance Ltd. www.rmtprotect.com

HEALTH CASH PLAN

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

EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL

Assistance for members with their potential employment tribunal claim offered through the RMT's In-house Legal Department.

Contents

Page 4

ORGANISING AT LUMO

Page 5

A MITIE WIN

Page 6

FOR A GBR RAIL WORKFORCE STRATEGY

Page 7

DEFEND SHIPPING JOBS AND END EXPLOITATION

Page 8

RFA PAY WIN

Page 9

CLEANERS CALL FOR INSOURCING

Page 10

WOMEN IN THE UNION

Page 12

EDUCATION CONFERENCE

Page 13

FIGHTING FOR STATION STAFF

Page 14

DEALING WITH OFFSHORE FATIGUE

Page 15

AGM 2026 LIVERPOOL

Page 21

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Page 22

PARLIAMENTARY REPORT

Page 23

LGBT+ LAUNCHES RMT CHARTER

Page 24

SOLIDARITY AT BLACK TUC

Page 25

BOB CROW NATIONAL RECRUITING DAY

Page 26

BRANCH TALK

Page 27

ORGANISING FREIGHT AND LOGISTICS

Page 28

RMT AWARDS

Page 30

CROSSWORD

Page 31

ON THE WALLINGFORD BUNK

EDITORIAL



WINNING AT WORK

After years of campaigning, RMT has won recognition for outsourced cleaners employed by Mitie at Network Rail.

I would like to pay tribute to my predecessor Bob Crow who launched the fight to organise outsourced workers like these many years ago.

The next campaign is for all grades working for Network Rail to identify where there are Mitie workers and help them get active in the union.

RMT is also demanding that all Govia Thameslink Railway staff be brought into direct employment after the train company became the latest to be nationalised.

The union has been campaigning for all elements of the railway to be taken into public ownership under Great British Railways with track and train all under the same employer again.

However, thousands of cleaners, gate line, security, maintenance, renewal and engineering workers, remain employed by private contractors. We want to see all members on the railway receive the same benefits gained by public ownership.

Congratulations also to Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) members for winning an impressive pay deal after taking days of action around the globe.

This was a hard-fought victory based on years of industrial and political pressure to get the government to recognise the essential job these workers carry out often in very difficult circumstances.

We have emerged from our annual general meeting even more determined to fight for all grades of transport and energy workers.

These industrial and political strategies are developed within our democratic structures which determine our agenda and our priorities for the coming period.

We are at our best when we all work together for the common good based on solidarity and industrial trade unionism.

And that can only happen from the bottom up when workers organise themselves through the branches and regions and gain the confidence to represent workers and take on the employers.

That is why the union must push ahead with its educational review to equip workers and continue to transform the way we operate using the latest digital technology to improve our ability to deliver for the members in the battles ahead.

Eddie Dempsey



RECRUITING: Members of Preston No.1 and Newcastle Rail & Catering branches and RMT NEC member Conor Price out recruiting on the first public Lumo West Coast service from Stirling to London Euston.

ORGANISING AT LUMO

Union launches recruitment campaign on Lumo

RMT is organising workers at Lumo, an open-access operator owned by FirstGroup which has started operations on the West Coast Main Line between London Euston and Stirling.

Lumo already operates passenger trains on the East Coast Main Line between London King's Cross, Edinburgh Waverley and Glasgow Queen Street and is headquartered in Newcastle upon Tyne.

RMT recently met with the union's Parliamentary group about open access rail services under Great British Railways (GBR) which included RMT regional organiser Gray Jackson who is the lead officer dealing with open access companies.

This meeting was chaired by RMT group member Rachael Maskell MP who explained that whilst RMT strongly welcomed government's plans to bring the railways into public ownership, an absolute priority

must be to protect the jobs of open access members.

She said that GBR will take over responsibility for track access decisions from the regulatory body the Office of Rail and Road (ORR), and the government has confirmed that it will honour existing open access contracts, but it has not said what it will do after that.

RMT general secretary Eddie Dempsey raised concerns about the open access operating and its employment model.

"The reality is that the primary purpose of open access operators is to make profits and try to keep employment costs as low as possible at the expense of hard-working staff, by offering worse conditions and less generous pension schemes than comparable areas elsewhere on the railway," he said.

Rachael Maskell has tabled an amendment to the Railways Bill, which is the legislation

currently going through Parliament that will establish GBR, which would require the government to protect all open access jobs should an operator exit the market for any reason and enable these staff to transfer into employment in GBR.

A number of MPs signed the amendment.

Due to Parliamentary

conventions, while the amendment will not be law at this stage it provided an opportunity to raise this important issue in Parliament.

During the debate RMT group members secured a commitment from the Minister that he would meet with them to discuss the issues in the amendments including the status of open access staff. ■



Rachael Maskell MP

A MITIE WIN

Union wins recognition for Mitie workers across Network Rail

After many years of campaigning, RMT has won recognition for outsourced cleaners employed by Mitie at Network Rail-managed stations across the country.

The agreements, secured by RMT Scotland organiser John Hay as part of the union's push to use new Employment Rights laws, mean that around six hundred cleaning and facilities maintenance staff now possess collective bargaining rights and the right to elect representatives.

As a result, the union is now recognised at major stations including Victoria, Paddington, King's Cross, Euston and Birmingham New Street.

This campaign to win recognition stretches back at least fourteen years when the first motion was passed by AGM to organise these outsourced workers.

In 2013, the late Bob Crow wrote to branches and regional councils launching what he called 'a high-profile campaign to win complete RMT organisation on the contracts'.

All subsequent general secretaries have been involved in the campaign since, as have numerous past and current regional and national officials.

Over the years, recognition was won at several individual stations, including in Liverpool, Manchester, Edinburgh, Leeds and Glasgow.

However, London stations proved to be more elusive, in part because of the low wages and poor working conditions given by successive contracted companies meant a heavy staff turnover rate.

The brief acceptance during the Covid pandemic that

cleaning workers were totally central not only to the railway but to the whole of society was quickly forgotten in the following years.

The union's 'Justice for Cleaners' campaign was successful in winning the Real Living Wage as well as sick pay provision during the pandemic, but management remained resistant to granting recognition.

Victories continued to be won, with then lead officer Craig Johnston winning an agreement for Bristol Temple Meads in 2022 and London Waterloo in 2023.

Recruitment and retention efforts by branches meant that by the start of this year, three more recognition agreements were conceded by the company for London Liverpool St, London Bridge and London Charing Cross.

Then crucial changes provided by the government's Employment Rights Act (2025) offered the union a strategic

opening.

At a stroke, the requirement for the union to demonstrate majority support in a bargaining unit was abolished and RMT only had to demonstrate that it had 10 per cent membership in the bargaining unit.

Since this condition was in place across the London stations, RMT's recruitment, retention and organising department approached the company on the day the law came into force.

RMT was fully prepared to use the statutory procedure by applying to the Central Arbitration Committee, which can order employers to come to agreements with the unions but this was not needed.

As a result of RMT's campaigning and our ability to win previous recognition ballots, Mitie agreed to recognise the union.

This saved both the union and the employer time and money and made sure

recognition was agreed as soon as possible. RMT's approach to Mitie and other recognition targets has been vindicated.

RMT general secretary Eddie Dempsey welcomed the victory and said that now was the time for RMT members working for Mitie at Network Rail stations to elect reps.

"For now, many union officers, reps, activists and members over a long period of time deserve to give themselves a pat on the back.

"However, whilst we have recognition, there is always scope to improve our density and presence.

"Our union remains determined that no group of workers should be left unorganised.

"That means that all grades working for Network Rail should identify where there are Mitie workers and let the organising department know," he said.



ORGANISED: RMT regional organisers Kathy Mazur and John Hay recruiting at Euston and Kings Cross

FOR A GBR RAIL WORKFORCE STRATEGY

Union joins call for a new approach to planning, skills and productivity

Rail workers and industry skills leaders have called for a workforce strategy under Great British Railways (GBR), warning that fragmentation, short-term funding cycles and a narrow focus on cutting labour costs are holding back productivity across the railway.

The call came after all Govia Thameslink Railway staff were the latest to be brought into direct employment after the train company came under public control.

The union has been campaigning for all elements of the railway to be taken into public ownership and has welcomed the commitment by the government to launch GBR with track and train all nationalised.

However, thousands of cleaners, gate line, security staff infrastructure maintenance, renewal and engineering workers, will remain employed by private contractors despite the Labour government's commitment to undertake the biggest wave of insourcing in a generation.

In a joint letter to Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander, RMT and the National Skills Academy for Rail (NSAR) encouraged the government to use the creation of GBR as an opportunity to reform the industry's approach to workforce planning, skills and productivity, including through the development of a national GBR Workforce Strategy and a regional pilot scheme.

RMT general secretary Eddie Dempsey said that GBR was a once-in-a-generation opportunity to build a more productive, resilient and

TRANSITION: The government is taking over operations at the end of each operator's contract to avoid taxpayer penalties. South Western Railway, c2c, Greater Anglia, West Midlands Trains, and now Govia Thameslink Railway - the UK's largest railway operator which includes Southern, Thameslink, Great Northern and Gatwick Express - have been taken in-house. Chiltern Railways will be nationalised in September and Great Western Railway in December.



publicly accountable railway by investing in the workforce that kept it running.

"For too long, productivity has been measured through a narrow focus on labour costs while ignoring the billions lost through fragmentation, outsourcing, and inefficient funding models.

"Our joint work with NSAR shows that a stable, highly skilled workforce is a productive asset that drives innovation, reliability and long-term value.

"The creation of GBR should be accompanied by a national workforce strategy, stronger apprenticeship opportunities, strategic planning with trade unions and

a serious consideration of bringing work back in-house.

"GBR provides the opportunity to end the waste of fragmentation, invest in skills and create a railway that delivers better value for passengers, workers and taxpayers alike," he said.

NSAR chief executive Neil Robertson said that the railway sector had substantial scope to improve productivity, but achieving this requires a new approach to funding the workforce.

"Skills must be recognised as an investment that generates long-term value, not simply a cost to be controlled. Fragmented structures and fluctuating funding have too

often undermined innovation, eroded expertise and encouraged short-term decision-making.

"A productive railway depends on having the right people, with the right knowledge, in the right roles, and a whole-life-value approach to rail spending would better recognise and measure that contribution.

"That is why we are jointly calling for a GBR Workforce Strategy and a Regional Pilot to put these principles into practice. The creation of GBR presents a rare, generational opportunity to reset the system, and we urge the government to seize it," he said. ■

DEFEND SHIPPING JOBS AND END EXPLOITATION

RMT shippers discuss recruitment, recognition and collective bargaining

RMT's biennial maritime industrial organising conference pledged to build on recent successes and innovate new ways to recruit members in the sector.

Meeting in Portsmouth, RMT national secretary Darren Procter told delegates how the union had stepped up its recruitment work and was campaigning to protect and improve conditions for maritime members.

"The election of a Labour government with a big majority in the Commons has helped significantly, and we have also maintained our effective working relationships with the Scottish government and the Welsh government on devolved issues affecting our maritime and docks members, especially in the ferries' sector," he said.

He outlined the effort the union had put into creating a mandatory Seafarers' Charter designed to protect UK maritime jobs. By introducing new legislation, the initiative seeks to eliminate the exploitative agency crewing models seen in the short-sea ferry sector and prevent a recurrence of the P&O Ferries crisis.

He explained how the union is working to make sure these new laws work effectively in ports and at sea. Some of these changes are already in effect, making it easier for RMT to support seafarers and dockers and to increase the number of workers covered by collective bargaining.

Recently elected RMT assistant national secretary



Karlson Lingwood told conference that the event was an opportunity to look at the union's successes and build on them.

"How do we engage members to become activists? Here in Portsmouth, Wightlink is a great example; how do we replicate that elsewhere?" he asked.

Martin Quinn, Belfast Shipping led a call for RMT to intensify campaigning on the issue of workplace fatigue in the ferry sector.

"Worker fatigue is a significant occupational health and safety issue that increases the risk of accidents, injuries and long-term health problems," he said.

RMT regional organiser Geoff Kite gave a rundown of some of RMT's activity at local maritime companies including Hovertravel where a dispute is currently under way.

He said that while Wightlink remained a model for the union – nearly all workers are members of the union – high fares were putting pressure on the company and causing

significant issues.

Royal Fleet Auxiliary convenor Ian Parkin reported on how the union had been working to improve the industrial framework to protect members with one of the biggest achievements being the creation of a new collective bargaining agreement at RFA.

"It was a long, difficult, and at times frustrating process, but ultimately, we got there through determination and collective effort.

"The new agreement simplifies many of the processes our members previously struggled to navigate and provides greater clarity, transparency and protection for RFA seafarers.

"It also addressed long-standing tensions regarding the convenor role as under the previous arrangement, convenors were expected to split their time between union duties and organisational responsibilities, often limiting our ability to fully support members.

"I am pleased to report that

we successfully secured 100 per cent trade union facility time for the convenor role.

"This is a major victory for our members because it means your representatives can now fully dedicate their time to supporting cases, dealing with disputes, challenging poor management decisions, and representing the interests of RFA seafarers without compromise," he said.

Recent industrial action at RFA over fair pay had been extremely well supported by members and he told delegates that the formation of the dedicated RFA branch of the union had transformed member engagement with online meetings attracting up to 145 members.

Stena Line convenor Michael Hobson reported that the union had recently negotiated above RPI pay increases and had also secured significant increases in maternity and paternity pay.

"We are fighting to create decent work and conditions for future generations," he said. ■



RFA PAY WIN

Royal Fleet Auxiliary seafarers win pay deal following strike action

RMT members working in the Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) have voted to accept a negotiated pay offer that delivers significant improvements to pay and conditions.

The settlement represents a

combined increase of 8.26 per cent, with the equivalent of 13 days extra leave a year and a series of consolidated payments.

RMT general secretary Eddie Dempsey said that it was a tremendous win that

reflected the determination of RFA members who have taken days of strike action around the world to secure the much improved offer.

"RFA crews carry out vital and often dangerous work in support of the Royal Navy

around the world.

"They deserve fair pay, decent conditions and respect, and this agreement represents a significant step forward for our members," he said.



P&O PENSION DEBT VICTORY

RMT marked a significant victory for seafarers' pensions after P&O Ferries paid the £94 million it owed to the Merchant Navy Ratings Pension Fund (MNRPF).

The payment follows negotiations between the MNRPF Trustees and DP World and means the £94 million debt has now been paid in full, with the funds invested

alongside other scheme assets.

It also removes the charges held over P&O Ferries' vessels, which had been put in place as security against any default on the company's obligations.

However, the union made clear that the settlement did not erase the scandal of the unlawful dismissal of 786 seafarers by P&O Ferries in March 2022.

RMT general secretary Eddie Dempsey said that it did not draw a line under one of the biggest industrial scandals in modern British history.

"The seafarers who were ruthlessly sacked and replaced with low-paid agency labour are still owed justice, and our campaign on their behalf will continue until that is achieved.

"The low-cost crewing

model imposed by P&O Ferries has come under increasing political and legal pressure.

"New legal protections requiring improved pay, better conditions and significant changes to roster patterns will make it far harder to sustain the exploitative model introduced after the sackings," he said.

CLEANERS CALL FOR INSOURCING



Delegates at RMT's national industrial organising conference of transport cleaning workers in Aberystwyth sent a clear message to the government: 'the era of outsourcing must end.'

Alex Grant, Cambrian spoke on the inconsistent terms and conditions faced by cleaners in his branch, noting that such discrepancies were commonplace elsewhere.

Tim Butler, York and District led the call to strengthen the union's campaign to end outsourcing and bring cleaners back in-house.

"It doesn't matter whether they work for train operating companies, Open Access, TfL or Network Rail, they should be treated equally," he said.

He called for the union to organise and develop a national campaign to end all outsourcing and for the union to carry out a full review of all cleaning grades rates of pay and conditions of service both in-house and outsourced

workers.

Conference backed his call for the union to develop an appropriate strategy to deliver the required changes which should:

- End outsourcing and hold government to account
- Review RMT policy of a minimum £15.00 per hour for all cleaners
- Bring cleaners back in-house on meaningful and workable contracts

"Bringing cleaners inhouse should be number one on the union's agenda.

"We need all cleaning and cleaners to be in-house on decent terms and conditions with appropriate rates of pay, with staff travel, sick pay and pensions across the entire rail network and undergrounds in the UK.

"We need to liaise with the Department for Transport and Great British Railways to ensure that all cleaning on the rail network is in-house," he added.

RMT general secretary Eddie Dempsey explained the next stage of the union's insourcing campaign was to "force the question" directly onto the government's agenda, particularly where private contracts were "coming up for tender".

Conference also saw the launch and screening of a new video made in conjunction with the ITF as part of the union's *Better Jobs, Better Services* campaign.

Jonathan White of RMT national policy outlined how the union's campaign was designed to hold the Labour government to account with their pledge to insource and integrate the railway.

The video, which specifically addresses the issues cleaners face, showed RMT cleaners explaining the challenges they face and how the union was lobbying government and industry bodies.

Ian Boyle of the union's recruitment, retention and

organising department, detailed how changes to the Employment Rights Act had given the union enhanced opportunities to gain recognition and recruit.

He explained that while the union only had a small staff base dedicated to organisation the "strength is its activist base".

He led a workshop on mapping membership to ensure that all delegates left conference with the essential skills to both recruit members and understand the steps required for RMT workplace recognition.

Steve Conway of the national executive reviewed the union's work carried out arising from the motions from last year's conference. He also reported on local cleaner grade pay deals, recognition and insourcing.

Conference thanked the conference committee for all the logistical work in bringing the successful event together.

WOMEN IN THE UNION

RMT's female regional organisers speak about their experiences

Women now represent nearly 20 per cent of RMT membership, a figure that has doubled since the turn of the century.

These changes are reflected in the fact that over 30 branch secretaries are women as well as around 13 per cent of industrial and health and safety reps respectively, that's over 560 reps.

Women have also had a constant presence on the national executive committee since 2010. As a part of these demographic changes three of the union's elected regional organisers are now women.

The union's longest serving woman regional organiser Kathy Mazur says that encouraging more women to join the union required a shift in focus to issues that affect female workers.

"Women in the workforce are interested in equal pay, flexible working arrangements, maternity rights and protection from workplace harassment," she insists.

When it came to improving female participation Kathy said that when she was a branch secretary, she would hold meetings at accessible times rather than evenings or



ELECTED: RMT regional organisers Ann Joss, Primrose Jeanton and Kathy Mazur

weekends.

"We can only get members with primary care responsibilities to participate if they can take part in the first place," she says.

The newly elected regional organiser Primrose Jeanton agrees and adds that women are not a single group with a

single experience.

"A disabled woman, a Black woman, an LGBT+ woman, a young woman entering a male-dominated industry or an outsourced woman worker may all face additional barriers in the workplace.

"For many women, these experiences overlap and

compound one another, which is why recognising intersectionality matters," she says.

Primrose believes that the union must be visible and actively support insourced and outsourced women workers and promote gains on issues that are felt by women.

WOMEN IN THE BRANCH: RMT South East Essex branch secretary Fiona Thompson, assistant branch secretary Carmen Carder and branch chair Christine Willet.



Before becoming an RMT regional organiser based in Aberdeen, Ann Joss worked as a signal worker which has traditionally been a male-dominated grade.

Now as lead officer for offshore and renewables she can see that the problems are the same.

"Women offshore put up with shared cabins with male colleagues for example and we shouldn't have to put up with that.

"We need to showcase what we have changed for the better, including decent facilities, flexible working, better PPE, a menopause policy, improved maternity rights and equal treatment at work," she says.

Ann believes that it is important that women can see themselves reflected in the union structures as it shows that RMT is for everyone.

"Knowing that there is another woman in the workplace or union structure who understands the challenges facing them makes a huge difference," she says.

Ann has been involved in an increasingly popular RMT women's group in Scotland which has three or four

meetings a year and now includes a WhatsApp group.

"We are currently producing a newsletter with articles about what women are doing and we want to hear what members want us to do and what we need to do better," she says.

Ann's take away priorities include encouraging women to attend meetings rather than waiting for them to volunteer, having women visible in union materials and campaigns and to offer mentoring support for new reps and activists.

"We must make sure that women's voices are heard and their ideas are acted on and provide them with regular feedback about progress," she says.

Primrose makes the point that it cannot fall solely on women to encourage more women to participate, especially when men still make up the majority in many union structures.

"Male comrades have an important role to play in encouraging women, challenging outdated attitudes and recognising the value women bring at every level of our union," she says.

So how have they enjoyed their experiences as regional organisers? Ann says that working as a lead officer in a traditionally male dominated area has been rewarding.

"Experience has shown me how important it is that women feel welcomed, supported and listened to within the union.

"Something as simple as a chat with women members when I travel on the trains or a word of encouragement on a picket line or at a meeting or conference can make a lot of difference.

"Representation matters, and when women are visible as reps, officers, negotiators and activists, it shows that there is a place for everyone within our union," she says.

Kathy says that it has been a fantastic experience due to a supportive leadership and "brilliant staff" at Unity House where she is based who support her.

"I not only enjoy the line of work but also the people I work with," she says.

Primrose reiterates that she has had a positive experience within the union from lay member to elected officer.

"I am proud to be part of

the Eurostar branch where every company we organise in has women reps. When I became branch secretary, I made it a priority to encourage more women to get involved.

"Some rep teams are entirely women-led and hold many positions on national industrial and equality conferences and committees.

"Ultimately, creating an inclusive and supportive environment is the responsibility of all of us," she says,

As the first Black woman officer, Primrose feels that her presence has helped members feel represented within RMT structures.

"I was elected based on capability, experience and commitment, which is something I am proud of, and it reflects the importance of valuing ability alongside representation.

"Being an officer has simply reinforced my belief that when we combine strong organisation with genuine inclusion, we build a union that is more representative, confident and effective," she says.



EDUCATION CONFERENCE



RMT tutors and Union Learning reps met at the union's education advisory conference in Poole Dorset for training and debates.

A training day updated ULRs and others on latest developments including how to make a social media video led by Dunya Kamal and Niki Kanukuntla from the TUC. RMT education manager Michael Cudjoe spoke about new ways of working at the Bob Crow National Education

Centre from catering to course no shows and the reconfiguring of classrooms to make them fully accessible.

RMT national executive member Gareth Jameson gave a report including the current position of the union's ongoing national education review and took questions from delegates.

RMT president George Welch addressed conference about on the business of the national union and the need to

drive the union's political narrative campaigns.

This included the need for a new Employment Act II and for all reps to build the union's strength through recruitment and organisation in every workplace.

Ivor Riddell introduced a film commemorating the 100th anniversary of the General Strike, emphasising the lessons learned and from many other disputes and campaigns which followed.

There was also time for a trip to the Tolpuddle Martyrs museum where Tom De Wit gave a talk on the development of the Martyrs annual festival in July and museum in the village. Conference thanked the education advisory committee made up of Ivor Riddell, John Holmes, Paul McClaughlin and Jo Parry and RNLI College and Poole Bus branch for hosting the event.



CARLISLE SUPPORT SERVICES STRIKE

RMT members at Carlisle Support Services (CSS) working on the Northern rail contract have taken further 48-hour strike action.

The action follows the company's continued refusal to negotiate a proper pay settlement through collective bargaining, despite increasing demands being placed on frontline staff including gate line operatives and revenue officers.

CSS has recently claimed that it has "honoured our agreement to implement an annual pay uplift in line with the Living Wage increase".

However, this increase was not the result of any negotiated agreement with the union but stems from the company's commitment as an accredited Living Wage



employer.

RMT general secretary Eddie Dempsey said that the annual Living Wage uplift was a commitment Carlisle had made as a Living Wage employer, not a pay rise negotiated through collective bargaining.

"Our members perform

vital frontline railway roles keeping stations safe, assisting passengers and protect railway revenue, all while facing increasing responsibilities and daily pressures.

"These workers deserve a negotiated pay settlement that reflects the value of the work they do, not a minimum wage

whilst refusing to engage meaningfully with the union on pay.

"The whole episode underlines why all outsourced rail workers should be taken in-house as part of the future of Great British Railways as soon as possible," he said.





FIGHTING FOR STATION STAFF

Station grades call for action on assaults and outsourcing

Delegates to the organising conference for station grades meeting in Wakefield backed a call for a recruitment campaign.

Alan Pottage, Nottingham said that the conference organising committee should spearhead the campaign to recruit and retain members covered by the grade.

Backing the union's Action Against Assaults campaign, Ross Marshall, Central Line West said that the death of RMT member Jorge Ortega on London Underground had had a devastating impact.

"We know that the increase in violent attacks against transport workers is due to the de-staffing of stations and British Transport Police cuts," he said.

He called for statistics to be used to expose the impact of job cuts and unstaffed stations and to make the case for staffing and safety.

"We need to campaign for tougher laws regarding assaults in front line stations and revenue staff," he said.

Chevelle Jacobs, East London Rail said that it was time to act against assaults.

"I have had to deal with the

consequences of violence at work and the impact it has had on the families.

"We have to say enough is enough as I don't want to go through that again and again," she said.

RMT assistant general secretary John Leach also backed calls to tackle the growing problem of assaults across the transport sector.

"It is not only about assaults but living with the fear of assault simply in the act of going to work.

"That is why this union's Action Against Assaults campaign is crucial to raise violence against transport workers as a social and political problem which needs to be dealt with," he said.

He also spoke out against the "the scourge of outsourcing" which had created a two-tier workforce.

"Agency workers are on less pay and worse terms and conditions often without sick pay and pensions.

"We need to hold this government to account on its promise to insource agency workers as a part of the creation of GBR," he said.

Peter Clifford, Manchester

South said that many train operating companies had been unable or unwilling to bring contract dispatchers in-house despite agreements to do so.

"This really brings into question the ability for a smooth transition into Great British Railways (GBR), as these director level managers are unable to resolve what should be a relatively simple undertaking.

"We must ask the question, will we ever see the 'wave of insourcing' Labour promised, when these TOCs cannot even insource relatively small groups of workers?

"Outsourcing divides and weakens the workforce and the union.

"We need to put pressure on the train operating companies to bring outsourced workers into direct employment," he said.

Conference also backed calls for workers not to suffer due to the introduction of new technology by employers.

Keiran Ali, Central Line West said that new technology should only be introduced with the agreement of the union.

"Every piece of new

technology should include an expectation that it should not be imposed by the employer," he said.

Peter Whitelegg, Waltham Cross said that rapid digital transformation including the use of artificial intelligence and automation was being driven by cost-cutting agendas.

"Technology should be a matter for negotiation, and these principles must be embedded within the development of Great British Railways.

"Any digital transition must guarantee job security, upskilling and fair distribution of the benefits of new technology," he said.

Keith Miller, Central & North Mersey said that TOCs should have a dedicated GDPR officer to oversee data protection particularly in the use of CCTV images.

"Such moves would block any unscrupulous managers from fishing for instances that could be used to discipline workers.

"When staff are being viewed for whatever reason, they should be informed by GDPR officers," he said.



DEALING WITH OFFSHORE FATIGUE

RMT's offshore and energy conference meeting in Aberdeen called for shift patterns to be based on a 2 on/3 off rotation as it benefited the workforce and productivity levels.

Delegate Ron Dickson said that delays getting to offshore installations were caused by adverse weather and other technical issues.

"The average delay per person and travel roughly equates to an extra two to three weeks per year.

"We are entitled to three weeks holiday per year which must be approved by employers who often denied due to operational reasons.

"Some big oil companies keep on highlighting mental health issues and fatigue in the workplace, but surely these extended tours offshore contribute greatly to the mental wellbeing and health of the contractors in our sector.

"How is it possible that workers in Norway receive an excellent 2/4 rotation and we work 3/3 whilst the value of their oil is the same as the UK sector.

"Some smaller operators have already reverted to the 2 on/3 off rotation as it benefits the workforce and productivity levels, so others can follow suit," he said.

RMT national secretary Darren Procter said that employers should all have fatigue monitoring plans which included the impact of shift patterns.

"We need to campaign around fatigue as a union on every level," he said.

Delegate Jake Malloy called on the union to challenge the



imposition of the weight restriction proposed by Offshore Energy UK (OEUK), the employers' association of the sector.

He reported that former national executive member Mick Bainbridge who recently passed away had done a lot of work around the issue and found that it was being used as a way to get rid of workers.

"The statistics used should include statistics around winch operations, instances involving weight problems and medical standards for offshore operations," he said.

Conference called for compensation to protect workers who failed to meet such medical standards.

"This argument should be developed quickly given that the deadline for implementation of the OEUK change is November," he said.

Darren Procter said that the union would write directly to the OEUK regarding the the imposition of such a policy.

"How is it possible to pass a medical then be told you cannot work offshore?" he said.

RMT regional organiser Ann

Joss called on offshore workers who had suffered discrimination because of their weight should let the union know.

"This incoming weight limit is an arbitrary one without proof and can be challenged legally by the union," she said.

She also said that the issue of employers using Not Required Back (NRB) whereby workers are told there was no job for them and the issue of redundancies was also growing.

"RMT has told employers that NRB methods and imposing redundancies on workers whose face does not fit was totally unacceptable.

"We also have re-hire and fire methods being used with claims that workers are signing new contracts voluntarily which we know is rubbish," she said.

Delegate Scot Agnew called on the union to develop an energy policy that provided a path to a Just Transition along with genuine energy security.

"We must use our seat on the North Sea Futures Board to avoid a Thatcher-style decimation of thousands of

jobs when the Tories discarded the coal industry in pursuit of oil and gas.

"A genuine Just Transition pathway will allow the union to work with other unions to pursue demands across the industry," he said.

RMT assistant national secretary Karlson Lingwood said that the key to building the union in the energy sector was organising at the workplace.

"In that sense offshore workers are the experts when it comes to how to recruit and operate in their workplace

"To do that effectively we need reps in place to reflect the aspirations of the workforce," he said.

Darren Procter paid tribute to Mick Bainbridge, who had recently deceased while on the NEC, for the work he carried out for the union and the offshore sector.

"The best tribute we can make for Mick is to increase our presence in the offshore, energy and renewables sector.

"To do that we must be clear about what RMT stands for and that means identifying key demands and increasing

The Annual General Meeting **LIVERPOOL 2026**





END OUTSOURCING

RMT delegates welcomed the union's decision to join forces with Unison to campaign for an end to outsourcing and hold the Labour government to its promise to undertake the 'biggest wave of insourcing in a generation'.

Speaking in Liverpool, Unison general secretary Andrea Egan made the announcement during a keynote speech calling on the trade union movement to come together towards "one common goal".

In a wide-ranging speech, the leader of the biggest public sector union said: "I want us to work together across the union movement to make this a reality, to bring our services, bring our people back in-house."

"And let's be clear, Labour isn't going to be winning back support unless it can massively increase spending in public services and in communities, that we so desperately need, into council housing, in care, in schools, in education, in our NHS, and in transport."

"I'm looking forward to the joint working, working more closely with Eddie in showing the wider movement what that fight back can look like."

"And that'll start with a joint

insourcing campaign," she said.

The newly elected leader of the Labour affiliated union received a standing ovation and strong support from RMT general secretary Eddie Dempsey.

He said that corporate giants like Mitie and Serco were creating constant downward pressure on terms and conditions of workers through the outsourcing model.

"These companies have no assets and are basically claiming rent on the backs of the entire industry."

"And these contracted out staff desperately need industrial trade unionism to defend themselves."

"Outsourcing means a two-tier workforce in which workers face discrimination, victimisation and sacking if you dare to fight back."

"Those in higher grades with full trade union rights should be helping these workers getting organised."

"We have come a long way with our own industrial cleaners' conference and some victories over sick pay and recognition."

"However, more needs to be done and the creation of GBR is an opportunity to bring

political pressure to bear and end outsourcing in the transport industry," he said.

Stephen Rees, Cardiff, described how cleaning grades suffered lower rates of pay, no sick pay or travel benefits or pensions across the rail and underground networks.

"We need an ongoing strategy to deliver for these workers and going forward under Great British Railways (GBR) all cleaners should be in-house."

Cleaner Mariana Zlatanova, Finsbury Park said that outsourced staff not only suffer

worse conditions but there were no opportunities for progression in the industry.

Rhys Harmer, London Underground Fleet said that the union needed to develop industrial strategies at branch level to bring cleaners into the union and turn them into activists.

"They need our help and the best thing we can do is equip them with the skills to organise themselves as a fundamental part of the union at every level," he said to applause.

Chris Hollowell, Docklands Light Railway said that



Unison general secretary Angela Egan announced a new joint insourcing campaign with RMT

outsourced workers were treated as second-class citizens with little or no minimum rights and it had to be addressed.

FIGHTING ASSAULTS

Delegates backed the union's action on assaults campaign and demanded an end to British Transport Police cuts for an end to lone working.

First time speaker Eli Edwards, Paddington No.1 moved a motion from young members conference calling on BTP cuts to be reversed and for more pressure to be exerted on employers to deal properly with staff assaults.

"Over 25 per cent of members in one survey said they didn't report any incidents they experienced due to feeling it wouldn't be taken seriously.

"Meanwhile, the prevalence of lone working, where 60 per cent of assaults occur, and 'reforms' which mean that we've replaced colleagues with computers, leaves people working in conditions that are much less safe than they ought to be.

"All of this has major potential problems for staff safety and retention, as people feel that the job isn't worth the hassle.

"Young members at the beginning of what should be a lifelong career in the transport industry might feel less likely to take the job if their first experience in the industry is you're put on a gate line on Saturday night where it is kicking off.

"Yet when you report it all you get is a reference number and a call from your manager saying, 'Will you wear a body camera?'"

"That's not good for the health of staff, it's not good for the health of the industry, and it's not good for the health and safety of passengers."

Seconding the motion, Etienne Ramsay, TfL pointed out that there was a "societal collapse" exacerbated by BTP cuts and austerity which left

frontline staff having to deal with the results.

"Let's end lone working and get more BTP support for staff," he added.

Phil Rowan, TfL also warned against the notion coming from some in the industry that being physically assaulted or verbally abused was now part of the job.

"That is not acceptable.

There is probably someone assaulted daily either verbally, getting spat at or racially assaulted or physically assaulted on London Underground," he told conference.

James Haley, Leeds urged a 'change in culture' away from not reporting incidents becoming the norm due to members believing that nothing will be done.

"If you do not report it, nothing will get done," he said.

Delegates also warned that women transport workers were facing an increase in misogynistic abuse and appalling levels of anti-social behaviour from intoxicated supporters travelling to and from football matches.

They backed a call for stronger security measures, greater BTP presence and tougher sanctions on offenders, arguing that train operators should do far more to tackle a problem that is both predictable and preventable.

Annila Saghir, King Cross spoke about her terrible experience of sexual assault while at work and how more needed to be done to protect rail workers.

"I was sexually assaulted by a football fan, on a train a few years ago, and it made me also realise how many things that I have had happen to me on board a train that I've let go and not reported.

"We must be honest about who carries the weight of all this, and its women.

"Women on our trains, women on our stations, women working on depots,



Transport Workers Union president John Samuelson from the United States addressed conference



TUC general secretary Paul Nowak backed the union's outsourcing campaign

and within that, outsourced cleaners and caterers are often the worst affected," she said.

She added that "proper security around reliable British Transport Police presence and dry trains with alcohol confiscated at the gate line" were essential.

Seconding the successful motion, train guard Sue Gazzard said that the brunt of attacks fell on women due to men seeing them "as vulnerable, they see you as a target, and they think they can say whatever they want".

GREAT BRITISH RAILWAYS

With Great British Railways being developed, the unjust reality of catering services still being outsourced on some train operating companies led to strong calls for the grade to be brought back in house.

Delegates warned that catering staff must not be left behind during rail renationalisation and workforce reform plans.

Mandy Evans, Swansea highlighted growing concerns among catering workers about



job security, the impact of technological change and the risk that frontline catering grades could be overlooked as the railway is restructured under public ownership.

Conference heard that catering staff perform a wide range of safety-critical and customer-facing duties beyond traditional onboard hospitality, including passenger assistance, public address announcements and supporting passengers during overcrowded services and incidents.

Matthew Partridge, Nottingham also called for security staff on the rail

network to be brought in-house.

"Under GBR security staff must be brought in-house and trained to the highest level with full term and conditions negotiated by this union," he said.

DEFENDING THE GUARD

Delegates called on the union to protect the role of the second safety critical person onboard trains when European Rail Traffic Management Systems (ERTMS) rolled out across the country.

James Tobin, Cambrian said that with the increase of rail

traffic, working with ERTMS had caused problems for guards, especially when they need to step away from a door control panel for any reason.

"There are concerns that guards could find themselves pushed into accepting methods of work where the role of the second safety critical person onboard could be compromised.

"We need to highlight the risk to the role of the second safety critical trained person in the dispatch procedure through the loss of visual indications and what to be prepared for when negotiating with management," he said.

Duncan Leishman, Edinburgh No1 & Portobello said that giving the driver authority on permission to proceed would make it easier to remove the guard altogether.

RMT assistant general secretary John Leach said that it affected all grades as the further introduction of Driver-Only Operation would undermine safety of the railway.

LOGISTICS

Delegates backed a motion highlighting the recruitment and retention crisis facing the freight and logistics sector and



Chris Hollowell



Rupert Pickering



Fiona Adams



Mariana Zlatanova



Millicent Samuel



Scott Agnew



John Leach



Stuart Sharp



David Clews



Charles Fisher



Rhys Harmer



Eddie Dempsey

calling for a stronger union focus on organising workers across the industry.

Stuart Sharp, Manchester South warned that the industry faced a shortage of 80,000 HGV drivers because people were leaving the industry in search of better pay and conditions.

"What we are looking for is for the union to back this sector.

"My drivers in the company, as soon as the ink is dry on the contract, there's an RMT membership slip for them to fill in to join straight away.

"We have 100 per cent membership in our terminal, and that goes across the board," he said.

He received loud applause from the floor adding: "During COVID truck drivers were held as heroes. How quickly that's been forgotten".

DAY OF THE SEAFARER

AGM delegates marked the international Day of the Seafarer observed annually on June 25 and established by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

The observance honours the 1.5 million mariners worldwide who sustain global trade by delivering vital

goods, energy, medicine, and food and celebrates the vital, often overlooked contributions seafarers make to the world economy.

RMT national secretary Darren Procter spelt out the need to organise workers at sea, at ports and in the offshore industry.

"We pay tribute to our seafarers in the deep-sea sector who are navigating difficult political challenges at the moment and those working around the UK coast.

"We've done some good work winning for our members, but we need more political buy in to address the exploitative practices around the key issues we have.

"That include dealing with fatigue and bad practices by employers," he said.

RMT AGM also backed a motion challenging proposed offshore weight restrictions due to come into force later this year.

Delegates voted to develop a detailed evidence-based case against the proposals put forward by Offshore Energies UK (OEUK), arguing that any new standards must be based on safety evidence rather than arbitrary thresholds that could

unfairly exclude experienced offshore workers.

Mr Procter told conference that it was vital that the union opposed these plans pointing out that even rugby players would fail these standards, despite being very physically fit.

A FERRY STRATEGY

Delegates backed a call for a national ferry strategy that clearly identified minimum standards.

Mairi Beaton, Glasgow Shipping said that this must include clear agreed crewing levels and roster patterns, employer pension contributions, decent apprenticeships, the eradication of voyage only contracts and for clear hours of work and rest.

She welcomed the fact that three ferry operators had complied with Seafarers' Charter requirements which was a stark reminder that where union recognition existed standards for seafarers were better.

"However, those who do not comply such as P&O and Irish Ferries continue to trade between UK and France.

"We must expose these rogue employers publicly and politically until all employers are compliant and a level playing field is achieved on ferry services.

"As part of a national ferry strategy we campaign for the establishment of minimal standards that are visible to members and future members of the union," she said.

DEFENDING BUS WORKERS

Delegates backed a call to defend the national bus fare cap as part of a long-term affordable fares policy to stabilise the industry.

Lee Odams, Notts & Derby Bus said that the national bus fare cap had played a significant role in supporting passengers during the cost-of-living crisis.





Delegates mark Day of the Seafarer

"Fare affordability is not simply a pricing issue but a matter of social inclusion, access to opportunity and equality.

"By reducing the cost of travel, it maintains ridership and ensures that bus services remain affordable to those who rely on them most," he said.

Conference also backed call for common discounted travel benefits for bus workers.

Currently, bus workers generally receive free or discounted travel restricted to their own operating company or specific partner operators.

"We need an integrated transport network that treats all transport workers as 'essential'

with consistent benefits," he said.

Delegates backed calls a national campaign on bus driver heat safety, excessive cab temperatures, defective cooling systems and national bus industry heat standards.

Caroline Carr, East Midlands Bus said that the latest heatwave was further proof of the need for legally enforceable maximum working temperatures, including standards covering bus driver cab environments.

"We should have mandatory driver cab cooling, ventilation, blinds, cab fans and other heat mitigation standards on all new buses.

"There should also be retrofitting programmes for older buses as bus cab cooling systems must be treated as safety-critical equipment during periods of extreme heat," she said.

Delegates backed a campaign for national heatwave operating procedures across the bus industry.

EQUALITIES

RMT delegates backed a call affiliate to Switchboard, the national LGBT+ support line, and strengthening the union's support for LGBT+ members across the country.

Delegates unanimously backed the motion in

recognition of the important role Switchboard had played in providing free and confidential support to the LGBT+ community for more than 50 years.

Scottish delegate Martin Duncan said: "Switchboard has been a lifeline to more than four million LGBTQIA+ people and allies across the UK, supporting them through some of the hardest and most defining moments in our history.

"Helping LGBT+ people feel that someone is listening, guiding, supportive, so that they can thrive, especially at a time of rising hostility towards our trans and non-binary



This year's recipient of the annual John Cogger young member award at AGM was Marc Harris of Ashford branch.

Marc has been very active in the recruitment of members across the rail industry and involved with education initiatives within the RMT young members network. ■

YOUNG MEMBERS AT AGM



RMT delegates to the annual young members conference which takes place at AGM joined national officers John Leach, Eddie Dempsey and George Welch at the top table.

The annual conference inducts new members into the union and includes sessions on the history of the union and how RMT's democratic structures operate.

Leading the conference this

year was young members committee chair Sarah Cundy. Any young members interested in getting involved with the union should contact their branch secretary or email: YMchair@rmt.org.uk ■

siblings.

Mohammed Mujahid, Central Line East said that the switchboard provided a vital service for LGBT+ members and their wider community, particularly for those who may feel isolated or face challenges because of their religious or culture backgrounds.

"Believe me, I should know this," he said.

There was also concern about the effect of artificial intelligence on black women members, delegates

unanimously backed a motion committing the union to challenging the use of and data-tracking technologies that threaten workers' rights, privacy and equality.

Mel Mullings, Bakerloo warned that the growing influence of technology firms such as Palantir in public services and workplaces risks entrenching discrimination, increasing surveillance and undermining democratic control over public data.

"When algorithmic tracking,

data harvesting, and AI-driven monitoring are introduced into a workplace, they do not impact everyone equally.

"They replicate and amplify a systematic racism already entrenched in our society, so what does this look like in practice?"

"A Black worker will be tracked by an automated algorithm disproportionately. Its technology is built on data sets that already profile Black and migrant communities as high risk.

"Black workers become a target for disproportionate surveillance, automated disciplinary triggers, and harsher capability procedures, all hidden behind a shield of impartial computer programming," she said.

Delegates called for a campaign for the removal of Palantir from public services, including the NHS, and to challenge the growing role of private technology companies in managing public data.

President's Column

ADDRESSING AGM

Liverpool has a proud trade union history that understands solidarity, resilience and the importance of collective action. It is a fitting place to gather as we reflect on the past and consider the future.

In the last year we can point to real examples of progress whilst recognising that we still need to continue the hard work.

However, working people continue to face pressures on living standards, uncertainty and concerns about the future. Yet RMT has continued to organise and membership has grown.

We have also secured improvements in pay and conditions, defended jobs, continued the fight against outsourcing, strengthened campaigns around workplace safety and assaults on staff, and made the case for public ownership and investment in the industries our members serve.

We have seen progress on bringing work back in-house and improvements for

outsourced workers. We have continued our campaign against assaults on transport workers and secured gains through negotiation, organisation and collective action.

The campaign for insourcing is a trade union campaign that impacts workers beyond the sectors we organise in. Those with the broadest shoulders within our movement must continue to put a clear commitment for positive change.

At the same time, we should recognise that our industries are changing and that our union must continue to evolve alongside them.

Change is not always comfortable. It is often met with caution and understandable concern. But we should not assume that every change is a threat, nor that every new proposal is an attack.

For many years RMT campaigned for public ownership and an end to the failed fragmentation that

followed privatisation. Today, we are witnessing the return of rail into public ownership.

That is something we can be proud of. But securing public ownership is not the end of the journey, we must make it work for the members. We must help shape a railway that provides long-term stability, secure employment, proper staffing levels, meaningful apprenticeships and skilled careers for future generations.

RMT also continues to be the leading maritime union campaigning for fair treatment of seafarers.

Our priorities remain clear: job security, safe workplaces, ending outsourcing, strengthening public ownership, growing the union and developing the next generation of activists and representatives.

Politically, the situation remains fluid. But RMT has seen governments come and go. It has seen industries transformed. Through all of that, one thing has remained

constant: our commitment to organising and defending the interests of our members through our democratic structures and our resolve.

Our strength comes from our willingness to debate, to listen, to learn and to move forward together.

I thank our branch officers, workplace representatives, activists, national executive committee, regional organisers and all staff who work tirelessly to support our members and our union.

Every achievement we discuss began with members who organised and stood together. Members who believed that collective action remains the best way to improve working lives. That remains the greatest strength of the union.

Whatever challenges lie ahead, and whatever changes may come in politics, industry or society, I remain confident in the future of his union because I remain confident in its members.

George Welch



PARLIAMENTARY REPORT

John McDonnell MP gave a full report regarding the work of RMT's Parliamentary group to AGM via a link due to the heatwave affecting travel across the country.

He said that the legislation to establish Great British Railways making its way through parliament was a victory for the union and parliamentary group after decades of campaigning.

The RMT group has submitted amendments highlighting the unions campaigns, including for GBR to be as a single employer, staff assaults and safe staffing levels, travel facilities and job protections for open access staff.

The Employment Rights Act has also become law which is another major victory for the movement, but you will see the group have been arguing for no dilutions and the full version of the new deal.



He said that the group will keep going to repeal more anti-union laws, deal with the single status of worker and extend collective bargaining.

The group also pursued amendments to the Bus Services Act to raise safety concerns, strengthening employment protections for workers and introducing local forums with trade unions.

The group fully supported the Action Against Assaults campaign seeking amendments to the Crime and Policing Bill in both the Commons and the Lords to create a standalone offence for public facing workers.

On maritime and offshore the group was continuing to campaign to protect jobs and prevent a race to the bottom

and exploring amendments to the forthcoming Energy Independence Bill to promote your campaigns.

Another union victory was the fact that the Employment Rights Act contained the Mandatory Seafarers charter and the government was consulting on the regulations that underpin that.

SOLIDARITY WITH CUBA

Cuban ambassador Ismara Vargas Walter won a standing ovation from delegates re-iterating the union's long-standing support for the Cuban people suffering the impact of the illegal US blockade.

She praised RMT for its solidarity with Cuba including the annual Cuba garden party launched by former general secretary Bob Crow over 20 years ago on behalf of the Cuba Solidarity Campaign (CSC).

"In that time this solidarity has deepened as the terrible impact of the United States blockade has been tightened even further," she said.

She outlined the current economic crisis in Cuba brought about directly by US



foreign policy.

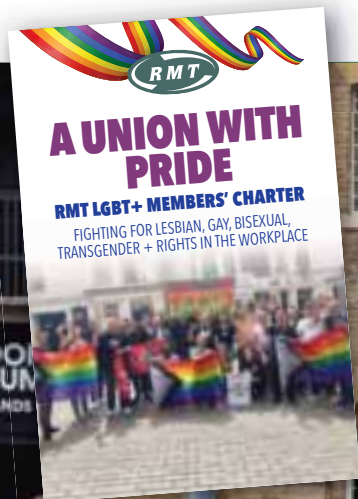
"This is economic warfare. And more recently, this is an oil siege against Cuba," she

said.

She thanked RMT for its fundraising efforts including supporting CSC's Cuba Vivé

appeal for medical equipment, medicines, and food aid and the union's involvement in the May Day Youth Brigade. ■

LGBT+ LAUNCHES RMT CHARTER



RMT LGBT+ members launch charter at annual conference meeting in London

Conference chair Simon Gilson explained that the new charter contained a charter of rights, and the relevant legal protections it provides under the Equality Act 2010, and what action union members can take to ensure it is enforced.

The Act provides legal protection from discrimination due to having a "protected characteristic" including marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

That discrimination can be direct, indirect or take the form of harassment or victimisation.

The charter also details how hate crimes against sexual orientation and gender identity are under-reported as people who are the victims are often not willing to come forward. It also explains what steps need to be taken to record and report a hate crime.

It also explained the benefits of joining RMT and issues a call for LGBT+ members to be fully involved

in all aspects of the union's work.

Primrose Jeanton, European Passenger Services, and Wale Agunbiade, East London Rail, welcomed delegates on behalf of the two branches that jointly hosted the event.

John Stack, Finsbury Park issued a call for the union to "give our unequivocal support for trans and non-binary people."

Addressing the consequences of the government's ban on puberty blockers he said: "Research has shown that following the UK wide ban, the consequences for trans and non-binary children and young people are revealing very serious adverse effects, less than a year after its imposition, including sharply declining mental health, increased depression, social isolation, anxiety, stress, self-harm, school avoidance and suicidal thoughts.

"Trans children and young people deserve safety,

understanding, and access to the same standard of care afforded to their peers.

Decisions about their healthcare should be guided by medical evidence and the expertise of trained professionals, not by political agendas," he said.

Guest speaker, Bob Hughes from Switchboard, the longstanding LGBT+ national support line, explained that a crucial part of the organisation's current work is supporting young people who are transitioning.

He detailed how Switchboard was founded in 1974 and gave an account of how progress had been made on many issues.

He explained that the organisation's archive of phone logs are historical records that have been drawn upon by television companies for TV series.

They contain notes of calls received during police raids on gay establishments in the 1970s and entrapment of gay

men to the fear around HIV in the 1980s, the Section 28 legislation designed to stop "the promotion of homosexuality" and the bombing of the Admiral Duncan pub in London in 1999.

Brian McCann, Manchester South proposed that the union to affiliate to Switchboard and highlight the work of the organisation.

Conor Price, national executive, gave a progress report on the union's work carrying forward the work of the resolutions from last year.

RMT assistant general secretary Daren Ireland highlighted the Better Jobs, Better Services and Action Against Assaults campaigns. He told delegates that union membership was increasing and paid tribute to members in the room who had been signing up new members in their branches.■

Copies of the LGBT charter are available from equal opportunities officer Jess Webb at j.webb@rmt.org.uk

SOLIDARITY AT BLACK TUC

RMT delegates joined other trade unionists at the TUC Black Workers' conference in Bournemouth around the theme *"From Equity to Action: Transforming Work for Black Workers"*.

Opening conference, Chair Taranjit Chana of GMB reflected on the anniversary of the murder of Stephen Lawrence and the role trade unions have played in campaigning for justice and challenging racism.

Delegates were reminded that solidarity, unity and collective organisation remain the strongest tools against fascism, racism and division.

Conference debates covered a wide range of issues including racism at work, microaggressions, the hostile environment, asylum policy, the rise of the far-right, AI discrimination, maternity inequality and anti-racist organising.

Delegates highlighted the gap between Black workers' high levels of trade union membership and their continued underrepresentation in senior leadership positions both within unions and wider workplaces.

A major theme was the growing threat posed by far-right politics and racist narratives. Delegates discussed how social media platforms and sections of the mainstream media were increasingly being used to spread anti-migrant rhetoric, misinformation and division.

Motions called for stronger anti-racist campaigning, better



RMT DELEGATION: Walé Agunbiadé, Shoaib Malik, Dennis James, Ebony West, Beverleigh Thomas, Uche Ngadi, Daniel Joseph, Mansur Khan, Mille Samuel, Chris Hamblen and Serwaa Boateng.

online engagement and workplace organising to challenge racist narratives directly.

One of the key motions addressing the 'rising influence of far-right parties' was selected to go forward to TUC Congress later this year. The motion focused on developing effective grassroots organising and social media engagement to challenge far-right narratives while promoting solidarity, decent jobs, fair pay and strong communities.

RMT delegates contributed to debates on migration, racism and workplace justice. Shoaib Malik warned that proposed government changes to asylum laws would create insecurity, exploitation and further division while targeting

some of the most vulnerable people seeking safety.

Conference agreed that the reforms would reduce protections for refugees and leave many trapped in prolonged uncertainty. Delegates argued that trade unions must continue to oppose attempts to scapegoat migrants and refugees for wider social and economic problems.

Delegates also debated emergency motions concerning international solidarity, war and the impact global conflict has on working-class communities.

A significant moment came with the election of Brother Walé Agunbiadé to the TUC Race Relations Committee for the coming year, reflecting the

important contribution RMT Black and ethnic minority members continue to make nationally.

Throughout conference there was a clear recognition that Black workers continued to face structural inequality, workplace discrimination and barriers to progression.

However, there was also a strong sense of determination and collective purpose among delegates to continue organising, educating and campaigning for change.

Conference concluded with renewed calls for solidarity, anti-racist organising and collective action to ensure trade unions remain at the forefront of the fight for equality, dignity and justice for all workers. ■

BOB CROW NATIONAL RECRUITING DAY

Every June 13 each year RMT activists carry out recruitment and mapping exercises



RMT activists across the country marked the national Bob Crow recruiting day on 13 June by taking the union's message directly into workplaces and speaking with transport workers about the importance of union organisation.

RMT's South East Regional Council chose London Marylebone Station as its focus, engaging with both Chiltern Railways employees and contract workers.

Covering both early and late shifts, regional secretary Dan Kennedy led the initiative, joined by regional president Ivor Riddell, regional organiser John Parsons and NEC member Dan Gibbons.

The team spoke with members and non-members alike, discussing the role of RMT, the benefits of collective organisation and why union membership remains as important as ever.

Conversations proved productive, with several workers joining the union on the day by scanning RMT QR code recruitment fobs or

taking away membership forms to complete later.

The team also listened to members' concerns about the future of Great British Railways (GBR), ongoing pay negotiations, uniforms and PPE provision, and the increasing use of Body Worn Video technology across the industry.

During the visit, the team met newly elected station representative Zara, who provided an update on workplace organisation and membership density at Marylebone.

The delegation also visited the cleaners' facilities, which provide an excellent example of the standards that all cleaning staff across the railway should expect and deserve.

South East president Ivor Riddell said that it had been a very productive day.

"Activities like this demonstrate that the union is a constant presence in the workplace. They also show how important it is for members to wear RMT lanyards, badges and other

union identifiers.

"When RMT is visible and normalised in the workplace, joining the union becomes a natural step for workers from day one.

"The recruiting day is about maintaining a visible, active union presence in every workplace, listening to

workers' concerns, and continuing the organising tradition that Bob Crow championed throughout his life.

"The message remains as relevant today as ever: when workers organise together, they are stronger together," he said. ■

ORGANISING MARITIME WORKERS



On Bob Crow national recruitment day RMT assistant national secretary Karlson Lingwood and Dover Shipping branch secretary Carl Holman made

a shipboard visit to members on the DFDS ferry, Delft Seaways. The cross-channel ferry sails from Dover to Dunkerque. ■

BRANCH TALK

RMT branch and regional secretaries discuss assaults and recruitment



RMT branch officials from across the country met in Southend-on-Sea to discuss priorities including dealing with assaults at work.

RMT regional organiser for London & East Anglia Kathy Mazur said that running a branch was a challenging role which needed union support.

"Through working with local branches, the union has increased regional membership by over 10,000.

"We could not have done this without the input of members who play important roles within branch structures," she said.

British Transport Police representatives Alan Bowell and Jay Bibby gave a presentation on how the BTP was acting across the South East.

They reported that there had been a nearly 30 per cent increase in staff assaults across the country and how they had

reduced that figure locally.

Police sergeant Bowell introduced Operation Fortitude launched on C2C and Greater Anglia train lines which had been designed to reduce assaults.

"We work directly with RMT and Kathy Mazur to develop the campaign for a safer railway.

"We need to reduce assaults, strengthen the relationship with staff and enhance safety by increasing presence on the network.

"That means patrolling known assaults hot spots, using spit kits, reducing investigation times and staff training to reduce incidents," he said.

He reported a nearly 10 per cent decrease in assaults on the lines at a time when violent attacks were increasing nationally.

He also encouraged staff to report assaults at work to

increase the chances of prosecution of violent passengers.

Carmen Carder, South East Essex said that agency staff that had been assaulted or witnessed incidents were not getting paid to attend court.

Ross Marshall, Camden No1 said that the BTP did not have

the visibility required to deter assaults and pointed out that the Crown Prosecution Service were also dropping cases.

Conference thanked RMT's South East Essex branch reception committee and secretary Fiona Thompson for the work involved in hosting the event. ■

BTP officers Alan Bowell and Jay Bibby with regional organiser Kathy Mazur





Local MP Rebecca Long-Bailey with delegates

ORGANISING FREIGHT AND LOGISTICS

Delegates to the freight and logistics organising conference in Manchester agreed that the union should prioritise workplace organisation.

Ian Boyle of the union's retention and organising department outlined the need to increase activity around mapping workplaces and building membership density.

"RMT is using new laws under the Employment Rights Act 2025 to develop recognition agreements in many companies.

"This is an historic opportunity to expand as we only need 10 per cent density to win recognition.

"It also allows the union access to workers and if companies refuse to allow us to do so they will face fines.

"Therefore, we need to equip branches and regions with basic information which highlights density and the potential to grow," he said.

Conference president Mick Williams warned that over 2,000 freight companies had gone bust over the last year yet there was still a shortage of drivers.

"There is clearly a crisis in the industry," he said.

Stuart Sharp, Manchester South called for an RMT freight and logistics charter.

"We must set out a vision for workers in our sector and demand improvements to members jobs, pay and conditions.

"For instance, many warehouse operatives are currently exploited by employers who hire on zero-hour contracts and fire without any notice when workers are not required.

"We must take a more active role to recruit in this sector to improve pay, terms and conditions, reduce hours, end zero-hour contracts and develop sick and pension schemes," he said.

Delegates agreed that the charter should be developed around these issues between the conference liaison committee and head office.

Conference also welcomed the fact that the union had produced recruitment materials such as lanyards, badges and cab fresheners for distribution within the sector to raise the profile of the union.

Tom Wilson, Southampton said that his region was also handing out RMT wallets with the Join RMT card with the QR card inserted which can be handed to drivers.

Addressing conference, local MP for Salford Rebecca Long-Bailey said that freight

workers were the backbone of the economy but were being ignored.

"We clearly need an industrial strategy to rebuild the economy.

"Road haulage and road freight should be planned, invested in and developed instead of endless disinvestment and decline.

"I am a part of RMT's parliamentary group, and we are trying to push your union's agenda for reindustrialisation and a new deal for workers.

"We need to expose this managed decline and replace it with a real, effective industrial strategy for the country.

"We also need details on how Great British Railways will develop the freight and logistics sector and that means direct investment instead of handing money to the privateers," he said.

RMT assistant general secretary Daren Ireland said that RMT and its parliamentary group needed to develop policies around the future of the rail and road logistics sector.

"We need a significant overhaul of the sector by government and that means developing a list of demands.

"For instance, there is no strategy to deal with the fact

that rail track access charges was forcing freight back on the road from rail," he said.

He also outlined plans to grow union membership in the freight sector and the union needed to identify areas to prioritise.

Mick Williams warned that most HGV road accidents could be attributed to driver fatigue.

"This is due to being forced into returning to drive after only a nine-hour rest period, often after working up to 15-hour day.

"The union should be pressing for a compulsory 11-hour rest period for all HGV drivers," he said.

He also called for the withdrawal of the compulsory Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) as it was simply a money-making racket, but drivers cannot legally drive despite having passed both the driving test and a health test.

"The CPC adds nothing to either driving skills or safety, but as it can cost up to £500 out of the drivers' own pocket and appears to be one of the main reasons drivers are leaving to industry.

"Last year over 100,000 CPCs were not renewed which shows you how many are leaving the industry," he said. ■

50 YEARS FOR JAMES



Long-standing member James Cunningham of North Clyde branch received his 50-year membership badge in the union's Glasgow office. ■



ENGINEERING PRESENTATION

RMT assistant general secretary John Leach presented Peter Ashley with a long service award on his retirement after 24 years in the union.

Peter's son Sam Ashley, who is now LU Engineering branch secretary, was also on hand.

John said that Peter had been active throughout his

time in the union and worked in APC at Hainault depot in London.

"I have known Peter as a member, activist and very hardworking and dedicated representative for all grades in LU and we will miss him, but luckily Sam has followed in his dad's footsteps," he said.

■

PORTSMOUTH 50



Portsmouth branch member Gary Oram who is employed by Wightlink as a Port operative was presented with a 50-year badge and a letter of commendation from the general secretary.

Gary was presented his medal by the RMT national secretary Darren Procter and assistant national secretary Karlson Lingwood with Portsmouth branch secretary Richard Howard. ■

CHILTERN AWARD

Stores issuer at Aylesbury Train Maintenance Depot Brian Keinch received an RMT decanter and glass set from Chiltern Line branch secretary John Lamb after 22 years as a stalwart member. ■



AWARD FOR CHRIS

Long-standing RMT activist Chris Cuomo was presented with a special achievement award at the Station grades conference earlier this year in Wakefield.

RMT general secretary Eddie Dempsey and conference secretary Ross Marshall congratulated him on his contribution to the union over many years as a member of Deptford

branch.

"Chris was always there during recruitment drives and on behalf of the union's Widow's and Orphan's fund and he continues to do so despite retiring from work earlier this year," he said.

Chris was awarded the prestigious TUC Organising Award at TUC Congress in 2018 and continues to serve the union in several ways. ■



AWARD FOR NOEL

Eddie Dempsey made a special presentation to Noel McDonnell aged 91 after serving Manchester Northwest Retired members as branch secretary for 23 years.

He became the newly formed retired branch's secretary in 2003.

Noel was born in November 1935 and joined the NUR in 1955 when he joined the British Rail Civil Engineers Workshop at Newton Heath.

Shortly after joining BR Noel was elected as a Shops & Works Committee representing the wages grade and served as secretary for some years.

As a member of the Miles Platting branch, he was elected to the NUR Manchester District Council and served on the union's

executive from 1985.

Noel was elected to four AGMs 1974 Plymouth, 1977 Ayr, 1979 Paignton and 1980 in Guernsey and served on the standing orders committee three times.

Following being made redundant from BR in the early 1990s Noel worked as a Social Worker.

"Noel has a lifetime of experience which enriches us all," said Eddie. ■



OFFICIAL RMT BRANDED MERCHANDISE

Show your support for the union. Go to the RMT webshop on the RMT web site for more details. Promote your branch, region and the union - call Pellacraft on 01623 636 602 if you have any queries.



LEGAL SUPPORT FOR RMT MEMBERS AT EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNALS

If you are experiencing difficulties in the workplace and need advice regarding a potential employment tribunal claim contact the union.

In the first instance, ensure that you contact your local RMT Representatives or Regional Organiser. Then complete an L2 – Request for Legal Assistance (available on-line) and send it to your Regional Office with all supporting documentation.

RMT's legal department deals with virtually all cases from assessment to the case's conclusion at a tribunal for members across England and Wales. The legal department has also submitted claims to Employment Appeal Tribunals.

The in-house legal department is now firmly established and employs four solicitors and continues to advise and support

members in their work-related criminal cases in the Magistrates Court.

This often involves defending members against false allegations made by the public of assault, false allegations of theft and alleged driving offences. Furthermore, it continues to offer tailored advice and support for bus and taxi drivers, in respect of their licensing issues, licensing appeals before the Magistrates Court, driving offences, and in respect of appearances before Traffic Commissioners.

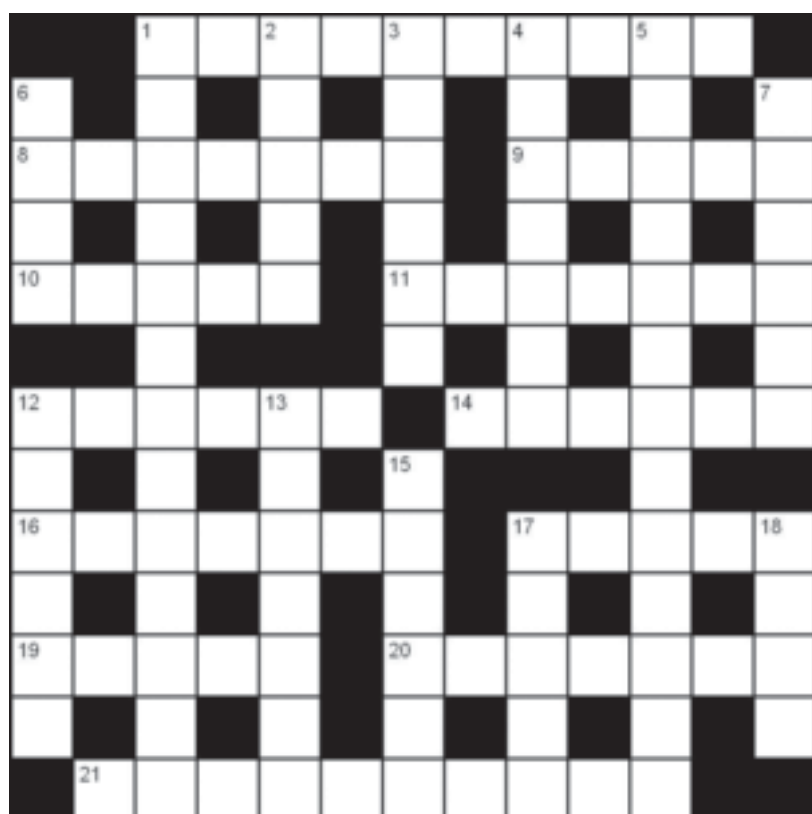
The In-house legal department continues to strive to deliver a first-class service to all of members. They are committed to provide a strong service to assist the union through the ever-changing legal landscape and their successes have grown yearly.

Your Free legal service covers:

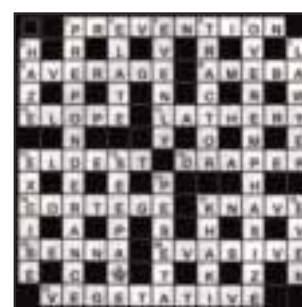
- **Employment Law** – provided by the RMT Legal Department
- **Access to Personal Injury Lawyers** – where 100 per cent of compensation is kept by members.
- **Access to a basic will service.**
- **Access to special terms for conveyancing, probate, powers of attorney.**
- **Access to special terms for family law related matters.**

The contact number for the legal department is 020 7084 7260 or go on-line to rmt.org.uk/about/legal-services/

£100 PRIZE CROSSWORD



Last month's solution...



Send entries to Prize Crossword, RMT, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD by August 24, 2026 with your name and address.

Last month's winner is John Payne, Southend.

Please supply bank account details and sort code to receive your prize quickly.

ACROSS

- 1 Magnifier (10)
- 8 Cleanliness (7)
- 9 Flamboyance (5)
- 10 Banishment (5)
- 11 Specimen (7)
- 12 Error (3-3)
- 14 Earnest (6)
- 16 Compress (7)
- 17 Appliance (5)
- 19 Dance (5)
- 20 On that (7)
- 21 Replicable (10)

DOWN

- 1 Pomposity (10)
- 2 Pancake (5)
- 3 Egg dish (6)
- 4 Reduce to ashes (7)
- 5 Thermoplastic material (13)
- 6 Footwear (4)
- 7 Authenticate (6)
- 12 Cut in half (6)
- 13 Control (7)
- 15 Group of six (6)
- 17 A swat (5)
- 18 Hindu princess (4)



ON THE WALLINGFORD BUNK

Oxfordshire heritage railway inspires an annual free music festival

The Cholsey and Wallingford Railway (CWR) is a small heritage line that is connected to the Great Western Railway between Reading and Didcot stations.

But it also plays host to BunkFest, one of the biggest volunteer-run free music festivals in the country, attracting over 10,000 people in the first weekend of September each year featuring food and music from all over the world.

The heritage line brings

people from the main rail network at Cholsey station and includes performances on the train. The festival also includes boat trips on the Thames with live music.

The railway became known as the Wallingford Bunk after a train left Cholsey station without its coaches in the Edwardian period.

The 2½ miles of track operates along most of the length of the former branch line from Cholsey station to the outskirts of Wallingford



that used to serve the maltings there, the main reason why the line survived.

Grand plans for a line through to Chinor collapsed over 150 years ago due to the bank crash of 1866 so the GWR took over the track.

The Cholsey and Wallingford Railway Preservation Society began running services on the full available length of the line in 1997 and today diesel locomotives and visiting steam locomotives run numerous special events.

Trains run on weekends and

bank holidays between April and September, and at Halloween and Christmas. The railway's web site has details of operating days.

BunkFest takes place on September 4-6 offering camping and a range of venues from the main stage, with artists including Dr Feelgood, to many fringe events and Ceilidhs.■

For information on the railway go to: <https://www.cholsey-wallingford-railway.com>
For information on BunkFest go to: www.bunkfest.co.uk

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Keep your RMT membership details up-to-date

In the light of draconian anti-trade union laws that have been used against the union, members should keep their personal data up to date. It is also important to note that in order to keep members informed your union requires your mobile telephone number and email address.

Members can do this via the RMT website, telephone the RMT helpline above, or writing to the membership department at RMT head office, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD.



rmt.org.uk