



London Calling

News and views from RMT's London Transport Regional Council

www.rmtlondoncalling.org.uk

April 2011

DEFEND ARWYN AND EAMONN – VOTE YES

At the time of writing, Train Operators and Instructor Operators across the combine will be receiving ballot papers concerning strike action in support of our two driver members sacked by LUL for their union activities. Following two separate incidents, Arwyn Thomas from Morden depot and Eamonn Lynch from Elephant and Castle, were sacked by the company. Both dismissals were grossly unfair, to the extent that two employment judges agreed that the men had most likely been sacked for trade union activity and so forced the company to pay their wages (legally known as 'interim relief') until their employment tribunals are concluded.

Our union has been in the forefront of resistance to the cuts programme driven by TfL and Nightmare Johnson, so the company is using any opportunity to try and weaken us. It is against this background that Arwyn and Eamonn have been deprived of their livelihoods by a vindictive and callous management. They want to get rid of effective reps and frighten would-be reps from taking on the job.

It is likely that both Arwyn and Eamonn will win their employment tribunal cases. However, even if the tribunals order reinstatement, the company can still refuse and this seems likely given their disregard for

justice and the tribunal process so far. That is why the union is calling on all drivers to vote YES for strike action in support of our sacked colleagues. Management might be able to stick two fingers up to the employment judges, but do they really want a total shutdown of the system? This is an issue about justice and the future strength of the union, its ability to continue to fight effectively for the interests of all members. We cannot afford to let the company get away with these sackings. SUPPORT ARWYN AND EAMONN. Stand up to the management bullies and VOTE YES! The balloting period ends on 27th April.

If you have not yet received a ballot paper, see your local rep or ring the union on 0800 376 3706

REINSTATE OUR REPS!

A special meeting to discuss the way forward in this dispute will take place at 4pm, Wednesday 27th April at:

YMCA Indian Student Hostel

41 Fitzroy Square

(5 minutes from Warren Street tube)

All members welcome. Come and show your support for Arwyn and Eamonn and help decide what actions we take to win their reinstatement.

LU REWARDS STAFF WITH PAY CUT

It might come as a surprise to learn that LU has been voted 'Metro of the Year', beating competition from around the world. Whoever judges these things clearly doesn't try using our system at weekends. That said, if we are the best metro in the world, then this is down to the hard work of LU staff across the grades. How does LU management thank us for our efforts? A pay rise, perhaps? Er, no! Instead, they have just made the following offer:

A 5-year deal; 4% this year; RPI + 0.25% in each of the following 4 years.

This represents a pay cut in real terms, as the current rate of RPI is 5.3%, down from 5.5% in February. The company has also failed to make any offer regarding other aspects of our claim, including the four-day week which is already enjoyed by staff working for many other train operating companies. If you have a view on this offer, get down to your branch meeting and be heard. It's our union and we need to decide what, if anything, we do next. For more information about our claim and LU's offer, go to www.rmtlondoncalling.org.uk/search/node/pay%20offer.

LU STALLS ON JOB CUT REVIEWS

Following the four days of strike action against LU's job cut plans last year, RMT and TSSA agreed to suspend the action in order to engage in four reviews at ACAS. The reviews would deal with the Safety, Collective Grievances, Ticket Office Service and Equalities issues arising out of the loss of 800 station jobs.

Safety reps have given management a list of specific safety concerns for each station and station group, highlighting safety concerns relating to staff shortages and impacts on members working the OSP rosters. We are still awaiting their response, expected at the end of April. Unfortunately, it appears management are not sticking to the original terms of reference and are dragging their heels on this process.

Reps on the collective grievance review produced an extensive report on the local issues relating to the rosters' impact on staff work-life balance and service needs within the BNS pre/post OSP. Our report recommends a substantial re-instatement of the jobs lost as a result of the new OSP rosters. It has been indicated to us that management will respond towards the end of April.

The Ticket Office review was set up to examine the level of service at stations as a result of the OSP reduction and closure of ticket offices. Since last year, management has insisted that the ticket office service is based on a formula which requires a stepped number of sales for the first, second and third windows etc to open; i.e. for the first window it is 30 sales per hour. The unions put forward a reasonable case for 24 sales per hour to enable the first window to open, bearing in mind the previous level after the shorter working week in 2006 was 15 sales per hour. Management dismissed this without even considering our arguments. We then made management aware that they were not even opening the ticket offices according to their own formula. Management replied that they were no longer interested in whether they had stuck to their own formula when determining ticket office opening hours. They lied to the unions and the travelling public when claiming their ticket office service levels were determined by their own sales formula. Clearly, their ticket office strategy has nothing to do with customer demand or sales, but is based on a policy of closing down ticket offices and forcing customers to use ticket stops and the internet. This review is continuing but has clearly reached an impasse.

The Equalities review has exposed the fact that LU has not taken its statutory obligations seriously. As a public body, LU has to by law conduct an Equalities Impact Assessment

on any re-organisation. This assessment must identify the negative impacts of the OSP and state what measures are to be put in place to mitigate these impacts. The unions quickly identified that the Assessment was not based on evidence but upon a collection of unsubstantiated opinions which were cut and pasted throughout the document. LU even made the outrageous claim that cutting jobs would have a positive impact on equality groups! The unions have demonstrated that statistically the job cuts have had a significantly more negative effect on certain equality groups. As it stands, it appears that LU management is intent on ignoring their equality duties and also the terms of reference for this review.

In conclusion, it appears LU did not enter into these reviews with any intention of taking seriously either the terms of reference or the validity of the issues and arguments put forward by the unions. LU seems intent on re-instating as few jobs as they can get away with. In the meantime, our members are suffering and working unreasonable rosters with staff shortages. Health and safety has been compromised for both staff and customers alike and the service provided to customers declines on a daily basis. The question now for the members of both unions is: what do we do about it?



Reviews or no reviews, LU management intend to do the government's dirty work and cut jobs to the bone

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