



London Calling

News and views from RMT's London Transport Regional Council

www.rmtlondoncalling.org.uk

January 2011

Release These Hostages!

London Underground workmates have taken further strike action to demand the reinstatement of Eamonn Lynch and Arwyn Thomas, and are on standby to ballot for strikes should LU also sack Peter Hartshorn. On Saturday 15 January, drivers on the Bakerloo line and at the Northern line's Morden depot were on strike in support of Eamonn and Arwyn respectively.

LU sacked Eamonn for following an instruction! An Employment Tribunal has already stated that the sacking was due to Eamonn's activities as RMT health and safety rep for Bakerloo drivers. Discriminating against a union rep in this way is unlawful, but the Tribunal does not have the power to force LU to reinstate Eamonn. The company sacked Arwyn following accusations by strike-breakers about an alleged incident during one of our strikes against job cuts. Arwyn has been an active RMT member for nearly 30 years, and has been a rep and a branch secretary. Peter, RMT rep for the Green Park stations group, has been stood down since October, and is now awaiting the result of his CDI, where he faced accusations of swearing at a manager, despite nearby witnesses stating that they did not hear him say what he is accused of saying.

It is clear to their workmates, and to RMT, that London Underground is victimising Eamonn, Arwyn and Peter because of their involvement in our union - because they stand up for their workmates and challenge management. The company has taken them as hostages in our long-running battle against attacks on jobs.



Picketing at Elephant & Castle with Eamonn (second right)

Management know that if they can 'take out' union reps and activists, we are all weaker. Equally, we know that if we defend our reps and activists, we will be stronger and better placed to resist management's attacks.

Stop victimisation of RMT reps and activists - defend Eamonn, Arwyn and Peter!



Picketing at Morden with Arwyn (left)

DLR Strike

RMT members will take 48 hours of strike action on Docklands Light Rail starting in the early morning of Thursday 20 January in a dispute with Serco Docklands over these issues:



- Failure to consult over redundancies
- Failure to consult and imposition of new pension arrangements
- Failure to consult over the introduction of new grades
- Imposition of a new roster reflecting altered walking times and spreadover times without RMT agreement.
- RMT claim for a 35 hour working week.
- The victimisation and dismissal of our members Julian Harper and Ian Peavot.

RMT members will not book on for any shifts that commence between 03.59 hours Thursday 20 January and 03.58 hours Saturday 22 January.

RMT General Secretary Bob Crow said: "Management at Serco Docklands continue to show total disregard for the idea of proper negotiation and consultation with this trade union and have also victimised and dismissed two of our colleagues. Our members have shown through a massive vote for action that they will not be bullied and treated with contempt. The industrial relations situation at Serco Docklands cannot be tolerated any longer."

The union will be producing leaflets to explain our case to the public, and welcomes all supporters to our picket lines. Check www.rmtlondoncalling.org.uk/dlr for details of pickets.

LU Job Cuts: Latest News

As London Underground moves towards imposing its job cuts, RMT remains determined to stop them, and to save as many jobs as possible.

New Rosters Published

London Underground has published the rosters it plans to impose on stations from 6 February. Staff are horrified to see that they are expected to work even more anti-social hours with staffing levels so low that they know their station will not cope. With ticket office opening hours slashed, and many ticket offices due to open for just an hour a day, huge extra workload will fall on staff in the ticket hall and elsewhere around the station - and yet their numbers are being cut too, despite LU's claims otherwise.

Other grades will feel the effect as well. There will be hundreds fewer station staff available to assist drivers, service control or engineers during incidents and emergencies. Other grades will be hit in other ways too: LU told driver Eamonn Lynch that they had to sack him because the alternative option of reducing him to a station post was no longer available to them because of the job cuts!

And we can be sure that these job cuts will be followed by even more in stations and other grades - the company has admitted as much already.

Displacement Letters Issued

LU has sent displacement letters to those staff whose posts it intends to scrap. Many of the letters were wrong - sent to the wrong address, or naming the wrong grade, or later withdrawn. For those that

were 'accurate', many staff are finding themselves displaced a long way away, sometimes far outside their current group, despite management giving the impression that displacements would be within groups.

Some staff will simply be unable to work their new posts because of the locations and/or hours. LU is even trying to move late-turn part-timers to early-turn part-timer posts!

ACAS Review Update

RMT, TSSA and management are taking part in reviews of the OSP (the job-cutting policy). There are four strands to the review: safety; matters raised in collective grievances; ticket offices; and equalities. However, management intend to impose the job cuts before the reviews are finished.

Regular reports from the reviews will be posted on www.rmtlondoncalling.org.uk

BBC Tube Lies

On 11 January, the BBC broadcast a report that RMT would not strike against job cuts during January. RMT is appalled at this report, which was in straightforward contradiction to the decision of the RMT's Executive (General Grade Committee) on 7 January that we wish to strike alongside TSSA for 48 hours in January.

RMT contacted the BBC to correct this inaccurate report.

Dispute Payments

RMT's Executive has decided that in the event of further strikes against job cuts, the union will make dispute payments to all strikers.

Snouts in Troughs

LU has revealed that it has saved £12m through recent efficiencies, but intends to spend the money not on saving jobs or improving services, but on hotels, drinks, flowers, lunches and management consultants.

In a circular to top Tube bosses, Peter Hendy told managers that

RMT members have elected Janine Booth as our new representative on the union's Council of Executives - the national body which runs the union, taking decisions on issues from organising strategies to industrial action and political campaigns.



Janine's contact details are:

Email: j.booth@rmt.org.uk

Phone (office): 020-7529-8810

Phone (mobile): 07900-408493

Janine will be posting regular reports on this website, as well as reporting at RMT branch meetings, Regional Council meetings and around the workplaces.

they now have a green light from the top to spend money on a wide range of luxuries just at the time that station security alerts have been upgraded to severe.

RMT sent out a press release deploring LU management's actions.

Unstaffed Stations

LU's planned job cuts will leave nearly a third of stations unstaffed for part of the day. RMT exposed this fact, and achieved significant media coverage: several newspapers reported on the issue, and items were broadcast on TV and radio news bulletins.

Staff Cuts Benefit Elderly, Disabled and Other Passengers?!

LU's 'Equality Impact Assessment' makes the extraordinary claim that removing around 800 staff from stations will have a 'positive equality impact' on elderly, disabled and other groups of passengers.

Not surprisingly, groups representing these passengers do not agree. Many have written to the Mayor and London Underground stating that vulnerable passengers need staff to help them around the system and opposing the cuts.

