

RMT *news*

Essential reading for today's transport worker

TICKET OFFICE CARNAGE BLOCKED!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



RFA ACTION
PAGE 4



SIGNALLERS ORGANISE
PAGE 10



PENSIONS
PAGE 10



www.rmt.org.uk

contents

Page 4

RFA ACTI ON

Page 5

SHAW REPORT "SMASH AND GRAB"

Page 6

NORTHERN HANDED TO DEUTSCHE BAHN

Page 7

TICKET OFFICE CARNAGE BLOCKED

Page 8

PI CCADILLY LI NE STRI KE

Page 9

PARLI AMENTARY COLUMN

Page 10

SI GNALLERS ORGA NI SE

Page 12

CANCER AND THE WORKPLACE

Page 14

ORGA NI SI NG FOR CATERI NG

Page 16

YOUR PENSI ON

Page 18

THE SI LENT KI LLER

Page 20

WO MEN ORGA NI SI NG

Page 21

PRESI DENT' S COLUMN

Page 23

VI NDI CATI ON FOR MARK HARDI NG

Page 24

EMEMBERSHI P I S HERE

Page 26

VI NDI CATI ON FOR MARK HARDI NG

Page 27

YOUNG MEMBERS MEET

Page 29

BUI LDI NG I NTERNATI ONAL SOLI DARI TY

Page 30

CROSSWORD

EDITORIAL



TICKET OFFICE VICTORY

RMT public campaigning has secured a massive victory in the on-going fight to stop ticket office closures.

Proposals by Govia Thameslink Railways to shut or change opening hours at ticket offices in London have been knocked back following a vigorous RMT postcard campaign.

However we still have a long way to go and we must keep the pressure on GTR to drop the whole ill-conceived plan on all routes both inside and outside the London area.

These plans are driven by the desire to de-staff our railways in the quest for profit and would unleash a wave of ticket office carnage across the basket-cases of Britain's privatised railway network.

There has also been a massive victory in the battle for public ownership as Deutsche Bahn (DB) subsidiary Arriva will have their contract for the Tyne and Wear Metro ripped up with the service being taken into direct public control from next year.

This result comes after years of hard work and pressure from RMT and we will now press for the initial two-year transition to be turned into a permanent arrangement for this essential public service.

However it is madness to now hand over the Northern franchise to DB, the German state railway.

Since 2007 Northern Rail has already sucked passengers dry to pay £179 million dividends to the previous franchise owners Serco and the Dutch state railway.

Transport for London also plans to hand busy London Overground over to Arriva despite the fact that the German transport ministry openly admits that it will be skimming profit from the entire DB to "make sure it is invested in the rail network here in Germany".

How can this government claim that it is ideologically opposed to public ownership of rail by the UK government and then hand these public services to German, Dutch and French state railways?

EU rail directives and packages and tendering rules are creating the conditions for the model of rail privatisation imposed in Britain for the last 20 years to be imposed across Europe.

This model didn't work here and it won't work elsewhere and the break-up of national networks will only benefit rail monopolies private or otherwise that are only interested in profit.

The Shaw Report on the future of Network Rail also leaves the door open to a Tory "smash and grab" raid on some of Britain's last remaining publicly-owned rail assets.

Although it balked at the idea of full privatisation after a strong RMT campaign, Network Rail assets from stations to power and other parts of the infrastructure, are set up to be knocked out in a fire sale to private speculators leading to further fragmentation.

RMT is also fighting to keep Caledonian MacBrayne lifeline ferries in the public sector and a new report warned of the dangers of privatisation.

It reaches a number of conclusions that make an overwhelming case for keeping the Cal Mac operation in the public sector.

It found that Cal Mac has operated in an efficient, innovative and strategic way on the current CHFS contract and has shared with the Scottish government all the benefits of cost savings.

Scottish taxpayers, ferry workers and passengers cannot afford these lifeline services being placed into the hands of Serco, specialists in failure if ever there was one.

Mick Cash

RFA ACTION

RMT is preparing for industrial action involving hundreds of staff across the Royal Fleet Auxiliary over an attack on pay and working conditions.

Any campaign of action will involve all RFA members including those on the ship RFA *Mount's Bay* which is currently being deployed to the Aegean Sea as part of the government's anti-people smuggling operations.

The issues at the heart of the dispute are the imposition of a one per cent pay increase despite RMT members rejecting the offer, imposing changes to staffing without agreement and creating banding levels which sees captain's receiving bigger increases by taking cash out of the pockets of RMT members.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that RFA staff have been deployed to

sensitive and dangerous operations down the years, including today's developments on the migrant crisis in the Aegean, the recent Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone and war zones like the Falklands and the Gulf.

"These are brave and hard-working men and women who deserve respect and recognition for the critical role that they fulfil. RMT stands behind our RFA members 100 per cent," he said.

RMT national secretary Steve Todd said that the attack on the pay and conditions of RFA staff was wholly unacceptable and the attempt to impose fundamental changes left RMT with no option but to prepare for action.

"The union is sick and tired of RFA staff being written out of the script by government ministers which is exactly what happened with the announcement on the



operations off the Turkish coast.

"It is a disgraceful way to treat this courageous and committed group of workers," he said.

REPORT BACKS KEEPING CAL MAC PUBLIC

A new independent report has reinforced the case for keeping Caledonian MacBrayne lifeline ferries in the public sector and HAS warned of the dangers of privatisation.

The RMT-commissioned report by Jeanette Findlay, Economics Lecturer at Glasgow University and respected analyst of the economics of Scottish ferries, reaches a number of conclusions that the union says make an overwhelming case for keeping the operation of lifeline ferry services in the public sector.

It has found that Cal Mac has operated in an efficient, innovative and strategic way on the current CHFS contract and has shared with the Scottish government all the benefits of cost savings.

CalMac has the potential to be a leader for the economy as a whole in delivering fair work, good quality work, training and

innovation, as well as a good quality service to passengers and the public. Indeed, to a considerable degree, it was found that CalMac already is leading in these areas of the Scottish economy.

In contrast, there was much less evidence that Serco Caledonian could or would wish to play that role and its motivation and focus in winning the CHFS tender is naturally based on its status as a profit-seeking entity.

The report found that Serco Group, owner of Serco Northlink, has an extremely troubled history in relation to its public sector contracts; it has no significant experience in the maritime industry and its financial health and business model raise concerns.

The estimated costs of tendering remain very high in the context of very limited scope for cost savings in the

operation of the tender.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that it was a sober analysis of the economic case for keeping Cal Mac public in order to preserve and increase the considerable economic benefits of publicly funded services, good employment and training standards already in place.

"Scottish taxpayers, ferry workers and passengers cannot afford these lifeline services being placed by the Scottish Government into the hands of Serco who would seek to drain profit from lifeline Scottish ferry services," he said.

RMT national secretary Steve Todd added that the report was a ringing endorsement of the vital role that CalMac's near 1,500 employees play in delivering an efficient, affordable and popular lifeline ferry service to Clyde and Hebridean communities.



"The report justifies the Scottish government's decision to invest hundreds of millions to 2022 in new vessels, IT, port and harbour infrastructure, maritime skills and passenger fares on this complex, 26-route network.

"Handing this jewel in the crown to Serco would be a scandalous betrayal of workers, passengers and the Scottish taxpayer," he said.

SHAW REPORT “SMASH AND GRAB”



Union warns Network Rail report leaves the door open to Tory sell-off

RMT has warned that the Shaw Report on the future of Network Rail leaves the door open FOR Tory Chancellor George Osborne to set up a “smash and grab” raid on some of Britain’s last remaining publicly-owned rail assets.

Although the Shaw report balked at the idea of full privatisation after a strong union campaign, RMT said that publicly-owned Network Rail assets from stations to power and other parts of the infrastructure, are set up to be knocked out in a fire sale to private speculators leading to further fragmentation.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that although a strong union campaign had fought off the prospect of wholesale and early reprivatisation the Shaw Report still openED the door to a sell-

off.

“This is the Tories looking to knock down what’s left of the family silver as Osborne scrambles to plug the gaping holes in his budget.

“Foreign speculators will be queuing up again to plunder Britain’s railways for every last penny in the same way as they have mopped up train operations and run them into the ground.

“RMT will continue to fight any further attacks on Network Rail and will continue to campaign for public ownership of the entire rail system.

“The government is already preparing the sell-off of electrical power assets to global speculators.

“The latest moves came hot on the heels of plans to begin the sell-off of £1.8 billion of NR property assets including a

whole raft of high-profile railway stations.

“The same global energy companies who are currently robbing Britain’s domestic power customers blind are now set to be unleashed on Britain’s railways with dire consequences.

“This is all about asset-stripping, fragmentation and profiteering by global companies at the expense of rail services in the UK and where passengers are seen as little more than self-loading freight whose sole function is to generate share-holder profits,” he said.

“The Network Rail proposals are a mirror of the train operator franchises that have reduced the bulk of our services to nothing more than a privatised cash-cow designed to underpin rail operations in

other parts of Europe and around the globe.

“The proliferation of contractors and sub-contractors is already dragging Network Rail’s performance down and the flogging off of the power assets would simply up the ante on the fragmentation that is the root cause of many of the daily problems hitting services.

“RMT is in no doubt that the latest NR plans are ideologically driven by the Government and are just the thin end of a long wedge designed to drag the publicly-owned Network Rail operations back to the lethal days of the privatised Railtrack.

“RMT will fight this concerted attack on our members and the safety-critical services that they deliver,” he said.



NORTHERN HANDED TO DEUTSCHE BAHN

The Tory government has awarded the Northern franchise to the German state railway company Deutsche Bahn.

Local authorities in the North of England through a body called Rail North will jointly oversee the franchise with the government.

Since 2007 Northern Rail has sucked passengers dry to pay £179 million dividends to the previous franchise owners Serco and the Dutch state railway.

Now Arriva, owned by the German state railway Deutsche Bahn, has been awarded the

Northern Rail contract and will begin operations on April 1, so helping to keep fares down in Germany.

Foreign state-owned rail companies are using profits earned through operating franchises in the UK to keep fares down and ensure rail services are better in their respective countries.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the profits had been acquired through ever increasing passenger fares makes the need for domestic public ownership even more clear.

“It's time our government nationalised our railways,” he said.

According to Rail North's own estimates passenger demand for the North's railway will soar by 50 per cent over the next fifteen years.

Despite this, and the clear need for investment, the government has stated that annual subsidy will be cut by over 50 per cent by the final year of the franchise.

This will be realised through attacks on the quality of service available to passengers and the loss of hundreds of skilled,

safety critical railway jobs.

For example, the new operator is planning to remove safety trained guards from 50 per cent of the network in the coming years.

“To add insult to injury, at a time when train building in this country is struggling to survive the German State operator has announced their intention to order new trains for the franchise from a manufacturer in Spain.

“Something needs to be done – we need a nationalised People's Railway for the North,” said Mick Cash. ■

LOROL HANDED TO GERMAN STATE

RMT has condemned the decision by Transport for London to hand busy London Underground services over to failing rail privateer Arriva, a subsidiary of the German state railway Deutsche Bahn.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that it was madness to hand LOROL services over to the German state as Arriva will have their contract for the Tyne and Wear Metro ripped up with the service being taken into direct public control from April next year.

“The German state has

openly admitted that it will be using profits from foreign franchises to run rail services in Germany.

“It appears that this government is happy for other states to make profits from our rail network but not this state,” he said.

A German Transport spokesperson stated in 2011: “We're skimming profit from the entire Deutsche Bahn and ensuring that it is anchored in our budget – that way we can make sure it is invested in the rail network here in Germany.”

TYNE AND WEAR METRO BACK IN-HOUSE

German state railways Deutsche Bahn subsidiary Arriva will have their contract for the Tyne and Wear Metro ripped up with the service being taken into direct public control from April next year.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that it was a massive boost in the battle for public ownership and comes after years of hard

work and pressure from RMT members and officials across the North East.

“RMT will now press for the initial two year transition to be turned into a permanent arrangement for this essential public service.

“This proves that the combination of a strong union and a relentless public campaign is unstoppable,” he said. ■



TICKET OFFICE CARNAGE BLOCKED

Following a massive RMT-led campaign the board of London TravelWatch have opposed all of Govia Thameslink Railways proposals to shut or change opening hours at ticket offices in London.

GTR's proposals would have seen ticket office closures at 41 stations in the London TravelWatch area and reducing the hours at a further 14 stations.

Thousands of passengers sent in RMT postcards in opposition to the proposals. The union also made direct representations in writing and

at the Board meeting.

The union welcomed the reprieve for the ticket offices and is seeking urgent clarification as to what the next steps were and also what the decision of Transport Focus is for the 28 non-London Ticket offices.

RMT has made clear that in light of the decision by London Travel Watch, GTR should drop what the union has called unworkable, unsafe and unpopular proposals. The union has also made it clear that the fight goes on and will not stop until the whole closure plan is scrapped.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that public campaigning, led by RMT, had secured a massive victory in the on-going fight to stop ticket office closures.

"However we still have a long way to go and we must keep the pressure on and Govia Thameslink must now drop the whole ill-conceived plan on all routes both inside and outside the London area.

"These plans are driven by the desire to de-staff our railways in the quest for profit and would unleash a wave of ticket office carnage across rail franchises that are already seen

as the basket-cases of Britain's privatised railway network. #

"It is clear that Govia couldn't give two hoots about passenger services, jobs and safety and are prepared to milk these routes for every single penny that they can extract regardless of what the travelling public think of them.

"The voice of staff and the travelling public has rung out loud and clear through the RMT campaign and the fight to scrap the whole programme of 83 ticket office downgrades and closures continues," he said.



PICCADILLY LINE STRIKE

Around 400 train operators across the Piccadilly Line on London Underground took solid strike action this month over a breakdown in industrial relations combining a range of issues.

Over 85 per cent of members had voted for strike action with an even larger number voting for action short of a strike.

The union had entered into talks in good faith but a hostile and confrontational attitude by LUL corroded and finally collapsed the negotiating process.

The Piccadilly is the fourth busiest line on the tube network transporting an average of 600,000 passengers a day and services London's Heathrow

airport – the busiest airport in Europe.

The ballot for action was called after a prolonged period of industrial problems on the line – some of which have been directly related to serious underlying issues with the aging Piccadilly Line fleet.

Those issues have left drivers in a vulnerable position and have been used by management as a tool to harass and threaten members through misuse of the disciplinary procedure.

There has also been an appalling lack of consistency by local management when it comes to addressing the long-running issues impacting on the Piccadilly Line and which RMT, as the main driver's union, had

raised repeatedly over a number of years.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the hostile and aggressive attitude by tube bosses had collapsed the normal negotiating process and next the strike action goes ahead exactly as planned.

“The wholesale abuse of procedures and agreements by management on the Piccadilly Line is rife and amounts to the development of a campaign of bullying, harassment and intimidation that the union will not allow to continue.

“RMT will not sit back and allow individual members to be picked off by a vindictive and aggressive management who are continuing to drag their heels

over addressing fundamental safety issues which leave staff in a vulnerable and exposed position.

“RMT will not watch from the side lines while our members are boxed into a position where they are left to take the rap for repeated management failures that the union has been raising for years now.

“The combined weight of these abuses and failures has built up to a fundamental collapse in industrial relations that the company has done nothing to address and which has left RMT with no option but to call strike action following the overwhelming vote of by our members,” he said.

RMT DEMANDS FAIR DEAL FOR NIGHT TUBE

As London's largest tube union RMT has called for reassurances from London Underground on the Night Tube safety case, and a fair deal for Tube Lines engineers, after the Mayor confirmed a July start for the project.

RMT LUL members have overwhelmingly backed a pay and conditions package that covers Night Tube and the union has supported the idea of extended running properly introduced through negotiation.

However, the union has yet to see a full safety case and remains in dispute over nearly 1,500 Tube Lines maintenance staff who are currently being balloted for strike action.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the dispute may have been settled for LUL staff on pay and conditions but the idea that all of the outstanding issues have been resolved, not least the safety case and the Tube Lines engineers dispute, is simply not true.

"There are still significant concerns over staff rosters and those basic operational issues would be fundamental to hitting a start date this summer. There is very clearly some distance to go in terms of getting all of the components in place.

"The whole project is being constructed against a backdrop of TFL cuts and only a fool would pretend that those cuts do not have an impact on the operational model.

"Police concerns about increased crime taking place during all-night running on Fridays and Saturdays".

"RMT remains fully engaged in delivering the Night Tube and fully committed to making sure that all of our members, including Tube Lines, are properly respected and rewarded," he said. ■

Parliamentary column



VOTE TO LEAVE

I hope RMT members will not need too much persuading that Labour supporters should vote to Leave the EU in the June 23 referendum. The union has led opposition to EU policies and the late Bob Crow was one of the strongest advocates of that campaign.

The European Union is anti-democratic, anti-socialist and failing economically. With low and negative economic growth, 25 per cent unemployment and 50 per cent youth unemployment in some member states, living standards cut by a quarter in Greece, forced privatisations and restrictions on collective bargaining rights as conditions of bailouts, the true nature of the EU is now plain to see.

Free movement of labour is designed to simply reduce wages and reduce wage bargaining strength. The Laval and Viking Line cases where the European Court ruled in favour of employers and against trade unions made a nonsense of the supposed EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and were a clear indicator of the directions of travel being steered by the EU's masters. Raising up the market and market forces against elective democracy was evident from the start in its original name, the Common Market, and was opposed at the time by British socialists including Clement Attlee, Nye Bevan and Hugh Gaitskill.

In a Commons debate in 1989, Tony Benn said, "I was brought up to believe, and I still believe, that when people vote in an election they must be entitled to know that the party for which they vote, if it has a majority, will be able to enact laws under which they will be governed. That is no longer true. Any party elected, whether it is the Conservative party or the Labour party can no longer say to the electorate, "Vote for me and if I have a majority I shall pass that law," because if that law is contrary to Common Market law, British judges will apply

Community law." Labour's policy of returning the railways to public ownership will become impossible if the EU's railway policies are implemented. This is bizarre when German Deutsche Bahn, the state railway owns much of Britain's public transport services, with British passengers effectively subsidising Berlin commuters.

The European Union project moved slowly and by stealth at first, later accelerating following the 1980s Single European Act. It was intended to promote the progressive dismantling of the post-war social democratic structures which brought such massive benefits to millions of working people across Western Europe.

The current secretive negotiations to impose TTIP, the proposed EU/USA trade deal which would give massive power to the giant private corporations to be able to prosecute democratically elected member state governments is conclusive proof – if proof were needed – about the true nature of the EU.

It is time for democratic member state governments once again to stand up for their peoples and to reject the EU. The United Kingdom has an opportunity to take the lead in that process by voting "Leave" in the coming referendum.

That being said, I always emphasise that the European Union is not Europe. Europe is a sub-continent of great peoples, beautiful countries and superb culture. Democracy, socialism and trade unionism were all created in Europe. The European Union is simply a political construct covering many of the countries of Europe. We can have a great Europe without the EU, a Europe of international friendship and solidarity which will not sell out working people to the global corporations.

Kelvin Hopkins is a member of the RMT Parliamentary Group and the Labour Leave Campaign



SIGNALLERS ORGANISE

Delegates meet at a
packed national
industrial organising
signallers and
operations conference



Signallers and operational grades meet in Perth discuss organisational and industrial issues

Assistant general secretary Mick Lynch outlined how rule changes has created a national executive committee made up of 12 full time general grade members and four maritime and offshore members.

He explained how the primary role of branches was the recruitment and retention of members and to organise regular branch meetings as well as drawing up a branch plan in order to allow members to take part in the life of the union.

"We need to encourage and train new members so they can fill union vacancies and participate in the union's campaigns.

"How all these changes, which are all in the new rule book, is up to the branch itself to implement not head office.

"This conference will also have a role in developing strategies in order to build the union and feed ideas about how to assist members represented by your grade," he said.

Alan Pottage of the union's organising unit said that the union membership had continued to grow in many areas with over 83,000 members while other unions were in decline in the transport sector but RMT could not be complacent.

"We need to carry out mapping exercises to find out who is not in the union and develop strategies to get them in the union," he said.

Mick Lynch also warned that Network Rail was being run-down and broken up by the Tory government with the long-term aim of re-privatising the rail network.

"They will be seeking to break up a national rail network in order to hand them over to their friends in the City and we need to defend our national agreements," he said.

He then outlined the pensions contracting-out process enforced by the Tory chancellor George Osborne which has led to changes in the Network Rail pension fund contributions.

Martin Russell, Stockport said that a clear explanation of the issue should appear in the union's journal RMT News (see page 16/17).

Delegates called for a full time co-ordinator position to be enshrined within the agreed bargaining procedure which has been afforded to other groups within Network Rail.

Tim Breed, North Staff said that the ongoing roll out of the Network Rail operating strategy and the continuing use of working parties on the

maintenance side meant that a co-ordinator was required in order to represent signal workers.

"The number, constituencies and election procedures should be determined by the union's national executive committee," he said.

Delegates also recorded "profound" objections to secondments being used by Network Rail outside of the agreed recruitment policy for promotional positions.

Tim Breed said that with thousands of jobs being lost by the often-trumpeted national operating strategy, all promotional positions should be advertised in the normal manner with the use of secondments only being used for non-promotional, exhausted vacancies.

"The use of secondments is detrimental to the promotional prospects of our members and places members at a distinct disadvantage in the promotion race in contravention of the NR equal opportunities policies," he said.

Delegates also called on the union to secure a shorter 32-hour working week for signallers.

Nathan Gill, Wakefield and Healey Mills said that if there were no serious talks on the issue then a dispute situation will exist between union and Network Rail and a ballot matrix be drawn up in readiness for industrial action to achieve our goals.

Delegates called on the union to find out the number of signalling and supervisory grades were on fixed-term contracts.

Robert Cross, Stockport and District warned that such contracts could be used to bring in a two-tier membership by the back door.

"In cases when box closures are put back then if such contracts are renewed, it leaves staff at a disadvantage should they stay until closure and then have to apply for other jobs on the open list and not be covered by PTR&R," he said.

Mark Bellanie, North Staffs

also said that signallers should not train managers and others to do signalling work.

"We have an employment clause which says we are only here to instruct trainee signallers.

"We need a strategy to ensure management cannot undermine any industrial action which may take place anywhere in the country," he said.

ROSTERS

Martin Russell called on the union to raise the matter of relief staff being rostered a Saturday night turn, then a Monday early turn with only 24 hours rest between.

"National rostering principles provide for 32 hours rest over a midweek rest day but this is not applied over a Sunday.

"We consider that rest periods over Sundays should be treated the same as midweek rest days and members cannot be expected to turn round from nights to days and sleep twice within 24 hours," he said.

Nathan Gill called on the union to continue to support the right for staff to choose to work a 12-hour roster.

"With more and more signal boxes being re-located to the ROCs and signallers already having their lives disrupted, we feel that if signallers choose this pattern of roster to give a better work/life balance," he said.

Delegates said that the union should challenge the rule forcing member to work an additional hour.

Chris Bown, Wakefield and Healey Mills said that this was enforced overtime which had been abused by management.

"How in this age of both parents-working families, can a company force an individual to work an additional hour either end of their shift with sometimes very little notice?" he asked.

Phil Boorman, Ashford said that legal opinion had been sought and the issue had been dealt in a draft agreement and would be only used under emergency conditions.



CANCER AND THE WORKPLACE

Doncaster hosts annual RMT National
Health and Safety conference which
discussed cancer in the workplace



RMT national health and safety conference chair Iain Minto welcomed delegates who turned out in great numbers for this popular event before leading everyone into a moment's silence for victims of workplace accidents.

This gesture was given further impact this year following on so shortly after the news of the tragic deaths of demolition workers at the Didcot Power-station.

This year's conference theme was cancer in the workplace and delegates were each given a copy of RMT publications *Danger Dust* and *Occupational Cancer – a workplace guide*.

Senior assistant general secretary Steve Hedley spoke about the vital importance of health and safety and the work our safety reps perform.

Steve cited the recent Section 15 dispute on London Underground as a prime example of employer's potential negligence being derailed on health and safety grounds.

It was his belief that the work of health and safety reps will become ever more prevalent

in the light of the proposed anti-trade union legislation currently working its way through Parliament.

"In April some of the most appalling and draconian legislation since 1927, a year after the general strike, that goes further even than Margaret Thatcher, will be introduced," he said.

He spoke of the need to "utilise every tool in our box" for getting the vote out given the likely new ballot minimum turnout thresholds.

He warned that increasingly health and safety legislation will be used to fight future government attacks on workers. Steve spoke of the difficulty the union will face when trying to run legitimate ballots and of how this legislation was totally undemocratic.

He paid tribute to all RMT health and safety reps for the hard work they do but also of the need for them to go back into their workplaces and to work in conjunction with industrial reps to recruit new members and to be a visible presence.

"This is how we retain our membership and it is proven that we gain more concessions from employers in workplaces that have a high density of union membership.

"You need to go back to the workplace and ensure people have the utmost protection, and that is by joining the RMT," he said.

John Jo Carruthers, Carlisle City branch gave an extremely moving speech to delegates about the Tebay tragedy and the family's battle for justice.

"The families who lost their loved ones and the branch have requested that I speak and thank conference for their unyielding support without which the families would have given up, but now they have rear-guard protection in place," he said.

He spoke of how the rolling-out of the Vortok rear-guard secondary protection had only happened because the union had warned Network Rail that they were in dispute over this matter

and that this had forced their hand.

This system is now being trialled and that over 200 people had now been trained in its use. John Jo concluded by asking that delegates "ask at their workplace for Vortok rear-guard secondary protection to be implemented in memory of those poor lads who went out to do a day's work but who never came home; knock on management's door and demand the rear guard protection".

Chris Skidmore from the National Union of Mineworkers, Yorkshire region gave an insightful speech about the Industrial Injuries Scheme run by the DWP.

This provides compensation to injured workers or those suffering from work related illnesses, and he described how his union had made numerous enquiries to the Industrial Injuries Advisory Committee in order that medical conditions be researched and included in the Industrial Injuries Scheme.

He spoke of the numbers of fellow miners that have contracted lung disease through their work in a pit and of how hard it can be to establish a claim as the registered medical practitioners that claimants are sent to see are not medical experts and will not have knowledge of the job you do or the nuances of it.

He advised RMT reps to accompany members to these interviews to ensure an accurate record is established and to refer more industrial illnesses to the IIAC for them to commission research into.

RMT legal officer Karen Mitchell also spoke about the IAAC of which she is a member. RMT can refer issues to the IAAC for its consideration. The committee's function is to advise government and to assist in the formulation of new legislation.

Karen also spoke of the Industrial Injuries Scheme and how it provides compensation to those who become ill through work, be it via accident or disease.

An accident is an unlawful incident that leads to a worker being unable to work whilst illness is for work related diseases. The scheme provides compensation for employed workers only, not self-employed and benefits will be received after 90 days disablement. Payments are made on loss of function rather than loss of earnings and only if you are deemed as at being at least 14 per cent disabled.

Karen gave a very detailed overview of the function of the IIAC and urged members to request that issues be referred to it, particularly so that more research could be done into the links between diesel fumes and cancer and the Musculoskeletal disorders that can occur from regularly walking long distances over ballast.

Stephanie Fitzgerald from the Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB), formerly a consultant clinical psychologist, gave advice to delegates on working with and supporting colleagues who had been diagnosed with cancer. She provided a guide for delegates in dealing with sensitive issues and the best, and most appropriate, responses to them.

Delegates debated three resolutions. One dealt with rosters – split shifts and fatigue from Edinburgh No1 and Portobello branch which called for the union to highlight the dangers of fatigue suffered through these rosters:

A successful motion from LU Engineering dealt with the death of Scott Dobson and called for a campaign to be launched jointly on London Underground and Network Rail focusing on health and safety on the track.

Central and North Mersey branch raised the issue of untrained staff carrying out safety duties; this called for the ending of the practices of train operating companies, specifically in this case Merseyrail, from using untrained staff being employed to carry out station staff duties.





ORGANISING FOR CATERING

Catering grades meet to discuss strategies to organise workers into the union

The newly-renamed industrial organising conference of hotel, catering and ancillary grades met in Weymouth this month to discuss union recruitment.

Assistant general secretary Steve Hedley said that an organising strategy was required for catering staff on-board trains and on the stations.

"We have got recognition with SSP and these workers, some of them working in Victorian conditions, desperately need a union.

"We have seen attacks on ticket offices on London Underground and now across southern England.

"So we are going to need to organise to stop further attacks on this grade," he said.

Steve Conway, Leeds City said that SSP, a company with a £1.8 billion turnover, were not paying meal breaks to new staff and were forcing staff to

buy their own uniforms.

"We have four different contracts for just 47 staff," he said.

Delegates agreed that staff should not be forced to buy their own uniforms and that the company must provide protective equipment including any form of uniform.

Steve Hedley said that any organising strategy must include the branches and regional councils getting out and recruiting these vulnerable workers.

He said that many train operating companies franchises were coming up for renewal.

"On Great Western Railway (GWR) trains we need to be making the business case for a buffet car on every train.

"Trolleys are dangerous and on packed trains passengers often get no service at all.

"This is on some of the most expensive rail services in the

world," he said.

Steve Harvey, Plymouth No1 said that there had been several incidents on GWR services where injuries have been caused by unstable and poorly designed trolleys.

"Risk assessments have been carried out but these do not take into account abnormal jolts and movement that occur every day on the rail network.

"We have had trolleys falling over and they are heavy and require a lot of strength particularly between carriages," he said.

Delegates called on all train companies to provide minimum standard of trolley design that will withstand all types of operation.

Conference also called the TOCs to provide a safe place of refuge accessible to all members operating trolley provision on all rolling stock.

RMT executive committee

member Kathy Mazur also warned that the upcoming rail franchising process will lead to more cuts in services in the drive for profit.

Derek England, Leeds City called on the union to negotiate with any food-handling employers that staff should not lose money if they are required by law to be absent.

"It is unacceptable that staff should incur financial losses due to being infected with a disease which is not their fault.

"Such staff must absent themselves from work for a minimum of 48 hours and thus losing their attendance allowance.

"Who else losing wages by complying with the law of the land?" he asked.

Delegates agreed that the union should take up this issue with the companies involved.



RMT proudly introducing C&D Specialist Insurance to our members

LIFE & CRITICAL ILLNESS COVER UPTO 50% CHEAPER

COVER FOR YOURSELF & YOUR EMPLOYEES CAN
NOW BE PAID BY YOUR LIMITED COMPANY
AS AN 'ALLOWABLE BUSINESS EXPENSE'

- ✓ Cover up to 50% cheaper
- ✓ Not classed as a P11D benefit
- ✓ Quick and easy to setup over the phone
- ✓ Payout does not form part of your estate
- ✓ Cover is also portable

Get in touch with C&D, mention us at the
RMT & have your membership number handy

C&D 
SPECIALIST
INSURANCE



Web: www.candd.uk.com

E: enquiries@candd.uk.com

Tel: (01832) 734 047

**Are you a Rating? Whether you
know a little or a lot about
Marine Society College we'd
like to hear your views!**

Take part in our survey! It will only
take 10mins to complete and you'll
be in with a chance of winning one
of 10 **£50 Amazon vouchers!**

Head to:

surveymonkey.com/r/MarineSociety

 **MARINE
SOCIETY**

A charity registered in
England and Wales 352095
and in Scotland 50057908



YOUR PENSION

Understanding the latest developments in contracting out

As a result of government legislation, in the form of The Pension Act 2014 – Single Tier State Pension, Defined Benefit pension schemes such as the Railways Pension Scheme will no longer be able to contract-out of the second state pension (S2P).

On April 6 2016 “contracting out” of the S2P will end. This is the practise whereby if a workplace pension meets certain criteria (benefits are generous enough), individuals are opted out of paying into the S2P. The RPS is currently contracted-out.

This means that the company and employees receive a National Insurance Contribution (NIC) rebate.

The government is now getting rid of the S2P and will introduce a new flat rate Single Tier State Pension. This will mean that there is nothing to opt-out of and therefore contracting-out will cease. In turn both members and employers will pay higher NICs.

Employers will no longer receive their NIC rebate of 3.4 per cent in respect of employee earnings between the Lower

Earnings Limit (LEL) and the Upper Accrual Point (UAP). Employees will see their NIC increase by 1.4 per cent between these two thresholds.

To help employers deal with this additional cost, the government has given them powers to impose changes to schemes to increase employee contributions or /and reduce benefits, in order to recoup the additional costs they will face.

The government has introduced legislation which will allow employers to bypass trustee agreement to recoup

their NIC rebate from the members’ benefits. Please note they can only recoup the additional costs associated to these changes.

While employers will receive “special treatment” allowing them a free hand to recoup their rebate, members could see any state pension gains wiped out by having their occupational benefits reduced for future service.

RMT has been campaigning to get the override removed from the pension bill via our Parliamentary Group. The union

has also met with the Pensions Minister and the Department for Works and Pensions on a number of occasions. Regrettably this has been unsuccessful.

Train Operating Companies (TOCs) and Network Rail wish to recoup their additional payroll costs associated to the Contracting-Out in respect of the Railways Pension Scheme (RPS). As a result RMT and other unions were in discussions throughout last year with these employers to try and find agreements which would reduce the impact on our members and also protect core future service benefits.

SOME OF THE OPTIONS MANAGEMENT PROPOSED INCLUDED:

- aligning the Normal Retirement Age to the State Pension Age (60 to 68)
- capping pensionable pay at CPI
- withdrawal of the separate lump sum
- changing the rate of accrual from 60ths to 80ths.

None of these proposals were acceptable to the union. However following discussions with TOCs through the Informal Pensions Working Group (IPWG) and Network Rail the following proposals have been endorsed by the union's national executive committee:

TOCS

1. Cost neutral early retirement factors (CNERF) to be applied for future service only from Age 60 to 62
CNERF will be applied up to age 62 for all non-protected members only. Benefits earned prior to April 1 2016 will not be affected. Members can still retire at the same age, but benefits accrued after April 1 2016 will be reduced on a cost neutral basis
2. Pensionable Pay Cap of RPI + 0.25 per cent
For pay reviews on or after April 1 2016 a pensionable pay cap of RPI plus 0.25 per

cent will be applied. This affects all RPS members.

Pay increases above the cap will be for future service only and will therefore be treated in the same way as a Pensionable Restructuring Premium (PRP)

As a result of these proposals the contribution rate in all cases will reduce for members

Management have informed us that the estimated additional payroll cost for all TOCs per annum will be in the region of £53 million.

Based on the proposals already received by RMT, the additional payroll costs on aggregate so far are estimated to be £50.9 million per annum. This is based on maximum band earnings for all members.

The agreed IPWG proposals, which have been verified by the scheme actuary, have recouped for these employers an aggregate estimated to be £36 million. Therefore employers have only recouped just over 70 per cent of their additional payroll costs resulting from the IPWG framework.

NETWORK RAIL

Network Rail initially informed the union that its estimated additional payroll costs resulting from the ending of contracting-out would be in the region of £27 million per annum. This figure was later reduced to £24 million per annum following

meetings with management. Resulting from the discussions the following proposals were agreed:

Network Rail RPS60 & RPS65 Sections members have two options:-

OPTION A: Pensionable Pay Cap to reduce from RPI + 0.5 per cent to a Flat Rate RPI

Any pay award above RPI will be non-pensionable. This is the default position for those that wish to maintain their current contribution rate at 9.36 per cent

OPTION B: Pensionable Pay Cap to reduce from RPI + 0.5 per cent to RPI with any pay increase above the cap to be pensionable for future service only

This option is for those who wish to pay a higher contribution rate, 9.36 per cent to 11.14 per cent, on the basis that pay awards may be above RPI going forward.

It is estimated that these proposals will recoup just over £15 million per annum in cash terms, less 63 per cent of the employers additional payroll costs.

While the above agreements reached with the TOC IPWG and Network Rail many other employers where the union has members have also said that

they will be recouping their NIC rebate. These employers include Freightliner, Forth Ports and Network Rail in respect of their CARE Pension Scheme.

However, not all employers are passing on their additional payroll costs to their employees. Eurostar and Wightlink Ferries have both informed the union that they will not be recouping their NIC rebate which is welcomed by this union but unfortunately these employers are in the minority.

It is clear that as a result of Tory chancellor George Osborne's decision to make a cash grab to fund the new Single Tier State Pension this union has had to make difficult decisions to try and protect members' pensions. Without reaching a negotiated position the government has given employers the power to impose changes on schemes without agreement.

Therefore it was crucial that the union tried to find a set of proposals that mitigated the worse of the employer's ideas. These proposals have maintained contributions at a reasonable rate and kept valuable Defined Benefits on a final salary basis which was achieved by agreement.

All the proposals mentioned above can be found on the RMT Website at

<https://www.rmt.org.uk/about/pensions/>

Please note the following RPS sections are affected by this proposal but not all at the time of writing have approached the union with their intentions. The employers who have submitted their proposals to the union's executive are highlighted in bold:

Anglia Railways	Arriva Trains Wales	c2c Rail	Chiltern Railway Ltd
Chiltern Railway (Maintenance)	East Coast Main Line	East Midlands	Govia: Thameslink: GTR FCC Heritage Southern
First Great Western	First ScotRail	Great Eastern Railway	Island Line
London & South Eastern Railway Limited	London Eastern Railway (West Anglia)	London Midland	London Overground
Merseyrail	MTR Crossrail	New Cross Country	Northern (ex North East)
Northern (ex North West)	South West Trains	TransPennine Express (Former ATN)	TransPennine Express (Former NWT)

THE SILENT KILLER



RMT launches national campaign to eradicate Asbestos from the work place

RMT members know the horrors of coming into contact with Asbestos as transport workers have historically been exposed to the substance and its component materials and parts across all sectors where we organise.

Workers in the construction, shipping, automotive and railway industries who have been exposed to asbestos are at particularly high risk for developing asbestos diseases such as asbestosis, asbestos pleural disease, mesothelioma, and lung cancer. Any exposure to asbestos increases a person's chance of contracting mesothelioma.

The truth of the matter is that Asbestos is everywhere and it comes with a prejudice and a fear, as any causation to illness will be deadly, with incubation periods of up to 40 and more years you can understand why it is called the 'silent killer'.

It is estimated that there are at least around 2,000 deaths a year from lung cancer caused by asbestos exposure. In 2013 there were 2,538 deaths caused by mesothelioma and on top of that in 2012 there were 464 deaths where asbestosis was thought to be a contributory factor. 85 per cent of these deaths are associated with work.

The HSE expect deaths associated with asbestos to continue to increase until 2020 and then fall off as the impact of the ban as a result of the introduction of legislation to restrict asbestos exposure. By then around a quarter of a million people will have died.

Asbestos exposure at a job site is a major health problem. While the risks of developing an asbestos related health condition are low the chance of developing such a disease depends on certain conditions called risk factors. The first risk factor is how much asbestos was in the air you breathed, or the

"concentration."

The second risk factor is the cumulative length of all exposures or "duration." The asbestos disease risk factors of concentration and duration establish a person's "dose", which is a combination of concentration and duration. Asbestos diseases follow a "dose-response" relationship curve. This means that the more asbestos you inhale (dose), the greater your risk of contracting an asbestos-related disease.

After trade unions and health and safety campaigners identified the dangers to workers legislation was finally put in place to protect those who were made ill by their exposure to asbestos, as well as those who might still encounter the material, which remains in buildings throughout the country. Asbestos prohibition laws in the United Kingdom were first introduced in the mid-1980s but a final ban didn't come in until 1999.

The current Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 updated previous regulations and these Regulations compel employers to take the following actions to protect their workers:

- Carry out of risk assessments
- Establish whether there's asbestos on premises, the amount and the condition.
- Have up-to-date records of the location and condition of any asbestos.
- Prepare and implement plans for asbestos risk management.
- Review and monitor the asbestos plan.
- Presume materials contain asbestos, unless there's evidence that it doesn't.
- Provide information on location and condition of asbestos to relevant parties including to staff working in the premises.



RMT established an asbestos register for members who have been exposed to asbestos at work. It is important to stress that just because someone has been exposed to asbestos, it does not mean that they will necessarily develop any condition because of it. But by collecting information now on past employment history for all those members who suspect that they may have been exposed to asbestos, RMT aims to assist any future claims for compensation. All enquiries relating to the register should be made to Thompsons on 0800 587 7516. Retired members should also be advised of the register so that they can report past exposure as appropriate.

RMT also provides its health and safety representatives with information and support in how to act when asbestos is found in workplaces. The theme of this

year's RMT health and safety conference was cancer and delegates were all provided with a new RMT/TUC publication on Occupational Cancer.

The pamphlet reports a notable success at Network Rail in Sussex where now-retired RMT member Greg Hewitt campaigned vigorously for the removal of asbestos-containing material from S&T boxes in his area. Eventually Network Rail was forced to allocate £16 million for this important work.

RMT has also helped representatives on TOCs deal with rolling-stock where asbestos was found in brake components in the First Capital Connect and Southern fleets, at Forth Ports where asbestos was found on the Leith Tugs and at Euston Station where the ORR eventually took enforcement action against Network Rail.



RMT at women's TUC

DELEGATES: from left to right Janine Booth, Ann Mooney, Millie Apedo-Amah, Jennifer Gray, Christine Willett, Cat Cray, Katherine Burke, Shirley Fulton, Mary Jane Herbison, Ann Joss, Kathleen Gaughan, Eileen Orrell. A full report will appear in the next issue of RMT News.

WOMEN ORGANISING

RMT women urged the union to develop a quarterly women's organising week to encourage more diversity at all levels of the organisation.

In an action packed two days, members from across the country descended on Scarborough in March to discuss key issues facing women members.

Issues around safety on the transport system and women's role within the union were top of the list.

Moving the unanimously passed motion on women's organising, Central Line East branch delegate, Jennifer Blane said: "It is important that members and potential members see the RMT as a diverse union which includes people like them. However there are no female RMT organisers.

"We ask the union to organise a quarterly women's organising week, with central funding for members of the National Women's Advisory Committee to have release from work to visit workplaces and take part in organising activities," she said.

NEC member Kathy Mazur said it was vital the union

carried on its great work organising low paid contracted out workers and urged women members to be militant when challenging the bosses.

She recalled a time when she was escorted off Euston station after attempting to deal with a workplace dispute.

Referring to late general secretary Bob Crow, she said: "I was incensed, but Bob backed me all the way," to applause from conference.

Conference also urged the union to highlight the role of the women's committee including sending out a new updated version of the union's

women's charter.

Assistant general secretary Mick Lynch encouraged women members to become more involved pointing out that he was elected to office directly from the rank and file.

"I do think our union is unique, I was working as an electrician this time last year. I don't think there is another union in this country who would elect someone directly from the shop floor into a leadership position such as this," he said.

Recalling his experience of organising on Eurostar, after he was blacklisted from the

construction industry, Mr Lynch said: "I got the job to get a bit of real money and keep my head down but there was no union so we built one and now I am here."

"We want every woman to be represented in this union and to have union officers who are women too.

"We want our executive to be populated with women members who are confident and strong and who have faith in the structures which we are developing. It is improving. It is not improving as quickly as it should do but it is improving," he said. ■



25 YEARS OF WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

President's column

SOLIDARITY



Dear editor,

I have just returned from attending the RMT national women's advisory conference which was the 25th anniversary of the meeting held in 1992.

I found this out thanks to sister Ann Henderson who found a copy of the Transport Review dated May 22, 1992.

The women's advisory committee was set up in 1988 and at the conference our now general secretary Mick Cash, who was then an executive member, gave a report on the progress made since the inauguration of the NWAC.

At that conference a man chaired but rest assured that was soon put right. At that time 18 District Councils were represented and female members were urged to put themselves forward and fill vacancies.

The committee campaigned on sexual harassment and guidelines on how to handle cases was put on all reps courses. A resolution from Neasden 3 branch urged the executive to commission a study of pay scales to identify where equal value claims could be fought.

RMT president at that time was John Cogger and the assistant general secretary was Wilf Proudfoot who chaired this first conference and foresaw a difficult period ahead for women after Labour's election defeat.

The Tories had made it clear that they intended to encroach in all aspects of passenger service, some things don't change.

I was fortunate to attend that conference and every one since and it would be interesting to know where are the women who attended that first meeting. Each conference seems to get bigger attendance and long may it continue but the fight goes on and some issues never seem to go away.

Janet Cassidy
North Clyde Branch

I recently joined with national executive committee members and officers to stand with junior doctors on the picket lines at their local hospital in Euston to show solidarity at this crucial point in their fight for justice.

RMT stands in full support of our junior doctors as once again they are forced to take industrial action in defence of the basic principle of decent working conditions for NHS staff who work round the clock saving lives.

The NHS is the cornerstone of the post-war welfare state and it falls to the entire trade union movement to line up alongside those prepared to take action to defend it.

This wonderful service is not only under attack from the Tories but by a secretive EU/US 'trade deal' called the Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP).

This deal would institutionalise irreversible mass privatisation of public services that working people rely on and create secret courts that would allow transnational corporations to sue nation states for huge sums of.

This is one more reason to vote to leave the EU on June 23.

Conference season is upon us and we have the new concept of organising conferences up and running. It will be interesting to see how these are received and developed going forward by you the members.

My first conference as president was the young members' conference held in Canterbury. Conference president George Waterhouse and vice-president Chris Hodds both did a sterling job of running affairs before they handed over their positions to Lorna Tooley and Dom Hill who I'm sure will continue the good work.

Judging by how the delegates conducted themselves the future of the union is safe in their hands.

I was warned that the night out with the young members is "legendary" but I have to admit that my staying power isn't what it once was and I'm sure I was first to call it a night!

The organising conference of supervisory clerical and other salaried grades took me to Great Yarmouth. It was a well organised event with Michael Campbell as president and Richard Walker as secretary at the helm.

I also attended South Hants and Eastleigh Workshops branch along with the senior assistant general secretary. It was a pleasure to present long service awards to a number of members, including an old friend; Steve Riggott and two 50-year members.

I'm also pleased to say that our new 50-year membership badge will be available shortly.

"A man is but the product of his thoughts. What he thinks, he becomes." Gandhi

In Solidarity, Sean Hoyle

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 0845 712 5495 (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 0765 911 8181 (0800 328 1014 in Scotland)

 **THOMPSONS**
SOLICITORS

 **Drummond Miller**
Solicitors and Estate Agents

PROTECTING AND PROMOTING OUR MEMBERS' INTERESTS



LEGAL



VINDICATION FOR MARK HARDING



The RMT legal department and London Underground worker Mark Harding have secured a high court declaration from British Transport Police that it was wrong to impose a restriction on Mr Harding's trade union involvement as part of the bail conditions attached to his arrest, for picket line activity in 2014.

British Transport Police conceded that: "It is hereby declared that, in all the circumstances, the imposition of the bail conditions imposed on the Claimant on the evening of February 6th 2014 at 6.55pm, and which remained in place until February 10th 2014, amounted to a breach of his rights under Articles 10 and 11

of the European Convention of Human Rights."

Mark Harding had already been found not guilty of charges brought against him.

He was accused of trying to intimidate a supervisor into not crossing the picket line at Hammersmith during industrial action in February 2014 over Tube ticket office closures.

British Transport Police brought a case under the 1992 Trade Union and Labour Relations Act, as amended by the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005.

Over 20 MPs and trade union leaders issued a joint statement of support for Mark in a case that would have intensified UK anti-trade union

laws and effectively made picketing illegal.

A joint letter said that they were "dismayed that the arrest appears to have political connotations in that Mr Harding was arrested by the use of trade union legislation and held in custody for 13 hours".

Mr Harding said that it was "clearly a politically motivated case.

"It is scandalous that so much public money has been wasted as I did nothing wrong -all I did was ask someone not to cross a picket line.

"This is an important victory, not just for RMT but for the whole trade union movement, and has significant implications for every single

trade unionist taking action and seeking to picket effectively at the workplace." he said.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the union welcomed the latest victory in the long-running case.

"This is an important victory for Mr Harding, the union, the legal department and the trade union movement in general as this declaration can be pointed to should there be any future police infringement upon trade union activity as part of bail conditions, which is particularly relevant given the proposals to criminalise picketing as part of the proposed Trade Union Bill," he said.



Web Membership is Changing

eMEMBERSHIP

IS HERE!

KEEPING YOUR MEMBERSHIP DETAILS ACCURATE ONLINE

(SCREEN SHOT 1)

Are you one of the thousands of RMT members whom regularly visit the RMT website and login to the area exclusively available to you? If you are, you will know that you have the ability to check and amend the details RMT holds for you on the membership database by clicking on 'Your Profile'.

It is in everyone's interest that the union's records are up to date, particularly your contact and employment details, absolutely vital for safe industrial action ballots and elections and to ensure the Union keeps in contact with you, especially when there is a need to urgently advise you of anything that directly affects you as a member. So if you don't already do so, you are urged to login to the members' area as often as you can. Apart from keeping your membership details up to date, there is a whole host of other information and news available to you as an RMT member.

The current web membership facility has been in operation since early 2008 and has proven invaluable in RMT's efforts to maintain accurate records.

Apart from members keeping their own details up to date, branch and regional council officials have been able to access and maintain the records of their members and use the information to help organise and recruit as well as communicate with activists, reps

and individuals. On the back of an extensive training programme over the past seven years, it has been a huge success.

MOVING FORWARD

Technology moves on and the union does not stand still when it comes to improving efficiency and the service provided to members and officials. Under the banner of the NMS, (New Membership Software), Project, a major upgrade to the union's membership records system is being developed, using the very latest web technology which should provide the union with future-proofing for the next ten years and beyond. It is equivalent to having a completely new membership system for a small fraction of the cost and the new web membership facility, (eMembership), is the first phase of the development.

SO WHAT'S CHANGED? **Members**

The first page a member sees, setting out their contact and employment detail on the membership system, contact and meeting details of their branch and with links to the branch and regional council website where available, will look different but still holds the same information. Members will still need to confirm or amend their detail before proceeding, once a month.

The big change is instead of having to select various menu items to find the detail you

require to amend, in eMembership, the main and important detail can be viewed and amended in one screen with additional information in one other area. Much simpler and easier to edit.

(SCREEN SHOT 2)

You will also be able to view the training courses programme and see a record of your own attendance as well as any Union benefits you have been paid.

BRANCH/REGIONAL COUNCIL OFFICIALS

The current web membership is already a powerful organising and communication tool. To say that eMembership is essential to organisation, recruitment and retention and vital to the day to day running of a branch would be a very bold statement to make but it is fair to say this would not be too far wide of the mark. For this reason, the union has decreed that at least one official from every branch must attend a training course in the extensive programme, scheduled to take place over the next couple of years.

Whereas in the current facility it is more or less necessary to output lists for any number of purposes, eMembership almost entirely removes that requirement and most tasks can be carried out on-screen. You select what data columns you want to see and you can easily move to the details of members in the list for editing. This applies to maintaining activists within the

branch and regional council too. If it is absolutely necessary to print a list, (see data protection below), you output what you see on screen so again the columns are under your control.

(SCREEN SHOT 3)

For communications you no longer have to output lists and go through the mail merge routine. You can simply write to members or e-mail them, (or both), directly from eMembership.

You can see totals in groups and categories within the Branch and view and print pie charts, (other graphs to follow).

One of the main benefits is that eMembership can be easily used on i-pads and other tablets.

There is much more in the new facility and branches and regional councils will have already received details, including the training programme. It really is necessary to get every Branch using eMembership and those attending courses will be urged to spread the word amongst their branch and regional council colleagues. RMT will promote eMembership and the training programme at every opportunity.

DATA PROTECTION

The Union has always taken the security of data extremely seriously and confidentiality is the watchword. For some time now, RMT has been undertaking a comprehensive review of its IT and data protection policies and

procedures and this will form a separate module within the eMembership training. Along with specific instructions on how to store and treat data, officials will be emphatically urged to only output membership details if it is absolutely necessary and then how they should treat that information. The ease and practicality of on-screen working means that in almost every case it isn't necessary to do so.

The current web membership will continue alongside the new one and whilst all members will access their own detail in the new web facility, branch and regional council officials will only have access to the records of their members in eMembership once they have been successfully trained in its use and have signed a statement accepting their responsibilities under the Data Protection Act.

Just to reassure members, whilst for ease of identification of individuals, officials will be able to select National Insurance number and date of birth on-screen as well as contact phone and e-mail, they will never be able to output that information.

WHEN WILL EMEMBERSHIP BE AVAILABLE?

eMembership has been more or less ready to go live for a while now but the Union didn't want members to login and suddenly be faced with something different without telling you.

The intention is to make it live in mid-April when everyone should have received this edition of *RMT News*. It is also intended to send you an e-mail as soon as it is available and to place a message in the members' area of the website. Your union is sure you will find eMembership much easier to use and it will help you to help RMT by keeping your membership detail accurate and up to date.

SCREEN SHOT 1



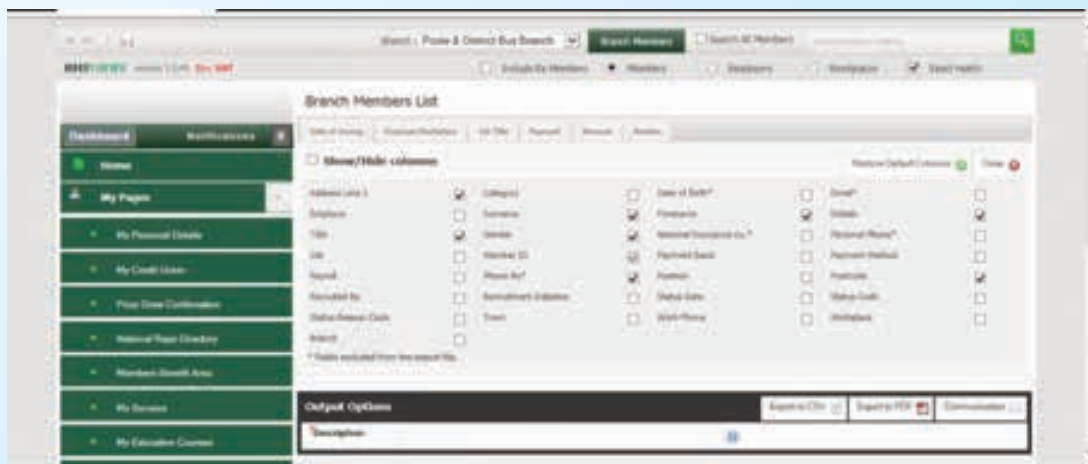
NB: Further changes may be made to this screen prior to going live.

SCREEN SHOT 2



NB: Further changes may be made to this screen prior to going live.

SCREEN SHOT 3



NB: Some of the column headings shown are not relevant to RMT and will be removed.



APRIL 28 2015 International Workers Memorial Day rally beside the Building Worker statue, Tower Hill, London

WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY – APRIL 28 2016

Strong Laws
Strong Enforcement
Strong Unions

Workers Memorial Day is held on April 28 every year, all over the world workers and their representatives conduct events, demonstrations, vigils and a whole host of other activities to mark the day. The day is also intended to serve as a rallying cry to “remember the dead, but fight for the living”.

This year the theme for the day is “Strong Laws - Strong Enforcement - Strong Unions”. Across the world we are seeing growing attacks on health and safety protection, including in Britain where the Government have removed protection from millions of self-employed workers, and across Europe where the European Commission are pursuing a dangerous de-regulatory strategy.

However, strong laws are

not enough if they are not going to be enforced. That is why we need proper inspections and enforcement action against those who break the law.

Here in the UK the number of inspections has fallen dramatically in the past five years, however in many other countries enforcement has always been non-existent.

That is why we also need strong unions. Unionised workplaces are safer, yet the government is trying to stop unions protecting the health and safety of their members by restricting the right of health and safety representatives to take time off to keep the workplace safer, and also trying to reduce our right to strike when things go wrong.



RMT YOUNG MEMBERS MEET

RMT Young Members
hold their annual
conference in
Canterbury

Young member Chair George Waterhouse welcomed delegates to conference and presented an overview of the work of the youth advisory over the last 12 months.

Conference also heard from the union's organising unit members Bill Paterson and Alan Pottage on the success of organising young members over recent years and the need to keep this work to ensure the next generation of RMT activists and officials are in place.

Senior assistant general secretary Steve Hedley presented an overview of the current issues facing the union and its membership. He gave a scathing analysis of the proposed Trade Union Bill that is the most pernicious attack on trade unions in decades.

He also set out the RMT of supporting UK withdrawal from EU membership and the importance of this referendum that will almost certainly not be repeated in a lifetime.

Newly-elected RMT president Sean Hoyle gave his first RMT conference address in the position. Sean gave a wide ranging contribution on

both the problems facing the Union but also the successful fighting back strategies that had brought victories for our members and the wider movement.

Conference members set a list of priorities and tasks for the coming months and agreed two resolutions that will go to the 2016 AGM, on the 'living wage' and 'international organising issues'. Debates on structures and the need to produce new organising/education materials led to six further resolutions being submitted to the NEC for their consideration.

Conference was felt to be a huge success both during the debates as well as the 'lively' evening sessions!

Conference elected a new chair Lorna Tooley, who is also on the Liaison Committee, along with Dominic Hill, Kate Stokes and Matt Trotter. The new Liaison Committee will begin preparations for the 2017 conference in Salisbury. A vote of thanks to outgoing chair George Waterhouse and vice chair Chris Hodds was also taken.

★ Morning Star

DON'T BE LEFT WITHOUT US



50 years of fighting for peace and socialism
April 25, 1966-April 25, 2016
ANNIVERSARY PARTY

Celebrate 50 years since
the very first edition of
the people's paper with
a legendary line-up of
words and music

Thee Faction
Grace Petrie
The Hurriers
Joe Solo
Comrade X
Attila the Stockbroker

April 25 at the 100 Club
100 Oxford Street
London W1D 1LL
Doors 7-11pm

Over 18s only. Tickets £12 plus booking fee
from www.wegotickets.com/event/350672
Sponsored by RMT, Unite and London
Morning Star Supporters Group
For more information, contact Bob Oram:
boboram@peoples-press.com



Enjoy up to 6% cashback on your shopping!

Looking for a card that will get you more
from your shopping? RMT members can earn
between 2.5% and 6% cashback at over 50 big
name stores⁽¹⁾ including: Sainsbury's, ASDA,
Argos, Boots, M&S, Debenhams and many more
with the RMT Prepaid Plus MasterCard® card.

It's not a credit nor a debit card – it's a prepaid
card. You load it with money before you shop,
rather than paying for it afterwards, so there's
less chance of going over your budget. Plus,
there's no limit to how much cashback you could
earn, no credit checks and no application fees.
All this for just £1.95 per month!⁽²⁾

WIN £300!



Apply for the RMT Prepaid Plus
card by 25th March 2016 for your
chance to WIN £300 loaded onto
your RMT Prepaid Plus card!*



APPLY TODAY FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN £300*
www.RMTprepaid.com

*To be entered into the prize draw you must successfully apply for an RMT Prepaid Plus card or be an RMT Prepaid Plus cardholder before 25th March 2016 (no cash alternative). The prize £300 which will be loaded onto your RMT Prepaid Plus card. Full prize draw rules at www.RMTprepaid.com/prizedrawrules.

⁽¹⁾ Range of retail partners and cashback rates are subject to change. Some retailer exclusions apply. ⁽²⁾ The RMT Prepaid Plus MasterCard® card is free to apply for. There is a monthly fee of £1.95, which is charged within 30 days of successful application. You must be a RMT member to apply, some identity checks will be made, but there are no credit checks. This card is issued by PrePay Technologies Ltd pursuant to license by MasterCard International Incorporated. This card is an electronic money product. The electronic money associated with this card is provided by PrePay Technologies Ltd, a company regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FRN 900010) for the issuance of electronic money. MasterCard and the MasterCard Brand Mark are registered trademarks of MasterCard International Incorporated. The RMT Prepaid Plus card has been arranged for you by RMT and RMT Prepaid Plus. RMT Prepaid Plus is a trading name of Union Income Limited ('UI'). UI is registered in England and Wales. No. 06595562. Registered office: 4th Floor, 7/10 Chandos Street, London W1G 9DQ.



Winning Cabotage Rights for Seafarers

BUILDING INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

An RMT delegation joined the Maritime Union of Australia's quadrennial national conference held in the Gold Coast, Queensland this month, writes Paul Shaw.

From the outset, it was clear the bond that had been built up between MUA and RMT throughout the years. The love for 'Our Bob' was also clear, through the t-shirts with his face on them to their mantra "they don't like us, we don't care".

RMT general secretary Mick Cash took to stage to speak to delegates on the struggles that we have around cabotage and seafarers rights - the same struggles that are seen all over the world.

Over 120 of the 500 delegates were overseas guests representing over 20 countries attending a conference by a relevantly small union of 14,000 members who certainly punch above their weight and have the

same ethos as the RMT in being a politically active, fighting and militant union.

Mick spoke about the current plight facing our seafarers at Calmac. From the platform Mick spoke of the possible privatisation of the ferry services by the SNP government, with outsourcing vultures Serco the other other bidder in the process.

Other unions members from around the world showed their support and sent a message to our members in Scotland that the trade union movement worldwide supports each other in all endeavours.

As a lasting memory to the bond established between the two unions, RMT national secretary Steve Todd presented Paddy Crumlin - MUA national secretary and ITF president - with a stain glass panel with motifs of both unions similar to the one that is on display at Maritime House, Clapham.

The MUA have a chant "MUA - Here to stay" and we are sure that the delegates present will take away a lasting impression that RMT is here to

say and as said by the Mick Cash - "our union was here before this government and will be here after them and many to come".

NOTIFICATION OF CONTRIBUTION RATE CHANGES FROM APRIL 2016

From April 1 2016 the transitional low rate of £1.50 will be increasing to £1.75 and the transitional full rate of £2.90 will be increasing to £3.70.

Direct debit payments will be amended accordingly as will contributions collected by employers under paybill deduction arrangements. Those sending cheques or postal orders direct will need to adjust the amounts sent in accordingly.

Period	Transitional low	Transitional full
Weekly	£1.75	£3.70
4 Weekly	£7.00	£14.80
Monthly	£7.58	£16.00

We maintain a tight control of our costs and continually re-examine them to ensure that we make best use of our resources to deliver improved services to you. I am sure you will agree that

YOU'RE SURE TO FIND THE IDEAL CAR!

UP TO 4,000 CARS PRICE CHECKED DAILY

RELAX!
EVERY ONE OF
OUR CARS IS
COMPREHENSIVELY CHECKED
AND FULLY GUARANTEED



**NOW
OFFERING
BRAND NEW CARS!**

Hassle Free, Risk Free Car Purchasing for RMT Members and their Families

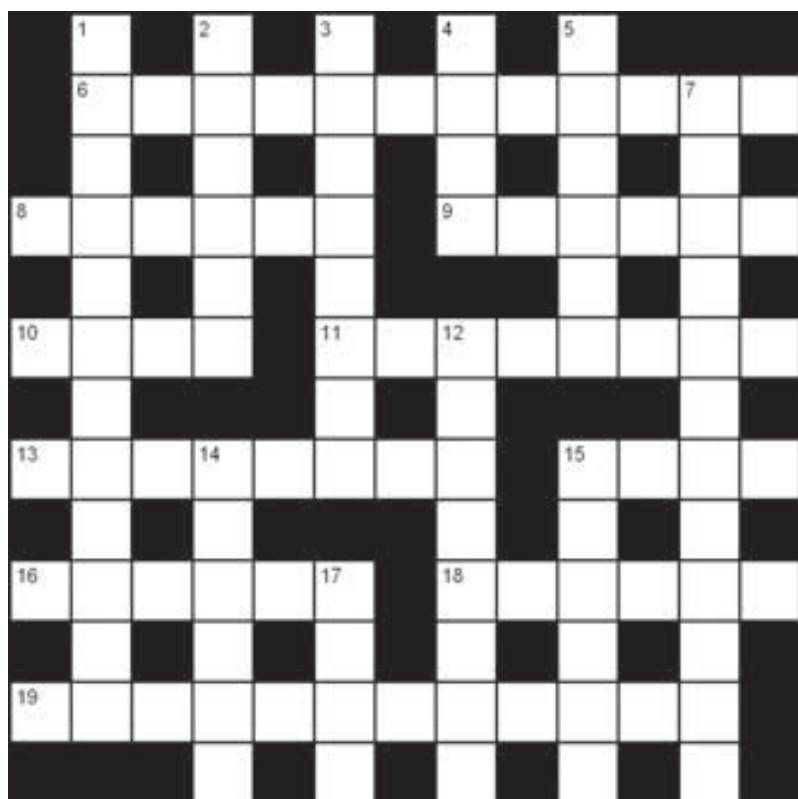
RMTdrive

Call 0845 122 6924

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

rmtdrive.org.uk

£50 PRIZE CROSSWORD



Last month's solution...



The winner of last month's prize crossword is Andrew Jeffers, Yate.

Send entries to Prize Crossword, RMT, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD by April 15 with your name and address.

Winner and solution in next issue.

ACROSS

- 6 Jumpy (7,5)
- 8 Size of a book (6)
- 9 Score (6)
- 10 Taunt (4)
- 11 Doomed (8)
- 13 Squeeze together (8)
- 15 By bad luck (4)
- 16 Ribbed fabric (6)
- 18 Thing (6)
- 19 Female singing voice (12)

DOWN

- 1 Standard equipment (5,2,5)
- 2 Face (6)
- 3 Uneducated (8)
- 4 Summons (4)
- 5 progress through life (6)
- 7 Decomposition (12)
- 12 Lack of respect (9)
- 14 Lit up (6)
- 15 Relating to stars (6)
- 17 Not difficult (4)



RMT CREDIT UNION LTD.

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

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER

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

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

1 PERSONAL DETAILS.

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

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

3 Your Employment.

Employer		RMT Branch	
Job Description			

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

5 Membership Status

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

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

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

8 **Next of Kin**

Address

.....
.....

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

Your signature

Date

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

I agree to my identity being checked electronically ☐

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



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



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

Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society

To: The Manager	Bank/Building Society
Address	
	Postcode

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

Bank/Building Society account number

Branch Sort Code

Originator's Identification Number

Reference Number

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

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society.

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

Signature(s)

Date

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

This guarantee should be detached and retained by the Payer.

The Direct Debit Guarantee

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





Britain's Largest Specialist Transport Union

RMT warns of CHAOS as Govia Thameslink threaten to downgrade and axe

84

**RAIL
TICKET
OFFICES**

**throughout
the South**

RMT is fighting these latest profit-driven cuts across the Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern routes.

You can get involved in the RMT campaign at <http://bit.ly/1PVJZVr>

**Protecting our members' interests is our priority
Join us today**

www.rmt.org.uk FREEPHONE 0800 376 3706

