



National Union of Rail, Maritime and  
Transport Workers

# Rail Cleaners' Charter

***For fair  
pay,  
dignity  
and  
respect***



# RMT – the union for railway industry cleaners

## Leading the fight for fair pay

Many cleaning companies behave as though they resent paying wages at all! Some impose below-inflation pay awards – a cut in wages. Others refuse annual pay increases. Most cleaners only get the National Minimum Wage. This behaviour towards workers is not acceptable on the railways. RMT issues the following challenge to the employers: -

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### **Rail industry cleaners must have dignity and respect at work:**

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A living wage, as a minimum at entry, rising to at least £10 per hour at today's prices

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A pay increase each year and every year

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A proper career path and encouragement to apply for other jobs in the railway industry

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A decent pension

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Free travel on the railways

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Additional payments for unsociable hours and bank holidays

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A minimum of 20 days basic annual leave plus eight bank holidays – aiming for the railway industry's average of 32 days per year

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A fair sick pay scheme

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A 35-hour week without loss of pay

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Clean and properly equipped mess rooms, changing rooms, showers and decent shelter

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Regular provision of uniforms and safety wear

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Full employment rights – no 'third party' sackings

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Direct employment, an end to contracting-out of cleaning

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Freedom from discrimination

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# Foreword

## A message from Bob Crow – RMT General Secretary

Cleaning the railways, underground and overground, is tough and often unpleasant.

Our cleaner members frequently have to deal with awkward, or even violent, members of the public and clean up vomit and excrement.

Rail industry cleaners are expected to remove body parts after suicides or accidents. Without cleaners, the railway system would quickly disappear under a torrent of rubbish. Yet cleaners are expected to live on extremely low rates of pay and without even the basic employment conditions which are common throughout the railway industry.

RMT's Cleaners Charter sets out our demands and shows why every cleaner should join RMT. We only want fair pay and decent conditions for all railway industry cleaners.

We campaign for 'dignity not poverty'. We want a living wage for an entry level cleaner, increasing to at least £10 per hour. Employers have no excuse for not treating railway cleaners with respect.

We want a stop to cleaners being bought and sold to the lowest bidder. When cleaners are directly employed by rail companies, wages are higher and employment conditions better.

RMT is demanding that Network Rail and all the train operating and infrastructure companies end contracting out and bring cleaning back 'in house'. This means that cleaners will be directly employed by the same companies as the rest of their railway colleagues.

Before rail privatisation, there was no division between cleaners and all other railway staff. Many of today's station staff, drivers and conductors entered the industry as cleaners.

RMT has always had people in leading positions who are, or were, cleaners. We want a proper promotional structure for cleaners and the same opportunities as other staff to make progress through the grades in our industry.

When we unite we win improved rates of pay. In Swansea, RMT cleaners in ISS on the First Great Western contract forced management to improve wages after they voted for strike action.

If any employer refuses to discuss these issues, RMT is prepared to force them back to talks by exposing through the media, to the passengers and to their shareholders in other areas.

If cleaners vote to take industrial action we will ensure that RMT drivers, station staff, booking office and infrastructure staff offer their full support and take appropriate health and safety steps to protect themselves and the travelling public.

We are determined to work as hard as possible so RMT cleaners get a better deal. Join us now to end low pay and exploitation.

Our numbers are growing and we have a network of trained and experienced cleaners' representatives. To get what cleaners deserve it is essential that every cleaner joins RMT. Check if your workmate is in the union – a form to join is included with this Charter.



*Bob Crow*

## Exploitation

Each time cleaning services are outsourced, cleaning firms bid low to win the contract. Cleaners are in effect bought and sold to the lowest bidder. Wages are squeezed and staffing numbers reduced. The cleaning contractors and the railway companies blame each other for this. Both claim that 'our hands are tied'.

RMT demands that the railway companies face up to their responsibility and put an end to exploitation.

The contracts should be taken back in house and cleaners employed directly. Until this happens, contracts that depend on abysmal pay, conditions and shifts for cleaners must no longer be awarded.

Fair minimum standards must be enshrined within the contract-tendering process. There must be a stop to cleaners being sacked with no legal rights because a railway company has instructed a contractor to remove an individual from a contract.

Exploitation of our cleaners has made the owners and top managers of the cleaning firms rich. But this success is not shared amongst the workforce.

Entry-level cleaners must be paid at least a living wage. RMT's ultimate aim is for a £10 per hour minimum rate of pay (at today's rates) to lift cleaners out of poverty.

Ensuring dignity and respect at work also means challenging the appalling employment practices of some of the cleaning companies. For instance, some companies are saving money by deliberately keeping staffing levels so low that there is never adequate cover. This must change.

### A simple career path

RMT represents all rail workers and wants a clear pay and grading structure for cleaners that offers a route to promotion: -

- ◆ A Level 1 Cleaner with a starting rate of pay of a living wage, eventually increasing to £10 per hour at today's prices.
- ◆ A Level 2 Cleaner based on additional qualifications and/or experience with an appropriate salary
- ◆ A Level 3 Cleaning Supervisor with an appropriate salary

Cleaners should be notified of all railway vacancies and receive recognition by employers of the railway experience gained by cleaners.

### A decent pension

All staff must have a decent pension to ensure dignity in old age.

### Assistance with travel costs

Cleaners in the railway industry must receive free travel to and from work on the network within a minimum of 25 mile radius from their workplace. As a first step RMT proposes a 75 per cent refund of the cost of an annual season ticket.

### Unsocial hours payment

An unsocial hours payment should be offered as compensation for any weekend, bank holiday or night work.



## Annual leave

The law says that everyone must have a minimum of 20 days holiday each year. Disgracefully most cleaning contractors include the 8 bank holidays in the 20 days. Soon this will be unlawful. The cleaning firms must act now and give 28 days minimum holiday for all – moving to the industry average of 32 days per year.

## Sick Pay

Many cleaners only get statutory sick pay. Railway cleaners should have a proper sick pay scheme equal to other railway employees in Network Rail, London Underground and the train operating companies.

## Reduced working hours

Most railway workers have a basic working week of 35 hours. There is no reason at all why cleaners should be forced to work longer hours. RMT wants a timetable for a rapid reduction in working hours to 35 per week, without loss of earnings.

## Dignity and respect at work

RMT protects you at work.

As an RMT member you have a legal right to have an RMT rep present in all disciplinary and grievance hearings with managers.

Your union will always fight to protect and improve your wages and conditions. If your company transfers you to another employer you have legal protection under TUPE (the Transfer of Undertakings and Protection of Employment) legislation. If your new employer tries to change your wages or your work **do not agree to anything or sign anything**, contact the union immediately.

## A safer workplace and clean mess rooms

Employers have a legal duty to provide facilities for employees. This means that eating places should be kept clean.

Staff should be able to prepare or buy a hot drink. Where hot food is not available, workers should be able heat their own food and then be given enough time to eat it.

Proper lockers, showers and clean changing rooms are essential for cleaners' dignity.

Cleaners need warm, dry shelter in all locations where they work.

Cleaners need to be regularly issued with adequate uniform, equipment and protective equipment. Legally, employers cannot charge staff for the provision of personal protective equipment, clothing etc.

RMT Health and Safety reps already do a valuable job representing cleaners. Health & Safety reps at each work location, will be helping to check and improve the workplace and take up the problems with managers where needed. RMT Health & Safety reps should also be consulted by managers before any decisions are taken that may have an effect on health and safety.

## Freedom from discrimination

Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect in the workplace. If you are being discriminated against on the grounds of race, gender or sexual orientation, or favouritism is happening in your company, RMT is here to help.

# RMT – The Rail Cleaners Union

## Got a Problem?

**Do not suffer in silence. Contact your RMT representatives.**

RMT is a powerful and growing union. The union has recruited over 15,000 members in the last five years and currently organise over 75,000 workers in the transport industry.

Locally, the union has over 200 branch secretaries and thousands of trained local RMT Reps. If you do not know who to turn to contact your regional office.

## Your Regional Organisers are

**Scotland: Phil McGarry, Ian MacIntyre**

Contact via the Scotland Regional Office 0141 332 1117

**NorthWest: Andy Warnock-Smith, John Tilley**

Contact via the North West Regional Office 0151 709 1786

**North East: Alan Heath, Stan Herschel**

Contact via the North East Regional Office 01904 525643

**Midlands: Ken Usher**

Contact via the Midland Regional Office 0121 212 2355

**South West: Phil Bialyk, Brian Curtis**

Contact via the South West Regional Office 0117 925 5018

**South East: Jim Stevenson, Bobby Law and Bob Rayner**

Contact via the South East Regional Office 020 7529 8860 or 8853

**Brian Whitehead** (special responsibility for Greater London cleaners)  
07917 327321

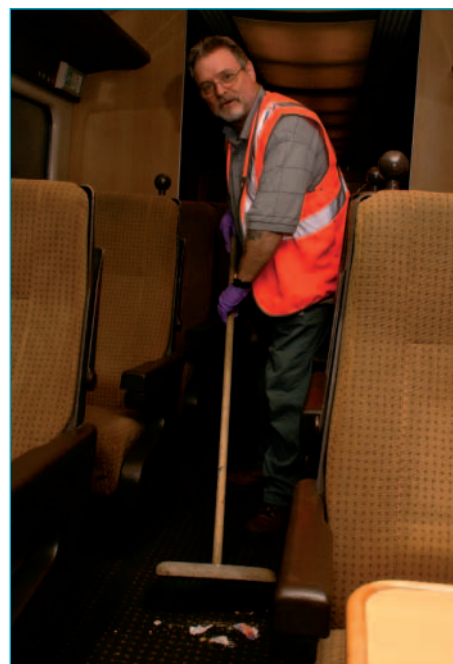
**John MacDonald** Relief Organiser North 07917 327320

**Your region's national executive members can be contacted via Unity House**

**Your national officers are**  
**General Secretary – Bob Crow**  
**Assistant General Secretary – Pat Sikorski: 07940950399**

**Freephone Helpline:**

**0800 376 3706**



# NATIONAL UNION OF RAIL, MARITIME & TRANSPORT WORKERS

Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD



**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP** – please complete your application along with either the attached Direct Debit or a separate paybill mandate form.

Please use **BLOCK CAPITALS** and **black ink**. \* Information that must be provided.

BRANCH NUMBER

## 1 PERSONAL DETAILS.

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

## 2 Your Employment.

Employer\*  Location   
Job Description\*  Part Time YES  NO

## 3 Sex.

Male  Female

## 4 Ethnic Origin.

White  Black African  Black Caribbean  Black Other   
Pakistani  Indian  Chinese  Bangladeshi  Irish  Other (please state)

## 5 How do you wish to pay.

Your Pay Number

Direct Debit (you must complete form below)  Paybill Deduction (complete separate form)  I confirm my paybill mandate has been sent to my pay office.   
Phone Freephone 0800 376 3706 to confirm your company offers paybill facility.

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

Your signature  Date  /  /



## 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, 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

Normally your payments are made once a month to RMT.  
If you prefer to pay 4 weekly instead please tick

Originator's Identification Number

9  7  1  7  4  5

Reference Number

Your National Insurance Number

FOR RMT OFFICIAL USE ONLY

This is not part of the instruction to your Bank or Building Society.

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society.  
Please pay RMT 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, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature(s)   
Date

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

This guarantee should be detached and retained by the Payer.

## The Direct Debit Guarantee



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

Moisten along edges and fold to seal



**Not a member?**  
**Complete the form at the back of this charter and return it to  
a union rep or head office as soon as possible.**

**You can also join by ringing the  
Freephone Helpline: 0800 376 3706  
Or join on-line through the website: [www.rmt.org.uk](http://www.rmt.org.uk)**

