



Bakerloo news



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As LU sets up new “Fatigue Group”, and studies prove detrimental impact of shift work, we say:

Fight for a shorter working week!

We all know our jobs are shift based, and that providing public transport to London involves working anti-social hours, including night working.

That is an inevitable aspect of a metropolitan transport system serving a global city. But with study after study proving that shift working, and particularly night working, have a detrimental impact on workers’ health, our employers must do more to mitigate fatigue and ensure our jobs don’t shorten our life expectancy!

Even if you don’t work night turns, you may suffer from the detrimental impacts of night working, which is defined in law as any shift involving three or more hours between 23:00 and 06:00.

Shift workers are at greater risk of diabetes, obesity, and even cancer.

A 2014 study by the University of Surrey concluded that shift working could lead to “widespread disruption to many biological processes.” Dr Simon Archer, one of the leading authors of the research, said: “Over 97% of rhythmic genes became arrhythmic with mistimed sleep and this really underlines why we feel so bad during jet



lag, or if we have to work irregular shifts.”

What can be done to improve this, and how can we fight for it?

RMT is for a reduced working week and a significantly increased staffing level. By reducing the working week to a four-day, 32-hour pattern, and employing more staff to share out the shifts, LU could reduce the detrimental impact of extreme shift working.

LU has indicated it is prepared to discuss a compressed working week on trains, but cramming existing hours into four days rather than five (which involves changes to frameworks and agreements) doesn’t fix the problem. A reduced working week would give us more time away from work to rest and recover, and create more jobs.

With talks on our 2019 pay deal set to begin next year, our unions should be demanding that the company takes serious steps to minimise the negative health effects proven to be associated with shift working by reducing our working week.

As always, while reps can put these arguments across in negotiations, our best weapon for getting what we want is collective action.

“Fatigue Group” established

LU’s long-awaited “Fatigue Group” is finally up and running. Unions have been pushing for the creation of such a group, and highlighting its importance, for many years.

The fact that shift work is a major factor in fatigue and the detrimental effect of fatigue on our health and life expectancy make this body essential. The fact that our work is safety critical makes this forum doubly important. Even the Office of Rail and Road (formerly the Office of Rail Regulation) has issued guidance on fatigue and safety critical work.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Section 2(1) and 3(1) clearly outline the employer’s responsibility to manage the risks from staff fatigue.

It’s early days, but it is already clear there is a job of work to do in this area.

If you have an issue you want to see raised at the Fatigue Group, speak to your health and safety rep.

Your branch meets on the **FIRST TUESDAY** of every month, 16.00, upstairs at **The Royal Exchange, 26 Sale Place, W2 1PU (Edgware Road H&C)**. All members welcome.

The Regional Council meets on the **LAST THURSDAY** of every month, 16.30, at the 12 Pins, next to Finsbury Park station.



RMT supports Picturehouse and McDonald’s strikers

RMT has been actively supporting strikes by workers at Picturehouse cinemas and McDonald’s restaurants to win living wages and union rights. Check rmtlondoncalling.org.uk for info on how you can get involved.

ABM suspends cleaners: RMT fights for justice!



New cleaning contractor ABM has suspended dozens of cleaners across LU, as it carries out “right to work” checks on workers.

Employers can legally conduct these checks on workers. Although you may have been working for Interserve, or previous contractors, for years, without any issue, the new contractor is entitled to ask for proof of your right to work. Immigration law is set up to favour bosses, not workers, and to make it easy for employers to fire workers.

However, RMT is fighting back. If

you are summoned to a meeting with ABM, make sure you take a union rep with you. If you have been suspended without pay, speak to a union rep about this. RMT believes ABM is *not* legally obligated to suspend you without pay, and will be pursuing Employment Tribunal cases for anyone who loses money while ABM carries out its checks on them.

If you are worried about your immigration status, you can speak to an RMT rep in confidence to discuss the issues and work out a way forward. You can call the RMT members’ helpline free on 0800 376 3706.

If you are not yet a member of RMT, join right away at rmt.org.uk/about/join-rmt.

News roundup



Rosters

Reps on the Bakerloo South Cover Group have been working on re-designing rosters to accommodate the increased staffing level won in the January strikes.

An additional long weekend for CSA2s was secured after management tried to nick it!

AG1 cuts?

The ongoing TfL “transformation” programme is set to hit some LU managerial and admin staff.

While none of us will be shedding a tear if there are fewer AMs on the job, AG1s are also at risk.

Speak to your AG1 and, if they’re not already in the union, recruit them!

OPOs not working? Request assistance!

A weekly occurrence on the Bakerloo at present is misaligned OPO equipment.

This safety critical equipment ensures that the driver can see the whole length of the platform. The driver must be able to see all of the platform to ensure that it's safe to depart.

The Rule Book is very clear about what to do in such a scenario: the driver should contact the signaller, report the problem and request station staff for assisted dispatch. You must not move the train until station staff arrive.

Worryingly, there have been instances of late when, instead of staffing the platform until the problem has been fixed, the signaller is asking following trains if they can see the platform, assuming wrongly that the OPO



equipment is somehow self-correcting.

Defective OPO should always be reported by drivers. Rule Book 8, Section 6, is quite clear. If you cannot see the whole of the platform, request assisted dispatch.

Station supervisors: assisted dispatch must be provided if requested. If this affects your staffing level, demand that your AM rosters additional spares. Don't let LU's penny pinching cut corners on safety!

Farewell, comrade Spurgin!

T/Op Steve Spurgin, a longstanding RMT health and safety rep at Elephant and Castle depot, is stepping down from his role due to his forthcoming retirement.

Bakerloo News thanks Steve for his years of service to his fellow workers and our union and wishes him all the best for the future.

Bakerloo News is a monthly newsletter from the Bakerloo branch of the RMT union. To submit a story for *Bakerloo News*, or to contact the branch, please email jimmcdaid36@gmail.com, or ring Branch Secretary Jim McDaid on 07917 131692