

RMT *news*

Essential reading for today's transport worker

TUBE CLEANERS WIN!

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SPIRIT OF RESISTANCE
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**Cleaners
need a
Living wage**



NATIONAL UNION OF RAIL, MARITIME & TRANSPORT WORKERS

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EDITORIAL

CLEANERS WIN LIVING WAGE



If there was ever an example of the benefits of organising transport workers in an industrial, all-grades union it was the magnificent victory won by cleaners on London Underground.

The threat of escalating strike action by more than 700 RMT members working for cleaning subcontractors finally delivered the London living wage to all Tube cleaners.

This was a hard-fought battle by cleaners backed by fellow transport workers in other stronger grades. It is also a vindication of the hard work activists put in organising this vulnerable group of workers under very difficult circumstances.

The full impact of the collapse of Lehman Brothers investment bank has yet to become clear but there is no doubt we are in the middle of a full blown capitalist crisis - that is why every member and their families should join the union's credit union.

The nationalisation of Northern Rock and now the \$85 billion - that's \$85,000 million! - buyout of AIG, which makes the US taxpayer the owner of the biggest insurance company in the world, shows that socialism is not dead after all.

Nevertheless, this government seems determined to go in the opposite direction by privatising the Tyne and Wear Metro, a public sector success story if ever there was one. This is despite opinion polls showing huge opposition to such moves and the collapse of Metronet on the Tube.

It appears that the socialist impulse for nationalisation is currently only limited to rich people and employers will still undoubtedly try to make workers pay for this growing financial crisis.

To combat these attacks workers must be prepared to act collectively in defence of themselves and their families. That means resisting job cuts and below inflation pay offers which are, in effect, pay cuts.

That is exactly what cleaners at OCS are doing and it is effective

The threat of strike action by RMT members at Tube

infrastructure company Tube Lines led to the company increasing its pay-and-conditions offer.

In this issue of RMT News there is a round-up of pay deals which gives an insight into how the union is progressing in all grades from buses, road freight, shipping to rail and without the collective pressure of your trade union these settlements would be far lower.

There is some movement on pay for members at the Royal Fleet Auxiliary but this has to be approved by the Treasury which is quite busy at the moment. The new RFA convener Andrew Clare also takes up his new post in early November.

I also recently had the pleasure of meeting members at Caledonian MacBrayne ferries and discussed the current three-year deal on the table linked to RPI each year.

The recent merger with offshore workers in OILC is already bearing fruit with some movement on the notorious No Required Back (NRB) policy which allows employers to throw workers off oil rigs without a reason to do so. This barbaric practice discourages oil workers from raising concerns particularly over safety and it must go.

Safety is also high on the agenda in the current dispute with Southeastern trains as the company seems intent on removing the safety role of the guard and the extension of driver-only operation (D00).

The recent fire in the Channel tunnel is a vivid example of what can happen and why the presence of properly-trained guards is crucial. Under D00 the only staff present would be the driver and, in the event of an emergency, who would evacuate and protect the train?

This union will strive to defend the role of the guard and the safety of staff and passengers alike.

Best wishes

Bob Crow

Bob Crow

When you have finished with this magazine give it to a workmate who is not in your union. Even better, ask them to join RMT by filling in the application form opposite

PAY AND CONDITIONS ROUND-UP

RMT News highlights some pay deals negotiated by the union over recent months

SOUTHEASTERN SHUNTER DRIVERS

After prolonged negotiations on pay, a 4.1 per cent no-strings attached increase to rates of pay, backdated to October 2007, has been accepted

SOUTHEASTERN REVENUE PROTECTION STAFF

- A 4.3 per cent increase in all salaries with effect from January 6 2008. This is in line with the Retail Price Index of November 2007
- A further increase of 0.25 per cent of the November 2008 Retail Price Index plus 0.13 per cent with effect from January 4 2009 until April 4 2009 to realign this group's pay anniversary date with all other groups of grades.

FIRST GREAT WESTERN DRIVERS

The following offer has been studied by the GGC and has accepted. The company has been informed accordingly and the increase should be in the next available pay packet:-

- A 5.1 per cent increase to salaries and allowances effective from April 1 2008.
- A commitment to enter into restructuring talks.

TRANSPENNINE EXPRESS

- From April 1 2008 rates of pay for Conductors, Drivers and Station grades to be increased by 4.8 per cent or £800, whichever is the greater.
- From April 1 2009 rates of pay for Conductors, Drivers and Station grades to be increased by RPI plus 0.4 per cent or £800 or 3.5 per cent whichever is the greater. RPI will be the February 2009 published figure.
- Payment for employees on maternity leave to be increased

ALSTOM TRANSPORT WEST COAST

- A one year deal from April 1st 2008
- 4.1 per cent pay increase or £800 whichever is the greater (other than red circled staff two per cent)
- Increase of London Weighting Allowance of one per cent
- Reduction in the working week from 38 to 37, with reduction taken as banked hours
- Extension of the company bonus scheme until Sept 2008

LONDON MIDLAND

- A five per cent or £800 whichever is greater for all the groups involved backdated to

April 1 2008 and reviewed in April 2009

- The company is committed to commencing harmonisation talks with each grade group by identifying key challenges and issues applicable to that grade group and agreeing a target end date.

BOMBARDIER DERBY

- A 3.25 per cent increase to basic rate for manufacturing staff, backdated to January 1 2008.
- A further increase of four per cent on basic rates for all the above groups effective from January 1 2009.
- An additional day's leave out of the annual leave entitlement may be broken down into two-hour blocks.

DHL COVENTRY

Following the threat of strike action, the company tabled an improved offer which was been accepted in a referendum ballot

- 3.75 per cent increase for 39-hour warehouse staff
- 3.25 per cent increase plus half hour off working week for 42.5 hour warehouse staff
- Four per cent increase for all drivers
- 3.5 per cent increase on all higher grade payments
- All increases backdated to April 1 2008

NORTHERN RAIL

- A one-year no strings attached 4.7 per cent increase across the board for all staff, backdated to April 6 2008.

ISS NORTHERN RAIL

- A three per cent increase in basic rates of pay backdated to April 1 2008 with a further increase of one per cent from November 1 2008 for members on the station and fleet contracts

ISS VIRGIN WEST COAST STATIONS CONTRACT

- A four per cent increase to all salaries and allowances backdated to January 1 2008.

ARRIVA TRAINS WALES SEAT CATERING

- Year 1 – 5.7 per cent increase
- Year 2 – four per cent or RPI (April 09)

MERSEYRAIL

A two-year offer has accepted:

- 2008 – 4.6 per cent or £800, whichever is the greater;

- 2009 – February RPI +0.25 per cent or £800, whichever is the greater, plus the overtime divisor for carriage cleaners reducing from 39 to 36 hours.
- Maternity Pay – Full payment to be increased from 13 to 26 weeks
- Travel Facilities – The Company has agreed to support the principle of universal travel facilities and will raise this at Joint Venture level.
- Recognition: Carlisle Security (Merseyrail Contract)

WILTS AND DORSET BUSES

- A four per cent increase to be implemented on all rates of pay, all grades.

FIRST CAPITAL CONNECT

- A one-year no strings increase of 4.6 per cent from the anniversary date of April 6 2008.
- Maternity benefits will be increased for staff with less than one years service 12 weeks at full pay and 27 weeks at SMP staff with one year or more service 22 weeks at full pay and 17 weeks at SMP
- First Capital Connect will extend the right to seek flexible working to parents of children up to the age of sixteen.

HARWICH INTERNATIONAL PORT

Following on from a magnificent show of solidarity from members at Harwich, the company tabled an improved offer which has been accepted.

- A four per cent increase to basic pay (basic 1 and 2), roster premium and overtime rates, effective January 1 2008.
- A reduction to six months from 12 months for the PO1 probationary period and the introduction of a four-stage payment process for basic 2 pay element.

P&O NORTH SEA FERRIES

After many meetings with the company, the following offer has been accepted.

- A base increase of 4.2 percent, effective from January 1 2008.
- Each rating eligible for the personal allowance, will receive a one lump sum payment.
- Eligible ratings will receive a lump sum payment equivalent to the personal supplement they received in 2007.

P&O IRISH SEAS

- A 4.2 per cent increase in basic

rates of pay with effect from January 1 2008.

- For achieving target performance a payment will be made based on 3.75 per cent of annual salary.

FORTH PORTS TUG DRIVERS

A three –year agreement with increases and protection for inflation as follows

- Year One – 4.5 per cent effective January 1 2008.
- Year Two – Three per cent effective January 1 2009.
- Year Three – Three per cent effective January 1 2010.
- Protection for inflation for years two and three will be based on the RPI figure published in January 2009 and 2010 respectively
- With regard to working into rostered time off, where everyone concerned has made their best endeavours to arrange cover, if due to normal operational matters out-going crews are delayed into rostered time-off, a call-out payment will be made.
- On the anniversary of achieving 20, 25, 30, 35 and 40 years service, a one-off bonus payment may opt to receive the bonus in the form of an extra weeks leave to be taken in that year. For the purposes of this benefit

STAGECOACH HAMPSHIRE BASINGSTOKE ENGINEERS

- Year 1 - A 4.8 per cent increase in basic rates of pay, backdated to May 5 2008.
- Year 2 - A 3 per cent increase or RPI (whichever is greater) from May 2009

DAMORY COACHES

- An hourly rate increase to £7.50 from April 1 2008
- An hourly rate increase to £7.75 from October 1 2008
- The next review will be October 1 2009
- Holidays will be paid in accordance with the Working time regulations.
- Staff with three years service or more will accrue one additional days holiday per year providing they complete a period of 12 months free of sickness absence.
- Overnight allowance will be increased from £15 to £20

VAE UK

- A four per cent increase to basic rates of pay, overtime and pension, backdated to April 1 2008. ■

RMT TUBE STAFF STRIKE IN SEPARATE DISPUTES

RMT Station Staff working at Eleven Tube stations between Plaistow and Upminster on London Underground's District Line and at Elephant and Castle, Charing Cross and Lambeth North on the Bakerloo line took 24-hour strike action in two separate disputes.

More than 90 staff on the East Ham group voted by a margin of more than 20 to one to take action over a breakdown of industrial relations sparked by local management ignoring procedures, the victimisation and harassment of staff and

union reps and the sacking of station assistant Sarah Hutchins who had taken time off for pregnancy-related illnesses and after being assaulted at work.

And around 100 station staff at Charing Cross, Elephant and Castle and Lambeth North on the Bakerloo line will be striking for the second time to demand the re-instatement of Jerome Bowes who was unfairly dismissed after defending himself against a violent assault on New Year's Eve.

RMT drivers at Elephant and Castle depot are now also being



balloted.

"These are separate disputes but there is a pattern emerging of unfair sackings, a rise in complaints about bullying and harassment, and the failure of LUL management to stand by staff who are victims of assault," RMT general secretary

Bob Crow said.

He said that the bottom line in both disputes was that members have the right to work in an atmosphere of trust and co-operation and without the fear of being fired without good reason. ■

TUBELINES MEMBERS WIN AFTER STRIKE THREAT

Tube infrastructure company Tubelines increased its pay-and-conditions offer on the eve of a planned 72-hour strike which has been accepted by a four-to-one margin in a postal ballot.

In last-ditch talks, the company raised its offer to over 1,000 RMT members on a two-year deal to 4.99 per cent this year (backdated to April 1), and RPI (February 09 figure, but currently 5 per cent) plus 0.85 per cent from April 2009.

The offer includes a minimum £1,000 salary increase for lower paid grades and apprentices, while points technicians will receive an

additional increase of £3,000 in their basic salaries in addition to the 4.99 per cent in year one of the deal.

The company also offered to increase travel subsidy from home to place of work from 80 to 90 per cent from April 2009, gave a commitment to pursue with Transport for London the provision of Oyster Cards, and agreed to separate discussions on a range of other issues.

"RMT members at Tubelines are to be congratulated for the unity and commitment they have displayed during this dispute, not least in the face of hostile media coverage," RMT general secretary Bob Crow said.

TUBE BILL-POSTERS STRIKE

Members at CBS Outdoor undertook four days of strike action recently leading to an offer currently being voted on by the workforce.

Although there was no direct improvement on the original four per cent increase in pay, management propose sharing with staff all savings made in improvements to advertising sites. Site quality is constantly improving due to the hard work of the workforce and could yield around £100 per year to each fixer and would be payable each December.

CBS have agreed to pay each employee £50 in the next paybill with any balance being paid in December. This equates to a 0.4 per cent increase in the current rates of pay on top of the original offer.

On the question of travel concessions on London Underground, management gave an assurance that they were lobbying LUL constantly with little success and agreed that an RMT representative could accompany the CBS delegation to its next meeting with LUL on the issue. ■



OCS EUROSTAR CLEANERS DEMAND FAIR PLAY ON PAY

Cleaners being paid poverty wages by OCS on its Eurostar contract lobbied the Oval cricket ground recently to explain to cricket fans how the company that gives its name to the lavish OCS Stand makes its sponsorship money by shamelessly exploiting its staff.

RMT cleaners who keep Eurostar's trains and stations clean are fighting to win the London Living Wage of £7.45 an hour, but OCS – which boasts of its 'family values' – pays them more than £1 an hour less than that with nothing extra for overtime, nights or bank holiday work.

Some 120 RMT members at the company have already taken solid strike action over the August Bank Holiday after returning a 100 per cent vote for industrial action for a living wage.

"Cricket is supposed to be about fair play, and our members are telling OCS and

Eurostar that it's time to stop cheating our members and stump up a living wage," RMT general secretary Bob Crow said.

It would cost OCS less to pay the London living wage than they pay one of their directors.

The company made £6.2 million profit in after-tax profit last year and directors' remuneration added up to £1.3 million, with the highest-paid director receiving £409,000.

"Business is booming for Eurostar, which boasts about its ethical stance and how it treads lightly on the planet, and it could stop OCS trampling all over the workforce that keeps its trains and stations clean with one telephone call.

"We have just won the London living wage for cleaners on the Tube, and now it is time for both these hypocrite companies to stop hiding behind each other's fat profits and pay up," he said. ■



RMT WINS ELECTION TO FGW DRIVERS' DIVISIONAL COUNCIL

RMT member Tim Earl was successfully elected to represent train drivers on First Great Western's Drivers' Divisional Council recently.

RMT Regional Organiser Brendan Kelly said that Tim's election showed the high personal regard, which he is held in by his colleagues, as well as RMT's growing train driver membership and authority on issues relevant to the Driving grade.

Tim who was standing to represent HSS (High Speed Services) drivers at FGW's Paddington, Bristol and Swansea depots won his election by a margin of 88 votes to 38 votes for his opponent from the ASLEF.

Since his election, Tim has been kept busy at numerous meetings representing FGW train drivers in pay negotiations, discussions on the PT&R and various other issues affecting drivers' terms and conditions.

Last month RMT's General Grades Committee voted to accept a one-year pay offer

from FGW of a 5.1 per cent increase to drivers' salaries and allowances backdated to April 1 2008 and a commitment to enter into restructuring talks over the starting rate of pay for FGW Drivers employed on former Wessex Trains and Thames Trains (FGW-Link) terms and conditions. This pay award was in line with the second year of a two-year pay offer already accepted last year for all other grades at the company and brings drivers' pay negotiations backing line with other grades.

Members at both FGW and Arriva Trains Wales have now elected Drivers' Divisional Council representatives to put forward RMT's progressive agenda for all grades at the highest levels within train operating company negotiations.

RMT's South Wales & West of England Regional Council also recently organised a one-day school dealing with driver disciplinary representation and working with Competent Driver Programmes. ■



DRIVERS' VICTORY: RMT member Tim Earl, successfully elected to represent train drivers on First Great Western's Drivers' Divisional Council with EC member Alex Gordon

Companywatch

ARRIVA'S CASH FROM CHAOS

Transport privateer Arriva has just announced a 44 per cent rise in operating profits, raking in £76.3 million in the last six months, due to the growing economic crisis combined with soaring petrol prices.

The bus and rail operator is enjoying a bonanza as soaring costs drive people out of cars and planes and on to buses and trains, with a 59 per cent increase in revenue in the first six months to June 30.

Arriva, which took over the UK's CrossCountry rail franchise last year, said revenue had risen by £1.4 billion from £902 million last time.

The Sunderland-based firm's rail operating profits increased to £14.8 million from £1.1 million since acquiring the Aberdeen to Penzance franchise in 2007.

It has managed this by hitting rail passengers with a 4.8 per cent increase in peak fares and an average seven per cent rise in off-peak tickets at the start of the year, which has since reportedly been followed by price reviews across some operations nationwide.

The company has also been threatening cost-cutting exercises like withdrawing shops from its Cross Country rail franchise

despite bucking rising fuel prices by securing supplies on fixed deals in advance.

However, Arriva will be paying an interim dividend of 6.15p a share, up 10 per cent on the payout a year ago and shares rose 4.2 per cent on the day the figures were released.

The company's European operations delivered a 50 per cent increase in revenue of £626 million and a 24 per cent rise in operating profit of £34.9 million, boosted by the acquisition of 80 per cent of Hungary-based bus business Interbus Invest.

Chief executive David Martin has indicated that the company will be looking to swallow up other franchises in Europe as 'liberalising' EU transport directives are rolled out across the European Union regardless of the UK experience with rail privatisation.

"Our focus on Europe's diverse transport markets gives us resilience and great potential for further growth," he said.

However, the competition is pretty stiff from other private transport monopolies that view transport networks as herds of publicly-subsidised cash-cows rather than essential public services. ■

ARRIVA RESULTS

- Group revenue up 59 per cent to £1,443.4 million
- Group operating profit rose 44 per cent to £76.3m
- Group profit before taxation increased by 40 per cent to £66.3m
- After taxation Group profit was £51.1m, up from £37.5m for the same period in 2007
- Earnings per share up 31 per cent
- Interim dividend increased by 10 per cent

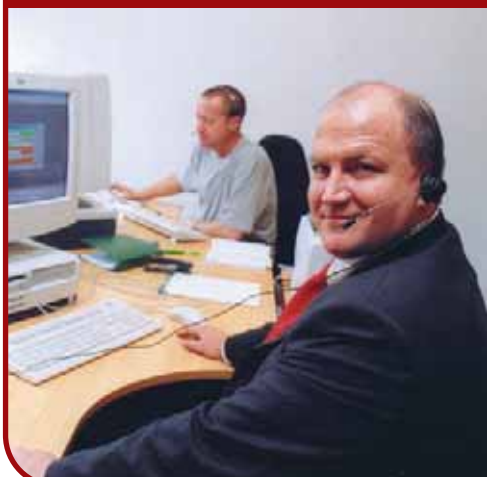
UK BUS

- Revenue up 14 per cent to £454.5 million
- Operating profit up 20 per cent to £45.5 million

UK TRAINS

- Revenue up to £415.5 million from £121.6 million
- Operating profit up to £14.8 million from £1.1 million
- Cross Country passenger revenue for 6 months to June 30 up 10.3 per cent
- 75 per cent of the annual fuel requirement for Cross Country remains fixed until 2016
- Arriva Trains Wales revenue up 12.3 per cent

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RAIL MAINTENANCE WORKERS' STRIKE ACTION SUSPENDED FOR FRESH TALKS

Four days of strike action by some 12,000 Network Rail maintenance workers has been suspended after Network Rail agreed to further talks.

The union, which has already mounted two weekend strikes, was due to escalate its action after a breakthrough made in earlier talks was vetoed by Network Rail at director level.

The company has tabled its latest proposals on harmonisation which represent its wish list and these have not been agreed with the union.

Assistant general secretary Mick Cash said that whilst the proposals from management could form the basis of future negotiations, the document as it stood was

unacceptable, particularly regional pay rates and overlapping skills.

"It is unacceptable that they value our Scottish members less than elsewhere or that a member in Liverpool is paid differently to a member in Preston.

"Our objectives remain the same, Network Rail should pay the same pay for the same job no matter where you work," he said.

He said that ultimately RMT members would be given the final say and more industrial action has not been ruled out.

Mick raised concerns that Network Rail had another agenda, to make 22 per cent savings in its budget on maintenance and renewals over the next five years and it had made commitments to reduce costs to the

Rail Regulator and government.

"If they cannot get them through harmonisation then they will try to do it a bit at time dividing worker from worker to achieve their goal. You either trust Network Rail or you trust your representatives on that," he said.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow also said that the ball was now firmly in Network Rail's court and the union expected the company to negotiate in good faith.

"Our members have already shown where they stand and Network Rail should be under no illusion that they remain determined to win a harmonisation package that delivers fairness and justice," he said.



NRB 'NAME AND SHAME' CAMPAIGN BEGINS TO BITE

RMT's 'name and shame campaign' to combat the continued use of NRB (Not Required Back) in the offshore oil and gas industry may be forcing employers to act.

Oil and Gas UK (OGUK) announced fresh efforts to stamp out offshore workers being banned from any installation in the North Sea without being given a reason.

OGUK health and safety director Chris Allen claimed that the practice of people being NRB'd was not as widespread as rumoured, with only a handful of cases annually.

However, there is not one rig offshore where the NRB criteria has not been used, creating fear about raising issues particularly around safety.

RMT's offshore branch, the former OILC union, has had to deal with a number of cases recently. At Hess a man with 10 years service was NRB'd for 'not

being a team player'. Another man with 10 years service – five as a safety rep – was NRB'd by BG Group for being 'argumentative'. Two men, one a safety rep for three years and another with 20 years on the Forties, were NRB'd by Apache. Two more were NRB'd by Exxon because 'a manager didn't like his appearance' and no reason was given for the other.

RMT has written to the HSE and OGUK concerning these cases and offshore organiser Jake Molloy will be meeting both organisations.

"For over 30 years contract workers have lived and worked in fear of this practice and we want this fear removed and specifically where the action is related to raising or questioning health and safety issues," he said.

Jake Molloy said that, while supporting stringent safety standards, NRB was the

arbitrary, unaccountable and unjust. However, he said that the union's campaign may be showing signs of delivering an outcome.

John Methven, Petrofac's health and safety director, has also admitted that the shadow of NRB hanging over offshore workers must go. ■



TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE

RMT recently took part in a TUC-organised conference on trades unions and climate change.

If steps are not taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, we face serious consequences and increasingly bitter trade disputes as countries struggle for control over key natural resources.

The Climate Change Bill commits the UK to legally binding targets to reduce carbon emissions by between 26 per cent and 32 per cent and then 60 per cent by 2020 and 2050 respectively.

Reductions on this scale will inevitably lead to changes in a series of energy intensive, high polluting industries including transport.

Around 450 delegates discussed the role trades unions should play in mapping out a sustainable future whilst ensuring that jobs and skills are protected.

RMT led the discussion at two lively transport workshops which discussed a range of issues including public ownership, electrification, high-speed rail, road user charging, rural bus services and Heathrow airport expansion.

Transport currently accounts for around a quarter of UK carbon emissions the vast majority of which are from road transport, although emissions from aviation are growing rapidly and projected to increase even further by 2030.

Trains, buses and coaches have clear environmental advantages over cars and planes.

In order to deliver a sustainable future, a publicly owned, fully integrated and environmentally sustainable transport plan is required.

There will be important consequences for jobs and skills as demand for domestic and short haul flights and long distance road haulage reduces and demand for rail, bus, coastal shipping and light rail increases.

One of the key points RMT made was that it is essential to protect jobs and transfer skills, by involving trade unions in drawing up and delivering such a plan.

Workers in effected industries should not suffer. There is no point in bringing forward a plan which leads to thousands of job losses with no prospect of future employment except for in the low-skilled, low-paid service industry.

RMT's recent report into developing a high-speed rail network as an alternative to both short haul flights and the third runway at Heathrow explains that a new high speed network could create thousands of jobs in construction, train manufacturing and on rail services, for workers at Heathrow to transfer to.

The alternative is a market driven free-for-all, leaving workers exposed to job losses and reduced living standards. This is a future which will benefit neither the environment or transport workers. ■

Parliamentary column



TRADE UNION CO-ORDINATING GROUP LAUNCHED

A cross-union Trade Union Co-ordinating Group (TUCG) was launched at the TUC Congress this month to give trade unions a new and stronger voice in parliament.

RMT has joined with a number of other unions to co-ordinate industrial and political campaigning and develop working class representation within parliament.

At the launch John McDonnell MP welcomed the fact that the National Union of Journalists (NUJ), the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), Public and Commercial Services union (PCS) and RMT had come together on such a basis.

"This is a significant breakthrough in trade unions working together on a common agenda of key issues facing their members and importantly securing a strong political voice and representation in parliament," he said.

Over recent years a number of trade unions have reviewed their arrangements for securing representation in Parliament on the issues of direct interest to their members.

This has resulted in the reformation of several trade union Parliamentary groups, bringing together MPs to act on issues of concern to the particular union and provide representation in Parliament to promote their policies.

However, it has become increasingly clear that there are a number of issues which are core concerns to several unions and where a common approach can be taken.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that the group would be well placed to stimulate the constructive debate needed to respond effectively to developments in

government and parliament.

"Trade unionists have had a bellyful of anti-trade-union laws, privatisation and attacks on public services and this initiative will help us to co-ordinate campaigning in parliament on the issues that matter to working people," he said.

NUJ general secretary Jeremy Dear said that the establishment of the group was about trade unions standing together united, making sure that the views and values of the movement are given a strong and powerful voice.

PCS general secretary Mark Serwotka said that when all the political parties were agreed on pay cuts, running down the welfare state and yet more privatisation, unions required new forms of political action.

FBU general secretary Matt Wrack also told the meeting that the TUCG was a crucial development in the history of political representation.

"It provides a voice for workers and trade unionists from across all the sectors and who are under attack from privatisation, pay cuts and the rising cost of living," he said.

To promote greater co-operation and co-ordination MP's will be invited to take part in the Trade Union Co-ordinating Group and promote a number of key policy objectives, including opposition to the privatisation of public services and support for public ownership.

The promotion of trade union rights, in particular the enactment of the Trade Union Freedom Bill, the eradication of low pay and the protection of decent pensions will also be high on the agenda. ■

RMT TUBE CLEANERS' WIN LONDON LIVING WAGE

The threat of escalating strike action by cleaners on London Underground delivers the London living wage to all Tube cleaners

The threat of a 48-hour strike by more than 700 RMT members working for four cleaning subcontractors ISS, ITS, ICS and GBM on London Underground has finally delivered the London living wage to all Tube cleaners.

After days of intensive talks at conciliation service ACAS, workers on Tube Lines contracts will receive an initial 60p an hour increase from September 1, and will receive a further £1.30 hourly increase from April 1 2009.

Workers on Metronet contracts will receive the London living wage, currently £7.45 an hour, from the beginning of September.

RMT cleaners had already taken strike action twice in their campaign for a living wage: a 48-hour strike in July and an

earlier 24-hour stoppage in June.

The deal also included ending the practice of forcing cleaners to pay for their own travel between the stations they are cleaning.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said the result was a victory for all-grades industrial trade unionism and a vindication of the hard work activists put in organising Tube cleaners under difficult circumstances.

"London mayor Boris Johnson did not hand Tube cleaners the London living wage, as some have claimed, it was a hard-fought battle by cleaners who were backed by fellow transport workers from drivers to clerical workers organised in one union," he

said.

He said that it was a massive breakthrough which would see all Tube cleaners paid the London living wage by next April at the latest.

The union would have liked to have seen £7.45 implemented immediately for all, but on Tube Lines contracts we have secured an immediate minimum increase of 60p an hour with the rest following by next April.

However, that is a massive improvement on the prospect presented by the mayor of having to wait for contracts to be re-negotiated, which would have left some members waiting until 2012.

Tube Lines also assured the union that it would take over the entire responsibility for funding the London living wage

on their contracts from 2010.

The union believes that it should also be an ideal opportunity for Tube Lines to take its cleaning back in-house.

"There are other issues that remain to be dealt with, as well as internal funding issues arrangements between contractors and clients, but cleaning members have made a principled stand for a living wage and have conducted themselves in a way that is a credit to the entire trade union movement.

"I am sure that people will recognise that this result has been achieved by taking united action and that this is a fantastic result for workers we were told would never be organised," Bob Crow said. ■



RMT TUBE CLEANERS DEFY INTIMIDATION

Ollie New reports on how cleaning company bosses tried to intimidate RMT tube cleaners who voted by over 99 per cent to take successful strike action

When cleaners on London Underground took strike action for the first time to demand the London living wage recently the bosses, predictably, refused to negotiate, organised strikebreaking and intimidated union activists. Yet, despite severe threats and intimidation, RMT left the bosses in no doubt that it means business.

What do I mean by intimidation? During the first day's strike I spoke to a cleaner at a fleet maintenance depot when a manager started yelling at me. "I'll talk to you in a minute" I said. "Right" shouted the manager to the cleaner who I was speaking to "You're docked an hour's wages!" And that was how he treated a worker who was not even on strike because he worked for a separate company. The man was docked an hour's pay for the crime of just talking to the union. Like all bullies, these managers will always pick on the most vulnerable workers.

One of their tricks is to threaten workers with immigration issues. Both before and since the strike, union activists have been asked to produce their immigration and naturalisation paperwork at a day or two's notice to prove their status. These are people that have in many cases been working for years, paying income tax and National Insurance.

It seems that so long as they put up with rubbish pay and conditions, their bosses were happy. Now management are showing their true colours as hypocrites and bullies. By

checking documents they hope they can find some irregularity or other to stop their workers getting uppity, or else simply intimidate union activists into leaving and taking another job.

Some members' pay has simply been stopped at a day's notice until our member could prove their right to work. Victorian attitudes are combined with Victorian conditions. Cleaning companies often provide tiny storage rooms as changing facilities or mess rooms. Despite the fact many Cleaners work on several stations, there are no free travel facilities. Members are expected to pay out of their own pocket to travel from one station to another and claim the money back later.

Thanks to RMT, London Underground workers are well organised. But we work alongside some of the worst paid people in London. Cleaning companies try to pay only the minimum wage with

little or nothing by way of conditions.

When a cleaning contract expires, companies compete to see which can get away with the lowest bids and exploit their workers the most. This system of 'reverse bidding' drives down standards as well as exploiting workers.

RMT is demanding that the Mayor of London and all other employers insist that contractors pay a living wage with decent conditions. The politicians who support privatisation and contracting out are responsible for the exploitation and abuse they pretend to be against. Boris Johnson - the new Mayor of London - has been forced by the strike into stating that he will at least put the 'London Living Wage' into contract agreements. But so far this is just a paper promise.

Tube Cleaners have magnificently defied bullying, sackings and threats. Trade union branches and meetings

across London have rallied to their support and collected money for the strike fund. We intend to keep on until bosses and politicians are forced to pay up. It will be a long struggle, one we are determined to win. Support has been strong from many people in the trade union and socialist movement, with donations, public meetings and other activities organised around London.

Our long term goal is to bring all sub-contracted work 'in-house', with properly paid workers having the right to progress to other jobs and gaining sick pay, pensions and holidays. Meanwhile we aim to expose and shame the people benefiting from this exploitation and their political allies.

With the Olympics coming to London in four years time, the lack of human rights for workers in our capital city and across Britain needs to be highlighted. ■



GERMANY OFF THE RAILS



Dr Winfried Wolf of the German anti-rail privatisation group Bahn für Alle (BfA) warns that profit not safety lay behind plans to sell off the network to the highest bidder

A SECOND ESCHDE? Rescue workers search for survivors after a high speed train slammed into a vehicle that had plunged off a bridge onto tracks in Eschede, northeastern Lower Saxony, Germany, on June 3 1998. At least 60 people were killed and 200 injured in the train crash. German Railway Safety Board wrote in its first report of a derailment in July this year, "there was danger of a second Eschede".



The latest generation of German high-speed train ICE-3, built by Siemens and Bombardier, left Cologne's main station as usual on July 9 2008.

Passing over the huge Hohenzollern Bridge across the Rhine an axle broke derailing the train. Fortunately, due to the low speed at the time, seven km/h, there were no casualties. However, en-route to Cologne the ICE-3 had been running at top speed of 300 km/h.

The German Railway Safety Board, Eisenbahn-Bundesamt (EBA) wrote in its first report of the incident: "There was danger of a second Eschede".

In 1998 at Eschede the wheel of an ICE-1 broke at a speed of 200 km/h, the train derailed and 101 people died.

After the Cologne accident Deutsche Bahn AG (DB) took away the broken axle – it disappeared for a whole week. For the last six weeks an axle, which Deutsche Bahn says is the one from Cologne, has been in the state-owned Federal Institute for Metal-testing (BAM) for examination.

The decisive question is was the fracture caused by extreme force or metal fatigue? DB says it was a percussion fracture, an extraordinary event. Pictures of the broken axle indicate that it was a metal fatigue fracture. If this is true at least 65 ICE-3 high-speed trains have axles that are in danger of breaking.

CAMPAIGN

In August German anti-rail privatisation group Bahn für Alle (BfA), Railways for All, an alliance of 16 trade unions, initiatives and environmental groups campaigning against the privatisation of German railways, published an eight-page supplement in the German daily newspaper "Tageszeitung - Taz" stressing three issues:

- Since 2002 DB has been confronted with broken axles on ICE-trains. After just such a break on December 2 2002 the entire new fleet of 20 ICE-TD – the Diesel-powered version of the high-speed train – had to be taken off

the rails for four years. The EBA wrote in April 2003 that all ICE-TD-axles have not been strong enough for the different loads.

- Since 2006 articles have been published by top specialists in technical engineering literature stating that all axles in the entire fleet of 240 ICE vehicles are not strong enough and in Germany those burdens are especially clear because ICE units run on high-speed tracks and on old normal tracks. In the ICE-TD and ICE-3 every second axle is a driven axle, since on most high-speed rail lines there is mixed passenger and freight transport, which is heavier and therefore provides particular burdens. Leading experts from the German Fraunhofer Institute such as the famous Professor Dr. Vatroslav Grubisic and Dr Gerhard Fischer even wrote that the new European Union standards for high-speed train axles (EN 13103 and EN 13104) are not appropriate to all these various burdens. In addition Japanese Shinkansen high-speed trains have axle diameters of 190-209mm, French TGV high-speed trains have axle diameters of 184-212, but German ICE axles have diameters of only 160-190 mm.
- Since 2002 DB has extended the maintenance intervals for ICE axles from every 60,000km to every 300,000km – explicitly stating that this measure could save it 151 million euros every year. Just by chance in 2002 DB Chief Executive, Hartmut Mehdorn and former German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder decided on the privatisation of German railways.

BfA's expose resulted in impressive reports by two TV documentaries on both the state-owned TV channels, ZDF and ARD. On July 29 four leading figures from Bahn für Alle – amongst them former DB

senior manager, Prof K.D. Bodack and a well-known Professor, Dr. H. Monheim – lodged a complaint against DB management under article 315 of the German criminal code of "infringing the safety of railway transport".

However, all the important German newspapers such as Spiegel and Stern and most important daily newspapers like Süddeutsche Zeitung have blocked all reports about the circumstances of the July ICE-3 axle break. The government is silent. The public prosecutor is inactive and even claimed for four weeks not to be aware of the complaint. The Federal Institute for Metal-testing (BAM) wants several more weeks to examine the broken axle. Meanwhile, DB has published huge advertisements in most important newspapers and weekly magazines.

RAIL FOR SALE

What's behind these blockages and attitudes is obvious. Siemens has huge orders worth 10-15 billion euros to sell ICE-3 units to Russia, Spain and China – the name of their new train is

"Velaro". The privatisation of DB in a first stage stock market offering of 24.9 per cent will take place in October 2008.

One of the most prominent investors thought to have designs to buy up to 20 per cent of DB is the Russian state-owned railway company, RZD, which is itself planned for privatisation in 2009 or 2010.

DB and RZD are planning a special railway link between Germany, Russia and China to compete with sea transport between China and Europe.

In reality 10,000 kilometres of the German railway network out of a total in 2007 of 34,000 km are under threat from DB privatisation and from the interests of these new investors. Meanwhile a 10,000-kilometre rail-link from Germany-Russia-China will be newly built or modernised in the interest of profits of new investors and of big business. ■

** Dr. Winfried Wolf is a representative of Bahn für Alle (BfA) <http://www.bahn-fuer-alle.de/>. He was member of the German Federal Parliament 1994-2002. He has published numerous books on transport, including in English: "CarMania ? A Critical History of Transport" (Pluto Press 1996)*

PROTEST IN PARIS AGAINST EU RAIL 'LIBERALISATION' DICTATS

PARIS, NOVEMBER 13

French rail union CGT has called a protest in Paris on November 13, supported by the European Transport Workers Federation, against EU rail 'liberalisation' directives privatising rail networks across the European Union.

RMT will be organising a large delegation to attend the protest, make sure your branch is represented. More details to follow.



CAMPAIGNING TO STEM THE 'TIDAL WAVE' OF ASSAULTS

RMT launches campaign to tackle the scourge of violence at work with a transport workers' charter of protection and a postcard campaign to call on MPs to sign Early Day Motion 901

RMT has launched a campaign to establish an industry-wide code of protection for workers in the rail, bus and ferry sectors to stem a 'tidal wave' of violence.

Cross-company zero-tolerance campaigns, an end to unnecessary lone-working, more uniformed staff and better legal protection for transport workers are at the heart of the campaign.

After surveying front-line RMT members, it revealed that official assault figures represent only the tip of the iceberg, that police fail to attend as many as 40 per cent of reported incidents and that more than a third of incidents go unreported.

There were 4,865 reported assaults against rail workers in 2007 – that's 13 a day, and a 50 per cent increase on the 2002 figure of 3,179 – and that is also aside from the 2,064 assaults against staff reported on London Underground in 2006/07.

But data collected from RMT members suggests that most front-line transport workers can expect to be threatened, abused or physically assaulted at work.

RMT's charter calls for a unified zero-tolerance approach among all transport employers, with all incidents investigated and appropriate action taken, along with proper risk-assessment, effective training and encouragement to report all incidents.

The main aim should be to prevent assaults, but there

should also be in place adequate care to ensure that victims of assaults are given all the support and assistance they need.

RMT has welcomed changes to guidelines that will result in tougher sentences for those who assault public-service workers, but the union will continue campaigning for the law to treat assaults on transport workers with the same severity as assaults on emergency workers. Amateur

EDM

The union's campaign already has the backing of 76 MPs who have so far signed an early-day motion 901 (see page 15) that urges the government and employers to take all necessary steps to prevent assaults and to secure the strongest possible legal protection for transport workers.

"The level of violence our members face at work is already unacceptable, yet year on year the problem gets worse, and it is time to put staff safety ahead of profits," RMT general secretary Bob Crow said.

"No-one should have to regard the fear of assault as part of the job, no-one should have to worry about reporting assaults for fear that they might be seen as the problem, and no-one assaulted at work should have to wonder when, let alone if, the police might arrive.

"Staff who are attacked should be able to expect the best possible care and support,

but all too often the employer's response falls woefully short," he said.

COST-CUTTING

RMT argues that it is cost-cutting by private operators across the transport sector that has reduced staffing to the bone and has made transport workers more vulnerable.

And it is high time to reverse that trend and start putting guards and conductors back on trains and buses, and ensure that all stations and terminals are adequately staffed all the time they are open.

The transport police also need enough resources to respond in time, every time, and workers need the best possible legal protection that sends out the signal that transport workers are not there to be attacked.

RMT SURVEY FINDINGS

- Over 70 per cent of respondents to RMT's workplace violence survey said that they were working alone when they were assaulted.
- Two thirds of assaults reported to RMT were over tickets or fare disputes
- From our survey, 40 per cent of incidents reported to the BTP were not attended – but 51 per cent of those that were attended and investigated resulted in successful convictions.
- The official figures from the Rail Safety and Standards board show 4,865 reported assaults against rail workers, or 13 a day, in 2007, up from 3,179 in 2002.
- That figure does not include London Underground, where there were 2,064 reported assaults during 2006/07 – a 17.5 per cent increase over the previous year.

- RMT's workplace violence survey suggests that assaults are under-reported by at least 36 per cent.
- The bus industry has been so fragmented since its deregulation and privatisation in the mid-1980s that industry-wide assault figures are simply not kept. In an RMT survey of bus workers in 2007, only a third of respondents believed their employers took adequate steps to minimise assaults and anti-social behaviour by passengers.
- A survey published in 2006 by the Department for Transport showed that even employers acknowledged that 'passenger behaviour' was a serious issue adversely affecting recruitment and staff turnover.

TRANSPORT WORKERS CHARTER OF PROTECTION

RMT demands:

- Workplace violence policies that adequately protect our members.
- Policies that provide aftercare and counselling for staff.
- Zero tolerance on violence at work and maximum penalties for offenders.
- Training for staff in dealing with conflict.
- Consultation on additional security measures.
- Consultation on risk assessments of high-risk areas.
- Elimination of lone working.
- Investigation of incidents by employers and the police.
- Reporting of all incidents by victims.
- Improvements to the travelling environment.

*Early Day motion 901***ASSAULTS ON TRANSPORT WORKERS**

Tabled by John McDonnell and signed by 75 others to date

That this House applauds the vital work of Britain's transport workers who, as essential public servants, deserve to be treated with dignity and respect; believes there is a clear responsibility on the Government together with employers in the rail, ferry and bus industries to take all the necessary steps to prevent staff assaults and provide care for those who are assaulted; further believes that reducing staff assaults will help reduce anti-social behaviour and provide a safer environment for transport users; therefore supports the aims of the campaign of the Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers Union which seeks firstly to raise awareness with employers and the public, secondly to secure the strongest possible legal protection for transport workers against assault, thirdly to establish effective cross company forums in each of the rail, bus and ferry industries and finally to persuade transport employers to adopt best practice when developing policies to prevent staff assaults and provide care for those who are victims of assault.

*For up-to-date signatories, please visit
<http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=35077&SESSION=891>*

TRANSPORT WORKERS' CHARTER OF PROTECTION

Violence at work is never acceptable, stamp it out

Britain's biggest transport union RMT has launched this Workplace Violence Campaign to address the worrying issue of physical and verbal assaults and the threat of violence against transport workers. The campaign seeks to tackle this growing problem by lobbying Parliament and employers to demand action and raise awareness with the travelling public.

PLEASE SUPPORT THE CAMPAIGN
 (See overleaf to see how you can help)

Violence at work is never acceptable, stamp it out



STOP VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

"That this House applauds the vital work of Britain's transport workers who, as essential public servants, deserve to be treated with dignity and respect; believes there is a clear responsibility on the Government together with employers in the rail, ferry and bus industries to take all the necessary steps to prevent staff assaults and provide care for those who are assaulted; further believes that reducing staff assaults will help to reduce anti-social behaviour and provide a safer environment for transport users; therefore supports the aims of the Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers Union which seeks firstly to raise awareness with employers and the public, secondly to secure the strongest possible legal protection for transport workers against assault, thirdly to establish effective cross company forums in each of the rail, bus and ferry industries and finally to persuade transport employers to adopt best practice when developing policies to prevent staff assaults and provide care for those who are victims of assault."

Early Day Motion 901
John McDonnell MP

Complete the postcard that comes with this RMT News and send it off today

COMMENTS FROM TRANSPORT WORKERS WHO RESPONDED TO THE RMT SURVEY

"If I reported every verbal assault on a daily basis I would become a nuisance to the BTP."

Employee, Transpennine Express

"No point in reporting the assault as my company couldn't care less for its employees. Profits matter, not people."

Employee, Heysham Port Ltd

"The manager was there while I was being abused, and did nothing."

Employee, First Great Western

"Didn't report the assault, as I didn't want to be seen as a troublemaker."

Employee, P&O

"London Underground does not like incidents to be reported and view staff as the problem if an individual reports too many assaults."

Employee, London Underground

"A colleague was subjected to an armed robbery and the company seemed more concerned with when they

would return to work than their welfare. It seems to me that while the company pays lip service to protecting and assisting staff involved in assaults, ultimately its main interest is protecting revenue. Everything else comes second."

Employee, Southern

"I consider myself very lucky to have only suffered verbal abuse. I always fill in the incident report to my employers, but no action is ever taken. It seems to be considered part of the job."

Bus driver, First

"I work alone as a signaller, and the area I work in is noted for drug dealers. I've been threatened on numerous occasions, had a knife pulled on me and my car stoned."

"The signal box also gets stoned. The police do the best they can but there are so few of them they can't be in more than one place at once, and by the time they arrive, the yobs are gone."

Signaller, Network Rail

ASSAFA HADISH: RMT'S WALKING MIRACLE

Steve Silver reports on how track worker Assafa Hadish survived a horrific accident at work and how RMT supported him

Assafa Hadish was carrying out a railway track inspection at Leatherhead one August morning in 2007, as he had done many times before.

It was just another day at work and the best time of year to be working outdoors.

The next thing RMT member Assafa recalls is awaking, disorientated, in a hospital bed. He had been in a coma for three weeks after being hit by a train.

Assafa was to spend a total of six weeks in the Royal London Hospital, confused as to what had happened. His injuries were horrendous. He had broken both legs, his right hand had been dislocated, neck and vertebrae fractured, his ribs broken both sides and he had suffered head injuries.

Yet when RMT News visited Assafa in his flat near Elephant and Castle in South London – less than a year after the accident – he was walking about and keen to tell his story.

The doctors told Assafa that they could not believe that he had survived the accident. They said that the prognosis for him making any kind of recovery was very poor. “The doctors read my notes and said it is a miracle that I survived; and I believe it was a miracle,” he says.

When Assafa came round from his coma, the first thing he did was call out for his young son, Joseph. Meanwhile, the trauma of the accident had a big effect on Aster, Assafa's wife, who was nine weeks pregnant with their second child. “There were complications, and I could



SURVIVORS: Assafa Hadish with his new son Nahome

have lost the baby”, she says.

But today Assafa is the proud father of a second son, Nahome, who sits on his dad's lap while we talk.

It may be a miracle that

Assafa survived the accident, but the road to recovery is a long one. A big operation was carried out on his legs which required plates and pinning.

“I am getting better all the

time though,” Assafa says, largely as a result of the physiotherapy that he has been undertaking so that he could walk again.

He can walk, but only short distances and he finds crossing the road frightening. If he has to go the post office he can only go in if there is a short queue as he can't stand for long periods of time.

The investigation into the accident concluded that no one individual was to blame. Obviously, Assafa is still keen to know what happened that day. He was well known to his colleagues as a safety advocate, which makes the accident all the more puzzling.

Assafa says that the support, not only of his family, but other people around him have made a big difference. “From the beginning RMT supported me. From visiting me in hospital to when I came home and Nahome was born.”

He makes special mention of Russell Knott, the Area Council Rep and Paul McDonnell, his branch secretary, who have been helping and advising him during his road to recovery.

“I have to say that Ben Edwards, a manager from Network Rail at Clapham, has been exceptional too.

“He has even visited me on Sundays in his own time and has been dedicated to helping me,” he adds.

Assafa looks forward to the day that he can return to work, although he says that being a trackman was a difficult way to earn a living. “The wages are low, so you have to work overtime. Sometimes we worked 13 days in a row,” he says.

Meanwhile, Assafa takes one day at a time, recovering and enjoying life with his new addition to the family. ■



LOBBY OF PARLIAMENT

A decent State Pension for all generations
Wednesday 22 October 2008

- 12 Noon - Rally , Methodist Central Hall, Westminster
Speakers include: MPs, trade union and pensioners' leaders
- 2pm onwards - Lobby of MPs, House of Commons
- After 100 years, 1 in 4 pensioners still live below the poverty line
- Millions of workers will rely on the state pension when they retire
- Raise the state pension above the poverty line for all
- Restore the link with earnings

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WATCHDOGS OBJECT TO SWT TICKET-OFFICE CUTS

South West Trains triggers RMT ballot for strike action by ignoring Passenger Focus and London Travel Watch opposition to planned ticket closures and job losses

RMT has given a warm welcome to the objection to plans by South West Trains to slash ticket-office opening times at 114 stations lodged with the government by rail users' watchdog Passenger Focus.

However, the company has ignored the protests, which includes a widely-supported early day motion in

parliament(see below), and the reports from Passenger Focus and London Travel Watch which supported RMT's opposition to the moves.

This has created a dispute situation and a ballot for strike action of members in the retail grades is being carried out.

RMT and TSSA joined forces in a campaign to urge

passengers to protest over plans that would leave dozens of stations without ticket offices all weekend, and dozens more without cover in the evenings and early mornings.

Passenger Focus has challenged the cuts and urged the government to instruct SWT to shelve them after it received thousands of objections from passengers and postcards distributed by RMT and TSSA.

Passenger Focus director Ashwin Kumar said that passengers had unanimously agreed that they wanted staff at the station for advice and assistance on ticket sales to make sure they're getting the

cheapest ticket.

"We fear these plans will lead to passengers paying more for their off peak tickets than they should," he said.

Jocelyn Pearson, who has been leading Passenger Focus's consultation, said: "We are not against change but when fares are so complex, passengers need advice from staff at the station.

"In some cases the rail products they need are simply not available. Even where the ticket is offered, the complexity of the fare structure means passengers struggle to find the cheapest fare without advice," she said.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that Passenger Focus was to be congratulated for putting the case against such unjustifiable and unpopular cuts. ■



EARLY DAY MOTION 1969

South West Trains ticket offices
Tabled by Alan Whitehead MP

That this House notes with extreme concern plans by South West Trains to close ticket offices and cut ticket office opening hours at 114 stations; believes that such cuts cannot be justified when these stations have seen a combined increase in passengers of nearly 27 per cent. in the last year; is further concerned that the cuts will dramatically increase the number of stations that will lose their ticket offices entirely during weekends and will leave stations unstaffed at weekends and in the evening making railway stations and passengers who use them feel less secure; believes that replacing staff with ticket machines will also reduce the quality and range of services available to passengers; and calls on South West Trains immediately to withdraw its plans.

WOMEN SETTING THE ORGANISING AGENDA



Carolyn Siddall outlines how RMT women members are getting organised in the south east

In February 1918, five hundred women railworkers met at King's Cross Station to discuss possible strike action for equal pay.

Women railworkers were paid less than men because they were not given the same war bonus which was paid to male workers in the aftermath of the First World War.

In August 1918 women working on London Underground then voted to come out on unofficial strike over for parity with men. They got the support of some NUR union branches but unfortunately others opposed the strike.

Ninety years after this first strike for equal pay for women Tube workers, RMT women are getting organised around electing a women's steward for each Regional Council.

SELF ORGANISATION

In the South East Region, women activists have decided they need to get out across the region and find out for themselves what women members want from the union.

South East Region activists are part of a long and proud history of women organising in the workplace and leading disputes against aggressive employers or discrimination at work. Sometimes these disputes have been women only and at other times they have involved men and women.

Unfortunately, as the South East region women activists discovered on a recent two-day course, too often over the last 200 years women have led inspiring struggles but then almost immediately disappeared from union activity.

In 1918 women were a minority in the workforce and a minority in the union movement. Now in 2008, for the first time women, make up 50 per cent of union members in the TUC. In RMT, women are about 10 per cent of union membership.

The challenge today is to make sure more women join and more women play a part in the union. Even in female-dominated unions and workforces it is frequently the case that a disproportionate number of men hold



office or attend meetings and conferences so RMT has an even higher mountain to climb.

The recurring theme of recent RMT women's activities is that women often feel that issues that they experience more than men are not high priority.

Flexible working, uniforms and sexism and sexual harassment from managers or colleagues are examples. In some railway jobs sexual harassment from passengers is a regular occurrence but rarely discussed at union meetings.

On the course TUC tutor Rossina Harris and Jen York from Union Learning looked at confidence-building and encouraging learning. Janine Booth explained the women's advisory structure.

The structure of the union was explained by the region's education officer Mike Sargent and the women also had a tour round RMT headquarters, Unity House.

They met national officials and regional organisers and the staff that

carry out the day-to-day work of the union.

Rossina reported that surveys show that women generally prefer to feel confident and knowledgeable before getting involved in something. So to get more women active in RMT may mean holding more similar events.

As for the South East Region women activists, they decided that their next step was to have a half-day session on recruitment skills followed by a half-day visit to various workplaces to recruit more women members and to encourage them to start playing their part in the union. For the next regional council meeting they will also present some proposals about election of a Women's Steward and a regional advisory committee. Watch this space.

**Thanks to Dave Welsh from Campaign Against Tube Privatisation (CATP) for the details of the Underground Equal Pay Strike. More information from CATP website.* ■

RMT IS ON THE RIGHT TRACK

RMT MEMBERSHIP

Year	Number of members
2000	57,869
2001	59,277
2002	63,084
2003	67,476
2004	71,544
2005	73,477
2006	74,989
2007	75,575
2008	81,039

Gregor Gall outlines why RMT membership has broken through the 80,000 mark

Gregor Gall is Professor of Industrial Relations at Centre for Research in Employment Studies at the University of Hertfordshire.



For the size of its membership, RMT punches well above its own weight industrially and politically – probably more so than any other union in Britain today.

Activists in many other unions often look upon it with a mixture of jealousy and admiration.

RMT is a living example that 'fighting back' works, whether you look at the growth in its membership of 29 per cent since Bob Crow was elected general secretary in 2002 or the results it obtains in collective bargaining.

One of the major developments over the last year has been the transfer of the OILC offshore union into RMT on May 1 2008. It made organisational sense after the memberships of both unions appreciated that they both shared the same campaigning and fighting DNA.

The OILC – the Offshore Industry Liaison Committee – was borne of the struggles to unionise oil workers in the late 1980s where it operated as a body to coordinate the actions of the various unions then which included one of RMT's predecessor, the NUS. After that, the OILC became an independent union. In a members' ballot, 80 per cent voted to amalgamate, bringing 2,500 new members into RMT.

The logic of a tie-up between the two unions was based on the OILC members working alongside the RMT's in diving and catering. Employers denied the OILC union recognition so that it was unable to engage in full collective bargaining.

Following Bob Crow's election, the two unions campaigned side-by-side outside the main heliports and built a mutual respect and understanding whilst other organisations continued to shun the OILC for reasons best known to themselves.

Some former OILC members will be covered by RMT's existing agreements, and the challenge is to gain recognition at employers like Wood Group Engineering and stop employers continuing to use their 'Not Required Back' NRB blacklist.

The challenge will also be to emulate the 47 per cent two-year pay rise that RMT divers won in 2007 after ten days' of strike action and to forge greater unity with the sister oil union in Norway. With the increase in the price of oil as well as increasing demand for it, there is an obvious window of opportunity.

In the run up to the 20th anniversary of the Piper Alpha tragedy, where 167 workers lost their lives, this new offshore force will be driving forward a strong health and safety agenda recently demonstrated by the union's concern over the safety of freefall lifeboats.

Recent years have seen slow but steady progress in increasing RMT's membership by one or two thousand members per year. But the year just gone has seen nearly three thousand additional members gained – and that excludes the 2,500 from the OILC.

If progress like that could be made every year – and there are still large numbers of potential members remaining – then RMT could achieve its historic target of 100,000 members in the coming decade. To help achieve this, the organising unit has been given more staff as the cog to turn the bigger and vital wheel of the grassroots activists.

The union is not complacent or arrogant for it knows that it has a job of work to do in shipping where it faces the issue of the super-exploitation of migrant labour by employers to undercut wages and conditions. Another important area is road freight and providing support for newly-elected reps, particularly in newly-organised workplaces. Training workplace reps continues to be a priority and more and more resources are being released for this purpose.

It also has some longstanding targets of recognition still to gain like Rail Gourmet as well as some new ones like Carlisle Security that it needs to add to its tally – union recognition was gained at GNER for customer service grades, Grand Central and at Heathrow Express.

The new union region of Wessex is another welcome development in order to provide

full representation for all members within the enlarged union. The former OILC, along with RMT's existing offshore members, also now constitute their own distinctive Offshore energy branch within the union with new training facilities planned in Aberdeen to help organise the offshore workforce.

Politically, RMT has shown that not being affiliated to Labour does not mean giving up the ghost in this arena. It has one of the most active parliamentary groups led by John McDonnell MP and was able to put some heat on the new SNP government in Scotland when it renewed Scotrail's franchise without consultation and spurned the opportunity to take it back in public ownership.

Even accounting for the fact that RMT has a huge multitude of bargaining units following privatisation and sub-contracting, it has organised more ballots for industrial action than any other union in the last five years. And the year just gone has seen it implement these mandates with strike action, overtime bans and work-to-rules on issues like safety, victimisation, job cuts, long working hours and, of course, pay.

Last September, Bob Crow became 'public enemy number one' according to the media as the union ensured that failing Tube maintenance consortium, Metronet, backed away from transferring staff to another company after RMT enforced an overtime ban and threatened to implement its strike threat.

It says much as about the mettle of RMT that it is prepared to stand up to such sustained pressure from many quarters in pursuit of its members' interests.

In particular, RMT understands that taking effective action is the most likely way to bring employers to their senses. Keeping the clock of strike action ticking was a vital lesson of the Metronet dispute.

Of course, not all ballots for action lead to industrial action. RMT has been prepared to up the ante with employers by taking them through the stages of declaring a dispute, balloting

and setting the dates for action.

The fact that it is prepared to go the whole hog accounts for the fact that many employers settle on acceptable terms at the eleventh hour. So RMT is not afraid to call off strikes either – as long as it gets the results it wants for its members. So here it has won advances on guards' safety, pensions and stopped contracting out.

And behind this ability to exercise leverage lies something very fundamental, high union densities, effective national leadership, strong workplace union organisation and genuine rank-and-file democracy.

RMT is aware of both its own self-interest, that of the wider union movement and how the two fit together. To those ends, it continues to fund and support the National Shop Stewards' Network, which it established in late 2006, the Cuba Solidarity Campaign, the Trade Union Freedom Bill and the Defend Council Housing campaign, amongst others.

Indeed, RMT paid its debt to the rest of the movement by making the resources available for its doughty Scottish regional organiser, Phil McGarry, to hold the position of Scottish Trades Union Congress president for 2007-2008.

Sadly, the union had to say goodbye to one of its most effective and longstanding activists when Greg Tucker died of throat cancer at the early age of just fifty-four.

He was also one of many RMT activists who campaigned for a fighting and democratic union from the late 1980s and appreciated the many successes following the election of Bob Crow. Many of his fellow activists now occupy positions of strategic importance to the union's success story.

As Greg no doubt would have said: 'Don't mourn, organise!' That is what RMT has done and will continue to do. Because of this, it can look forward with some confidence to the challenges it faces in the coming year like dealing with Boris Johnson and his call for a no-strike deal on the Tube.



GOING

Arthur Scargill argues that we must draw on existing resources as part of an integrated energy policy, not go nuclear, the most dangerous option



NUCLEAR?

Has George Monbiot sold out on his environmental credentials or is he suffering from amnesia? In a recent Guardian article he states that he has now reached the point where he no longer cares whether or not the answer to climate change is nuclear - let it happen, he says.

Has he not read the evidence presented by environmentalists such as Tony Benn and me at the Windscale, Sizewell and Hinckley Point public inquiries? Is he unaware that nuclear-power generated electricity is the most expensive form of energy - 400 per cent more expensive than coal - or that it received £6 billion in subsidies, with £70 billion to be paid by taxpayers in decommissioning costs? Is he unaware that there is no known way of disposing of nuclear waste, which will contaminate the planet for thousands of years? Has he forgotten the nuclear disasters at Windscale, Three Mile Island and Chernobyl?

We are facing an economic and political crisis on a scale similar to the Wall Street crash in 1929, the mass unemployment which affected the UK and Europe in the 1930s and the energy crisis in the early 70s.

We are facing a monumental energy crisis, yet we live on an island with more than 1,000 years of coal reserves from which we can provide all the electricity, oil, gas and petrochemicals that people need, without causing harm to the environment. Britain - despite its massive indigenous deep-mine coal reserves - has never had an integrated energy policy based on coal and renewables, and as a consequence we are now facing the worst energy crisis in our history.

Since the end of the second world war, both Labour and Tory

governments have sought to replace Britain's vast coal reserves with a false promise of "cheap" imported oil, "cheap, safe" nuclear energy and "cheap" natural gas - policies that have not only cost the British people billions of pounds, but resulted in the near-extinction of Britain's deep-mine coal industry, the virtual exhaustion of North Sea gas and oil, and massive economic costs and environmental problems associated with nuclear power.

After the closure of 192 pits since 1980, the loss of 170,000 jobs and the closure or non-operation of nearly 70 per cent of coal-fired power stations on the false premise that they were uneconomic and the worst polluter of carbon dioxide, it is reasonable to expect that there would have been a dramatic fall in CO2 emissions. But in fact CO2 emissions have actually increased - not that surprising, since more than 80 per cent of CO2 emissions are produced by oil and gas from power stations, road transport, industry, shipping and domestic use. That fact alone should cause Monbiot to rethink.

Britain needs an integrated energy policy that will produce 250m tonnes of indigenous deep-mine clean coal per year - from which could be extracted all the electricity, oil, gas and petrochemicals that our people need.

All existing and new coal-fired power stations should be fitted with clean coal technology - including carbon capture that would remove all CO2 - and at the same time we should be developing a massive renewable energy policy based on wind, wave, tide, barrage, hydro, geothermal, solar power, together with insulation, conservation and reforestation.

We must end the import of coal, (currently 43m tonnes a

year) which is produced by subsidies, "slave labour" and child labour, and end the import of shale oil, tar sands and other so-called unconventional oils, which are the dirtiest fuels on the planet but are being used to produce electricity.

We still do not know - because of the security and secrecy laws - the full extent of the disaster at Windscale (Sellafield) in 1957 or Three Mile Island in the US in 1979, but we do know that the incidence of cancer and leukaemia - particularly among children - is 10% higher in or around nuclear power stations, and we know from experts such as Robert Gale - who treated the victims at Chernobyl in 1986 - that more than 100,000 will die over a 30-year period.

We need an end to all nuclear-powered electricity generation, the most dangerous and uneconomic method of producing electricity. We need an end to deforestation, which is the cause of 20% of CO2 emissions worldwide, and an end to biofuel development - which not only produces substantial CO2 emissions but is causing mass starvation and higher food prices throughout the world.

Only by the introduction of a real integrated energy policy based on clean coal technology and renewable energies, can we begin to meet the needs of people in the UK and throughout the world.

I challenge George Monbiot to test out which is the most dangerous fuel - coal or nuclear power.

I am prepared to go into a room full of CO2 for two minutes, if he is prepared to go into a room full of radiation for two minutes. ■

**Arthur Scargill was president of the National Union of Mineworkers 1982-2002*

UNION LEARNING IN WALES

RMT member Mandy Evans
is the new project worker
for the Wales Unions
Learning Fund





Some of our Wales Union Learning team

RMT was one of 16 unions in Wales to successfully secure a Wales Unions Learning Fund (WULF) bid for 2007 to 2009.

The project involves developing an uniformed approach to learning across the whole transport sector in Wales, the aim is to ensure that all employees in the rail, maritime and road transport industries has access to learning opportunities.

This project is the first that strategically links and fosters co-operation between the unions in Wales that traditionally organise the rail and bus sector.

The importance of raising skill levels for the people in Wales has never been more important than it is today and projects like WULF are at the heart of the Welsh Assembly Government's drive to create a workforce fit for the 21st Century and the recent Leitch Review has placed skills right at the top of the agenda.

Mandy maintains that all benefit from raising skills – individuals, employers and the economy as a whole. This is one of the core objectives of the Wales Union Learning Fund, which aims to maximise the contribution of trade unions to achieve the Welsh Assembly Government's workforce development objectives as expressed in the strategic document "The Learning Country: Vision into Action" and more specifically the "Skills and Employment Action Plan 2005" and the Basic Skills Strategy "Words Talk, Numbers Count".

Since its inception in April

1999 WULF has provided over £5.6 million to fund 115 projects across Wales.

The transport sector project is called *Transporting Skills* and the project worker is Mandy Evans who has always been an active member of the union since joining the industry. She has been seconded to the Transporting Skills project from First Great Western, where she usually works as a customer host.

"The project involves working with the TUC and five other unions that have transport workers amongst their membership, TSSA, ASLEF, T&GWU, GMB, AMICUS, and who better to lead the project than the RMT with our breadth of sector membership and multi-grade ethos.

"We are making a great success of the project and have hit all planned targets set at the start but best of all we are making a real difference to our members," she said.

The Transporting Skills project has created the opportunity to open another four new learning centres in Wales, which are to be based at Llanelli with First Bus, Swansea & Machynellyth with Arriva Trains Wales, and Llandudno with Arriva Bus, all four centres will be up and running by December 2008.

Within Wales there are currently learning centres in Port-Talbot, two in Cardiff and one at Newport, all transport sector staff are welcome to study at any centre on any course which may be running at the centres.

Mandy said that there are a

wide range of courses available such as languages, IT, British Sign Language & Skills for Life.

"These are just a few courses that have been run from our learning centres recently, and within the transport sector in Wales.

"Over 100 members have taken the opportunity to access courses with Learn-direct, which has given the flexibility for our members to return to learning.

"As we all know, the restrictions of our shift patterns as transport workers can often cause many problems when accessing tutor led courses," she said.

She said that the union is also working with the Workers

Education Association (WEA) who are a valuable partner and committed to help overcome the hurdles facing members that want to return to learning.

"The WEA are building strong partnerships with all trade unions in Wales, I am happy to be working with them in building a strong and beneficial relationship with the RMT," she said.

The current WULF project comes to an end in April 2009.

RMT will shortly begin work on securing further funding for transport workers in Wales and meeting all planned objectives with the current bid, to deliver greater learning opportunities to members in 2009 and beyond. ■

EVER WANTED TO KNOW HOW TO USE DECKS? A BIT OF SCRATCHING? MAYBE GET SOME LYRICS DOWN?

This is a FREE Music Course where you can learn how to put together a campaign tune and find out more about the trade union movement.

The knowledge will be provided by a professional DJ and an experienced trade union tutor.

The two-day course is being held in sunny Brighton on Saturday 29th and Sunday 30th November.

We, RMT Learning that is, will put you up in a hotel, feed you and sort out your travel.

That's right it is completely FREE!

(Yes, we agree it is an amazing opportunity)

So, what are you waiting for? To reserve a place you need tell Andrew Brattle who you are. You also need to be a RMT young member (under 30), with priority being given to apprentices at Network Rail.

You can talk to Andrew either by email a.brattle@rmt.org.uk or calling 020 7529 8820. He will also do his best to answer all your questions. We look forward to hearing from you.

RMT GOES FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

Alan Pottage of the Organising Unit reports on how RMT has been able to build a bigger and stronger union

RMT's latest membership figures contrast sharply with the figures released this month for all unions in the UK.

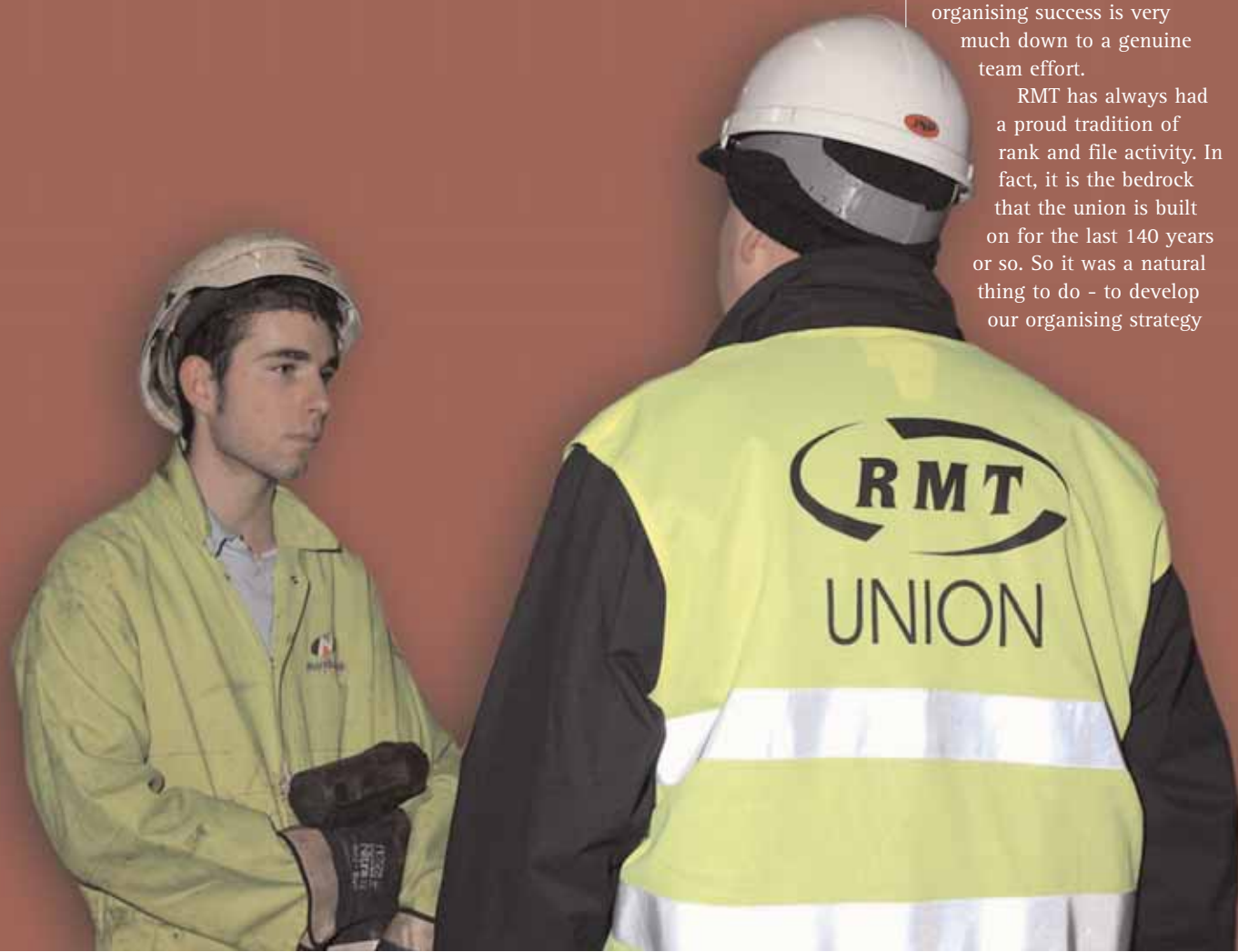
RMT figures show a remarkable increase of 75,575 in 2007 up to 81,039 in June 2008, whilst the UK national figure showed a slight overall decline minus 0.3 per cent.

Some of increase in RMT membership is made up of the 2,500 OILC members who merged with the union on May 1 this year, but despite that positive development the increase is still the largest over the last six successful years since the organising unit was set up.

The unit was created in September 2002 to give the union a much needed focus on recruitment and retention. It has an office base in London and a new facility that has just opened in Doncaster. There are six organisers – Donald Graham, Gerry Hitchen, Rob Conlin, Carolyn Siddall, Phil Boston and Dave Marshall.

All are nationally mobile and could be working anywhere in the country helping our branches and Regional Councils organising success is very much down to a genuine team effort.

RMT has always had a proud tradition of rank and file activity. In fact, it is the bedrock that the union is built on for the last 140 years or so. So it was a natural thing to do - to develop our organising strategy



around the many strength's we have in the union.

And we hold true to our traditions of being a campaigning, fighting and democratic union. So the active involvement of our branches and regional councils has been crucially important in our success story.

We also have a leadership who 'live and breath' the union. Bob Crow is happiest when speaking to members and never stops travelling around the country speaking at meetings and in countless workplaces.

The national executive is made up of workers from the various industries we organise in so their involvement is also important. Similarly, regional organisers have prioritised organising within their regions and more and more activity is happening where it counts – in the workplace.

STRATEGY

When the Organising Unit was created, the union wanted to develop a robust and energetic strategy involving hundreds of willing activists who were eager to get involved. In fact, many had felt frustrated that their enthusiasm in the past wasn't properly made use of and that they lacked basic recruitment materials and support was limited.

Now we can all share collective responsibility for the situation we found ourselves in. I can remember being on the national executive myself back in 1994 and we decided then that recruitment would be our priority. We laid down lots of good ideas but, crucially, we never created a vehicle that would ensure they were acted upon. We then wondered why we kept on losing members and the union was in decline.

Today, RMT has the ability to focus on what's required and to help create an evolving strategy. We are constantly reviewing our campaigns and the way we provide support. We learn from our successes but we also learn a great deal from our failures and we're not scared to try totally new ideas in order to

make a positive difference. RMT's strength is that we never accept failure and that's something we always remember.

Branch activity

The union needs need every branch to actively sustain their own organising programmes that ensure regular recruitment activity coupled with strong representation which takes care of retention.

But there are still a lot of problems to overcome. Sometimes we just don't have enough activists getting involved which creates a massive strain on the branch secretary. He or she can't do it all themselves so it's important to build a team to share the work. Members of the organising unit can lend a hand but they can't replace the role of the activist. Some unions have tried this to their peril.

So the union needs to involve more and more activists. Every RMT branch should be out there visiting the various workplaces they are responsible for. This is a major task for some branches but we have to find a solution because to ignore areas of concern is no solution. So we're prioritising the idea that every branch creates a 'plan of activity' and sticks to it.

Branch secretaries are currently receiving training on the new membership system and we have an input to explain how the new system can help us organise. In addition, every training course for reps at the RMT education centre in Doncaster hears a marvellous contribution from Geoff Revell – one of our most experienced and inspirational activists.

Geoff explains the culture and traditions of our fighting union in a style that only Geoff can do. Our members realise just how vitally important organisation is and leave the course upbeat and even more determined to 'get stuck in'.

I don't believe any other union has a Geoff Revell – so in many ways he is our 'not so secret' weapon.

In fact, after speaking to offshore workers from the



Norwegian sector, comrades from our sister union 'Indutsri Energy' asked if they could 'borrow' Geoff so they could fly him onto their oil rigs so their members could hear Geoff first hand. Now, anyone who's ever flown on an aeroplane with Geoff will understand that the prospect of getting him on a helicopter to fly over the North Sea is a complete non starter! Nonetheless it shows how much his contribution was appreciated.

CHALLENGES AHEAD

The org unit loves a challenge. And we all share a passion for our union that has made our team so effective – the most effective in the trade union movement I would argue.

We have the same 'love' for our union as our activists do and we are cut from the same cloth with each member of the organising unit having a very active background and a range of experiences.

And we don't go around patronising people, trying to make out like 'we're the masters of all things organising and that we know it all'. I've seen this happen in other unions and it's dreadful.

There are many occasions that we end up in a tight situation and we have to act on our wits. A recent example was when the police were about to arrest us at the heliports in Aberdeen airport. Now there's no 'organising manual' to refer to in that situation and we all had to rely on our instincts and experience. I'm glad to say that we ended up avoiding a night in

the cells and successfully establishing our right to continue leafleting the heliports.

There are many other examples where our local activists have experienced difficulties and need a bit of support on the ground.

If there are difficult areas to attend then one of the team will go along with our local activists to help establish an RMT presence so we can start building the union. We normally find that after the first few visits our local activists are more than capable of keeping the momentum going.

We're also helping to further raise our union's profile which is very important. We've all noticed the increase in the number of members proudly wearing their RMT badges. Now they are all starting to wear RMT t-shirts, jackets, rucksacks, hats and so on.

The union's profile is also much greater at the events such as Durham Miners' gala, the Tolpuddle Martyr's Festival, the Burston Strike Rally and at the leftfield tent at Glastonbury. We make sure there are loads of colourful RMT flags, banners, whistles and such like. We even flew a 55-foot long banner from behind a plane which certainly makes a dramatic impact.

RMT also runs really popular stalls at the various events and members are delighted to see their union have such a vibrant and colourful presence. Many other trade unionists also buy our t-shirts so we now have a load of non-RMT members wearing t-shirts saying 'join RMT'. That sums it up really. ■

CUBA NIGHT SUCCESS

The annual RMT/Cuba Solidarity Campaign garden party this year was another huge success, themed around Cuba50, the celebration of 50 years of the Cuban Revolution.

Now in its 6th year several hundred people enjoyed a fabulous evening of live Cuban music, dance and solidarity.

In his speech Bob Crow highlighted the recent case of the British bank, Lloyds that had been pressured by the United States to stop any trade with Cuba, putting jobs at risk.

Former Cabinet Minister Tony Benn said that the whole Cuban experience was about building a society around need rather than profit and that was why it had succeeded.

John McDonnell MP described Cuba as a shining beacon before his fellow MP and Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Cuba, Ian Gibson MP described Cuba's health service and excellence in biotechnology as world-class

Prison Officers Association general secretary Brian Caton said that the POA would be calling for the TUC to have nothing to do with Lloyds TSB and that the ongoing attacks against the people of Cuba were



completely unacceptable.

Cuba Solidarity Campaign secretary Bernard Regan said that the evening was a wonderful expression of solidarity with Cuba and cited the Operation Milagro where over 1 million people had been treated for eye operations as an example of the internationalism of the Cuban health care system and society. Bernard reminded the gathering that 2008 was the 20th anniversary of the battle at Cuito Cuanavale where Cuban troops had defeated the apartheid army of South Africa hastening the end of the racist system in that country.



Luis Marron, Political Counsellor at the Cuban Embassy (above), received warm applause when he announced that the Cuban revolution was safe, healthy and was moving forward. As the 10th anniversary of the imprisonment of the Miami five approaches Luis declared that there would be an international campaign to secure their unconditional release.

The evening ended with a fabulous special set from The Alabama 3 who gave the crowd a real treat with their own unique brand of politics and music. ■

The Cuba Solidarity Campaign and trade unions will be holding a protest vigil outside the US Embassy on October 7 to demand justice for the Miami Five who have been incarcerated for 10 years in US prisons.

www.cuba-solidarity.org.uk

For details of Cuba50 events go to

www.cuba50.org.uk



From left to right, Ian Gibson MP, Jeremy Corbyn MP, Bob Crow, John Leach, Tony Benn and John McDonnell MP

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS

Set out below is the report of the independent auditors to the members as contained in the accounts of the Union for the year ended 31 December 2007:

We have audited the accounts of the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers for the year ended 31 December 2007, set out on pages 15 to 36, which have been prepared the accounting policies set out on page 22.

This report is made solely to the Union's members, as a body. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Union's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Union and the Union's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of the Council of Executives and auditors

As described on page 13, the Union's Council of Executives is responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). Our responsibility is to audit the accounts in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

We report to you our opinion as to whether the accounts give a true and fair view. We also report to you if, in our opinion, the Union has not kept proper accounting records, or if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

We read other information contained in the Annual Report and consider whether it is consistent with the audited accounts. This other information comprises only the Report of the General Secretary. We consider the implications for our

report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the accounts. Our responsibilities do not extend to any other information.

BASIS OF AUDIT OPINION

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the accounts. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made in the preparation of the accounts, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Union's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the accounts are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion, we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of the information in the accounts.

OPINION

In our opinion the accounts give a true and fair view, in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, of the state of affairs of the Union as at 31 December 2007 and of its transactions for the year then ended.

H W FISHER & COMPANY
Chartered Accountants, Registered Auditor
Acre House, 11 - 15 William Road,
London NW1 3ER, United Kingdom
Dated: 6 May 2008

SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION EXTRACTED FROM THE FULL ACCOUNTS

Summary income and expenditure accounts for the year ended 31 December 2007:

General Fund and Orphan Fund

	2007 £'000	2006 £'000
Subscription income	10,673	9,724
Operating expenditure	(11,659)	(10,659)
Operating deficit before investment operations	(986)	(935)
Income from investment operations and donations	1,677	1,864
Operating surplus after investment operations	691	929
Other non-operating income/(expenditure)	1,623	364
Surplus for the year	2,314	1,293

Political Fund

	2006 £'000	2005 £'000
Subscription income	212	204
Investment income	5	20
Other income	-	-
Total income	217	224
Total expenditure	(214)	(237)
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	3	(13)

SUMMARY OF SALARIES AND BENEFITS PROVIDED

Name	Position	Details	Amount
R Crow	General Secretary	Salary and expenses Pension Contribution	£92,577 £26,115
J Leach*	President	Attendance, Lodging allowance and expenses	£35,304

The members of the Council of Executives do not receive any benefits but do receive attendance and lodging allowances, which are set out below. The General Secretary, the President and the members of the Council of Executives are reimbursed for any expenditure incurred by them in the performance of their duties on behalf of the Union.

Summary of Attendance and Lodging Allowances paid to the Council of Executives

General Grades

Name	Amount	Name	Amount
P Burton	£ 35,869	D Marr	£ 35,312
P Collins*	£ 26,629	O New	£ 23,090
P Gale*	£ 45,154	B Potts*	£ 47,288
A Gordon	£ 36,535	P Rowland*	£ 38,586
D Gott*	£ 41,209	D Shannon*	£ 47,642
J Jones*	£ 41,906		

Shipping Grades

Name	Amount	Name	Amount
M Carden*	£ 11,442	A Gordon*	£ 13,355
M Dunning	£ 11,071	D Nelson*	£ 7,009

* In addition, the Union provides accommodation while on Union business

We are required by the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (amended) to include the following declaration in this statement to all members. The wording is as prescribed by the Act.

"A member who is concerned that some irregularity may be occurring, or have occurred, in the conduct of the financial affairs of the union may take steps with a view to investigating further, obtaining clarification and, if necessary, securing regularisation of that conduct.

The member may raise any such concerns with such one or more of the following as it seems appropriate to raise it with: the officials of the union, the trustees of the property of the union, the auditor or auditors of the union, the Certification Officer (who is an independent officer appointed by the Secretary of State) and the police.

Where a member believes that the financial affairs of the union have been or are being conducted in breach of the law or in breach of rules of the union and contemplates bringing civil proceedings against the union or responsible officials or trustees, he should consider obtaining independent legal advice."

SPIRIT OF RESISTANCE

Alan Pottage reports from this year's annual Durham Miners Gala which attracted over 40,000 people

Trade unionists descended on Durham from all over the country to celebrate trade union resistance best illustrated by our old ally - the National Union of Mineworkers

The Tories thought they had killed off the threat of the NUM once and for all but events like this show how the old miners' slogan 'bloodied but unbowed' is as true now as it was twenty four years ago.

Sure the Tories managed to decimate our mining communities by destroying Britain's coal industry, but they haven't taken away the sense of pride nor the spirit of resistance that lives on in the hearts of the ex-miners and their families.

Neither should it be forgotten that many unions like the RMT benefitted from NUM activists coming into the rail industry and subsequently joining the union. My own branch in Edinburgh was strengthened by many such members including victimised miners Alex and Michael Hogg - who I'm glad to say were at the Durham 'Big Meeting' with their young families.

The old miners' colliery bands and their banners were the centre piece of the event

and there was also a colourful display of support and solidarity from a wide variety of other unions, anti-fascist groups and other campaigning organisations.

Forty five bands proudly played as they marched passed the assembled dignitaries on the traditional balcony of the Crown hotel. General Secretary Bob Crow stood there alongside Tony Benn, John Hendy QC, Rodney Bickerstaffe and Ricky Tomlinson.

Dave Hopper, the long standing miners' leader for the North East of England, was delighted with the turn out and he proclaimed that the Durham Miners Gala had stood the test of time and is now the largest trade union gathering in the country.

As each band entered the main park the union banners were proudly displayed and we counted over one hundred and fifty which included six from the RMT.

Just before the main speakers entertained the large crowd the sound system exploded into life with the compare announcing that 'coming through the clouds' above them was a massive 55 foot RMT banner being hauled behind a plane which banner read: 'Resist Unjust Euro Laws - Don't Give Up

The Fight!'

For the first time RMT had a stall which proved to be very popular. Newly designed RMT t-shirts and merchandise were selling fast and many leaflets about the threatened privatisation of the Tyne and Wear Metro were also handed out.

RMT's profile has never been higher as a result of the energy our activists. Many people came to our stall and said how they wished 'their union was like the RMT'. They appreciate the RMT is a campaigning, fighting and democratic union that isn't afraid to stand up for its members and to organise our members into the strongest possible force in order to win improvements in the workplace.

The union also argues for a better society in line with the policies set by our members at our democratic meetings. So all in all we take these remarks as the compliments they were intended to be but we will never rest on our laurels.

So let's make 2009 another great year for the Durham Miners' Gala by organising a huge RMT turnout and we will no doubt have a few more surprises next year! ■

Photograph by Roslyn Gaunt



UNIONS IN THE COMMUNITY WIN A VOICE AT CONGRESS

Your union believes that trades councils, the voice of trade unions in the community, should have the right to a voice at the annual Trade Union Congress conference.

That is why RMT made a successful call for a rule change at this year's Trade Union Congress meeting in Brighton to give the annual conference of trades councils the right to submit a motion to Congress from next year.

It is clear that working people and their organisations require unity to defend themselves and improve their lot. Indeed, in the workplace the level of often decided whether we can win a battle or not.

In the wider community trades councils can organise and support those trade unions in struggle with practical assistance and solidarity. Trades councils are, after all, part of the TUC and organise in a similar federal way as the TUC does nationally.

RMT activists right across the country are active in their trades councils to give support to other unions and keep other unions informed of the problems faced by transport workers.

I witnessed this two-way support recently during a visit to the Feltham branch that includes members fighting South West



Trains' plans for job cuts and booking office closures. Battersea and Wandsworth trades council immediately offered to give practical help by mobilising trade unionists to leaflet stations to stop this latest threat to the health and safety of rail workers and passengers.

My branch, Finsbury Park, is affiliated to two trades councils, Hackney and Waltham Forest, enabling RMT to assist other unions in struggle and I myself gained invaluable experience as part of the Hackney trades council.

Many of our leading activists cut their teeth in the trades council movement and because of these grass roots experiences RMT was proud to propose a motion calling for a wider recognition of the role trades councils play and giving them a

greater voice at TUC.

The union's motion pointed out that trades councils in Wales and Scotland already have the right to submit motions to their respective national congresses. It is also in line with rights already enjoyed by the TUC's equality conferences

Trades councils are our movement's community voice and they play a vital role in focusing trade-union energy on local issues affecting working people and their families and helping to build union strength.

It makes sense for them to have a voice at Congress and this positive step should encourage more workers to get involved.

I would recommend any RMT activist to get involved with their local trades council to get the message out into the community that working people do have a voice. If you want to get involved contact your branch secretary to find out what is going on in your area, you never know your motion might be discussed at TUC next year.

Finally, I would like to welcome Michael Craig as the elected member of the Council of Executives from OILC branch. I know he will make a great contribution representing offshore members alongside existing shipping and general grades. ■



New RMT T-shirt available

'Never mind the bosses
Join the RMT union'

Just £15 each

Available through Unity House and on the RMT webshop

Sizes: Men S to 3XL

Women cap sleeve XS to L

Women non-cap sleeve S to XL

It is suggested you order one above your normal size

ORIENT FOR ORGANISING AND CRICKET



London and Orient Engineering branch recently held a special branch meeting with guests Bob Crow, regional; organiser Bob Rayner and EC member Derrick Marr where over 30 long-service awards were handed out.

Over 70 people enjoyed the food laid on, especially the samosas and the Indian kebabs, except branch secretary Tony Luhar who got to the table to late!

All 31 long-service badges included a personal certificate which included their name and date of joining with the total

years of membership.

The branch also recently held its annual charity Cricket match against a Network Rail team in aid of the union's Widows and Orphans fund and McMillan Cancer Support.

The match took place in bad weather conditions and twenty overs were played. Network Rail scored 85 runs in 20 overs and RMT scored 71 runs after nine overs, then heavy rain stopped play.

The umpire decided that had the match gone on, the RMT team would have won therefore awarded the win to RMT. ■



LONG SERVICE: Long-standing member Derek Faulkner received his badge after 41 years on union membership. Derek works at the Plant and Distribution depot at Chadwell Heath and Bob Crow and Tony Luhar also presented him with a set of RMT Edinburgh crystal glasses.

LONDON AND ANGLIA REGION NEEDS YOU REGIONAL ORGANISING WEEK

The RMT London and Anglia region organising week takes place between October 13/17 2008 and your union needs members, reps and activists to help. Don't be afraid if you have never done any kind of recruitment before, as there will be a training day in London on Monday October 13.

The aim is to visit as many workplaces as possible, meeting and advising members and supporting existing workplace reps. Where there is no rep in place structure need to be put in place in order to represent RMT members.

The more RMT members involved, the more successful the campaign will be so support your RMT region and let's get organised.

Contact the RMT south east regional office: Geoff Wilkinson on 0207 529 8860 and Stewart Cameron on 0207 529 8853 or via the Head Office Reception Desk Switchboard on 0207 387 4771. ■

PLEASE CONTACT YOUR BRANCH SECRETARY TO REGISTER YOUR INTEREST AND INVOLVEMENT:

Bletchley & Northampton: Steve Craddock: 07766 991174
Broadlands: Alan Brooks: 07786 6381280
Cambridge: John Impey: 0122 3564951
Colchester: Dave Ling: 01206 503600
East London Rail: Ed Shine: 07940 349128
Euro Passenger Services: Mick Lynch: 07505 459302
Euston No.1: Pat Donahue: 07743 177051
Great Northern Rail: John Stanford: 07960 457081
Harlesden Engineering: Jason St. John: 07734 342851
Harwich Shipping: Bill Mixter: 07890 893717
Ipswich: Tony McGovern: 01473 439077
Kings Cross: Ray Knight: 07713 247821
London & Orient: Tony Luhar: 07967 667149
Lond. Ang. & Midland Transport: Vic Winning: 07952 561703
March & District: Steve Smart: 07801 840854
North Thames LTS: Darren Smith: 07725 983311
Peterborough: Peter Watson: 01733 570931
South East Essex: Derrick Marr: 07903 322911
St. Pancras: Allan Jeyes: 07711 149084
Waltham Cross & District: Albert Lingard: 07762 158240
Watford: Stewart Cameron: 07759 531761
Willesden 4 Engineering: Nick Kempson: 07825 431562
Willesden Rail: Keith Saunders: 07795 237276
Wolverton: Colin Cook: 07788 698813

LETTERS

ACCIDENTS WITH DIESEL SPILLS

Dear editor,

Readers may be interested in a recent piece of advice from Andrew Campbell in Motorcycle News concerning vehicle accidents involving diesel spills and how to claim damages. He outlines the following time limits:

Get an incident report in writing from the police within five days of the accident or as soon after as is reasonably practical. This should be relied upon in cases where the claim includes property or property-related damage.

If the claim is for injuries get the incident number within 14 days or as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Submit your claim to the Motor Insurers Bureau (MIB) within nine months if it includes property damage. If the claim is for injuries only, submit within three years.

The best advice is to gather the required documentation and submit as soon as possible. For cases other than minor injuries seek legal advice.

Yours sincerely, Bob Taylorson

DON'T KNOCK VOLUNTEERS

Dear Sir,

The comment in your article on the staff of the Ffestiniog Railway (July/August 2008) claiming that staff pay is low due to volunteers is somewhat misleading. I would suggest the pay issue is more down to a couple of things: Poor knowledge of skill sets, and poor knowledge of market worth. The railway probably wouldn't be in existence without the volunteer labour that is provided at great expense to the individual year in, year out. Therefore it is a little harsh to claim that they cause the poor wage scale.

I have volunteered on the railway for over 10 years, but I have also worked on the railway as a part-time paid member of staff. I was employed in the summer of 2005 for my professional ability, to assist with an engineering project. Despite this, the initial offer of pay was, to say the least, insulting, being the hourly minimum wage. I am aware that the railway can at times be short of cash, but that is not an excuse not to pay market worth for the skill sets required. A pay deal was eventually struck, but not before I had been forced by the then management to prove why I should be paid more than the minimum wage. In an email which I happened to see, the question regarding my skills was put as "...what are his qualifications for the job?".

This incident, along with discussions with some members of staff leads me to the conclusions I have stated above as to why the pay scales are not what they could be.

Secondly, the statement suggesting volunteers being the cause of poor pay is, if I may say so, self damaging. Many volunteers, myself included, are members of the RMT, having joined firstly to provide ourselves with a support network in case of incident when operating on the railway, but secondly to give support to those of our members who are paid staff on the railway. To accuse us, the volunteers, of causing problems with staff pay is insulting.

Yours faithfully, Chris Hoskin

DEPTFORD BRANCH

nominates

JEFF SLEE

for Council of Executives
(South East Region)

and asks members to support

CARLISLE BRANCH

Supports

CRAIG JOHNSTON

for Council of Executives
(Manchester and North
West England)

Fighting for your interests

MANCHESTER
VICTORIA BRANCH

Supports

CRAIG JOHNSTON

for Council of Executives
(Manchester and North
West England)

*A proven record.
Putting members first*

SKIPTON BRANCH

Supports

CRAIG JOHNSTON

for Council of Executives
(Manchester and North
West England)

Putting members first

BLACKPOOL & FYLDE
COAST BRANCH

Supports

CRAIG JOHNSTON

for Council of Executives
(Manchester and North
West England)

Working hard for all grades

BRIGHTON AND HOVE
CITY BRANCH

NOMINATES

GARRY
HASSELL

FOR THE COUNCIL OF
EXECUTIVES AREA 9

*And seeks supporting
Nominations*

WORKINGTON BRANCH

Supports

CRAIG JOHNSTON

for Council of Executives
(Manchester and North
West England)

*Disliked by the bosses, dedicated
to the members*

CARLISLE BRANCH
LAUNCHES
WEBSITE

Carlisle branch has
launched its own website to
keep members informed of
developments and the
activities of the union.

www.carlislecityrmt.org

GRANTHAM
DOES THE
HONOURS

Branch secretary Graham Flear (far left) presented three members with 25-year badges at a recent branch meeting. Recipients are on the front row (sitting) left to right Dave Hardy, Robert Smith, John Hill.



RMT STANDS UP FOR ITS MEMBERS

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

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

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

FOR THE BEST LEGAL ASSISTANCE FOR RMT MEMBERS CALL FREE ON

0800 587 7516 (0800 328 1014 in Scotland). Lines open 8.00am-8.00pm Mon-Fri (except public holidays) and 9.00am-5.00pm Sat and Sun. For the 24 hour criminal law line call 0800 587 7530 (0800 328 1014 in Scotland)



PROTECTING AND PROMOTING OUR MEMBERS' INTERESTS





CHESTER HONOURS HALL

Network Rail S & T rep Gary Bentley of Chester branch presents colleague Peter Hall with his 25-year RMT badge.

Election of Council of Executives member

MANCHESTER AND NORTH WEST

Skipton branch supports

CRAIG JOHNSTON

Putting members first

Election of Council of Executives member

NORTH WEST AND NORTH WALES

Warrington branch supports

LOL JONES

Time for change

CINQUE PORTS BRANCH

Nominates

JEFF SLEE

For Council of Executives region nine

DEPTFORD BRANCH

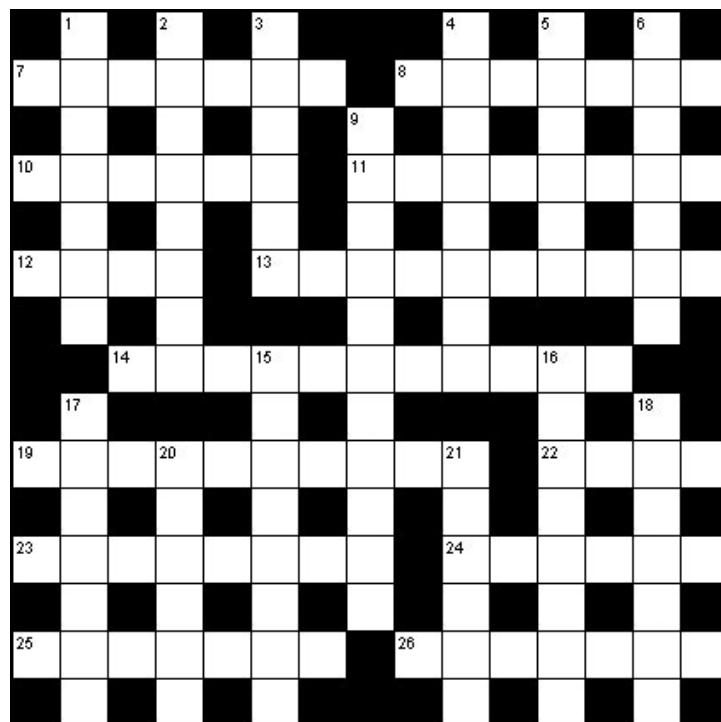
Nominates

JEFF SLEE

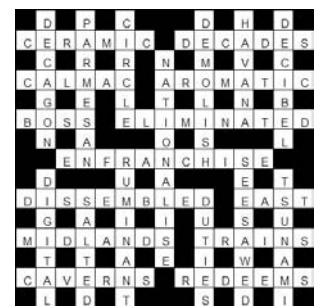
For Council of Executives South East region

£25 PRIZE CROSSWORD

No. 47. Set by Elk



Last month's solution...



The winner of prize crossword no. 46 is David Chapman of Eastbourne.

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

Winner and solution in next issue.

ACROSS

- 7,10 TUC general secretary (7, 6)
- 8 Arriving after time - as a birthday card, for example (7)
- 10 See 7 (6)
- 11 7, 10 will have spent Congress week there (8)
- 12 Something owed (4)
- 13 Climb it to do decorating etc (10)
- 14 They want you to know what they have to offer (11)
- 19 Retired folk (10)
- 22 Section -- not the whole thing (4)
- 23 There were 100 to a Franc, before the Euro (8)
- 24 Birds - fast ones? (6)
- 25 Diligent, not sloppy (7)
- 26 They grow in fields and end up in bowls (7)

DOWN

- 1 Places for amusements, in 11, for example (7)
- 2 Without pause (8)
- 3 Scottish children? (6)
- 4 Cars, vans, buses, trains, taxis etc (8)
- 5 Washed - in the tub? (6)
- 6 Taken away (7)
- 9 Bosses' word for sick-leave (11)
- 15 Huge (8)
- 16 Cold-blooded creatures (8)
- 17 Quite a few; more than a couple... (7)
- 18 Easily shattered (7)
- 20 Dog - could be English or Irish (6)
- 21 11's county (6)

RMT Credit Union

Our Own Savings and Loans Co-operative

YOUR CREDIT UNION IS HERE TO HELP, NOT TO MAKE PROFITS – JOIN TODAY!

OUR OWN SAVINGS AND LOANS CO-OPERATIVE

Our RMT Credit Union exists to provide help and support to all our members for their savings and credit needs, not to make a profit.

By saving together, and lending to each other, we take the profit motive out of savings and loans. All the surpluses created by the Credit Union are recycled as benefits to members through cheap loans, and the ability to pay dividends on savings.

It strikes a balance between low interest rates on loans and paying a dividend on savings. It enables members to have ready access to cheap loans while building up a substantial and useful savings account. The Credit Union can do this because it is run on the same principles of mutual support and members' democratic control as our trade union, so you can be sure that it's run in the interests of us all.

Loan term (months) 12.68% APR (1.056% per month)

Amount	12	24	36	48	60
500	44.58	23.70	16.77	13.33	11.29
1000	89.17	47.39	33.54	26.67	22.59
1500	133.75	71.09	50.31	40.00	33.88
2000	178.33	94.78	67.08	53.34	45.18
3000	267.50	142.18	100.62	80.01	67.77
4000	356.67	189.57	134.16	106.68	90.36
5000	445.84	236.96	167.70	133.34	112.95
7500	668.75	355.44	251.55	200.02	169.42

CHEAP LOANS

Decisions on interest rates are made by our members. This year our AGM decided to offer very cheap loans to members. This means we can now offer loans at 12.68 per cent APR, equivalent to 1.056 per cent per month on the declining balance. See our great rates below.

IT'S NEVER BEEN EASIER TO JOIN

All RMT members and their families and retired RMT members can join our Credit Union. You simply complete the form opposite. Under government legislation we have to check your identity and address but we can now do this electronically so you do not have to send any documents with your application.

MONTHLY OR FOUR-WEEKLY PAYMENTS

You can now also make your payments on a calendar monthly basis (28th of each month) or on a four-weekly basis which ties in with the pay cycles of many transport workers. The choice is yours so just indicate on the form. We take regular payments by Direct Debit although one-off additional payments can be made by cheque or cash. Members must make savings payments of at least £5 per month/four-weekly.

If you wish to join complete the application and return it to the RMT Credit Union at Unity House:

RMT Credit Union, Unity House, FREEPOST NW3706, London NW1 3YD

For assistance: Tel: 020 7529 8835

Authorised and Regulated By The Financial Services Authority FRN: 228612



LEHMANS – BANKRUPT... RMT CREDIT UNION – ROCK SOLID



RMT CREDIT UNION LTD.

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

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER

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

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

1 PERSONAL DETAILS.

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

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

3 Your Employment.

Employer		RMT Branch	
Job Description			

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

5 Membership Status

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

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

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

8 **Next of Kin**

Address

.....
.....

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

Your signature

Date

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

I agree to my identity being checked electronically ☐

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



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



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

Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society

To: The Manager	Bank/Building Society
Address	
	Postcode

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

Bank/Building Society account number

Branch Sort Code

Originator's Identification Number

9 7 4 2 8 1

Reference Number

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

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society.

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

Signature(s)

Date

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

This guarantee should be detached and retained by the Payer.

The Direct Debit Guarantee

- This guarantee is offered by all Banks and Building Societies that take part in the Direct Debit Scheme. The efficiency and security of the scheme is monitored and protected by your own Bank or Building Society.
- If the amounts to be paid or the payment date changes, RMT Credit Union Ltd will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed
- If an error is made by RMT Credit Union Ltd or your Bank or Building Society, you are guaranteed a full and immediate refund from your branch of the amount paid
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by writing to your Bank or Building Society. Please also send a copy of your letter to us.



**NEWCASTLE - HOLLAND
HARWICH - ESBJERG**

2 NIGHT NEW YEAR GALA MINI CRUISE BREAK TO AMSTERDAM

Celebrate New Year 2009 on our special Gala Mini Cruise to Amsterdam departing from Newcastle on the 30th December. On this festive short break you share in the fun and celebrations with hundreds of other guests on one of the finest ships sailing the North Sea, the m.s. KING OF SCANDINAVIA. When you reach Holland it's off to Amsterdam for the day, before your New Year's Eve celebrations on the cruise back to the UK.

- 2 nights onboard ship in a 2-berth inside en-suite cabin.
- Breakfast, dinner buffet & gala dinner buffet & **FREE bar on both crossings.
- Live entertainment onboard ship.
- Champagne & cake at midnight.
- Coach transfers to/from Amsterdam with optional sightseeing tour.

*Selected drinks (including draft lager, cocktails & selected spirits).

**ALL INCLUSIVE
FROM
£286pp
QUOTE X0137**



Departure date: 30th December 2008 Book by date: 30th November 2008

3 NIGHT CHRISTMAS MARKET CRUISE BREAK TO AARHUS

Sailing from Harwich to Esbjerg in Denmark on this lovely festive break you will stay in the Danish city of Aarhus. Step back in time and enjoy Christmas of the past with bazaars, period shops, trips in hansom cabs and - with a little bit of luck - a sprinkle of snow. The open air museum of the Old Town is made up of 75 different period houses. During the festive season the streets will be decorated, and a number of houses will have different themed exhibitions. Aarhus offers an elegant mix of cosmopolitan city and quaint town charm, with wonderful bars and restaurants.

- 2 nights onboard ship in a 2-berth seaview en-suite cabin.
- 1 night bed & breakfast at the 3* Scandic Plaza Aarhus Hotel.
- Breakfast onboard-both outward and inbound.
- Coach transfers to/from hotel, including a 45 minute lunch stop at Faaborg Kro (lunch included in the price).

**FROM
£211pp
QUOTE X0137**



Departure dates: 30th November and 14th December 2008



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