

BakerlooNews

www.rmtbakerloobranch.org.uk



Newsletter of the Bakerloo Branch
national union of rail, maritime and transport workers

July 2009

RMT to ballot Bakerloo train drivers to defend workmate

Drivers on the Bakerloo Line were shocked when Kevin Dobinson was summarily dismissed on May 28th.

Kevin had an aggravated SPAD at Queens Park, ie passed a signal at danger and carried on into the platform. The Line Controller called him up on the radio and realising his mistake he informed Control that he had reset the trip and carried on into the platform in error. Kevin owned up to his mistake. He did not attempt to cover this up or blame faulty signals or sunlight issues or any other notion for his mistake. As Kevin said in his train persons report "I thought BB2 cleared but now I realise I may have reacted to the points going across. I stupidly reset my trip and carried on into platform at which point Control called me and I told them what happened".

Drivers are all too aware of people who made mistakes as serious as Kevin who are still driving trains or still employed by London Underground.

Comparable cases on the Bakerloo Line include not informing the Line Controller after passing a signal at danger in the wrong direction across a crossover at Paddington; another driver had a SPAD at Regents Park

N/B and cut out the front trip and reversed the train back into the platform. One driver recently was disciplined for reading a newspaper while in operation of a train; another was disciplined for driving 33 miles an hour in a 20 mile an hour zone.

On the underground as a whole 21 drivers had aggravated SPADS the year before and 18 were still driving trains.

This is why there was disbelief when Kevin was wrongfully sacked by Bakerloo management.

In response over 160 drivers signed a petition to demand that Kevin is treated fairly. Even 6 DMTs wrote testimonials for Kevin to the Appeal chair, Rob Smith, Bakerloo Trains Performance Manager. All these points were relayed to Rob Smith. Further mitigating circumstance too personal to be outlined here were also brought to Rob Smith's attention. At the initial disciplinary hearing, because of these personal problems Kevin said "he wasn't thinking straight".

Despite Rob Smith saying he would inform Kevin of his decision in 7 - 10 days, Rob Smith eventually got round to writing to Kevin about a month later. Shameful. In the old days you would get the result of an appeal

“ I thought BB2 cleared but now I realise I may have reacted to the points going across. I stupidly reset my trip and carried on into platform at which point Control called me and I told them what happened. ”

**Kevin Dobinson,
train persons report 24/04/09**

after a few hours at most. And he didn't even bother to mention Kevin's personal problems when deciding not to re-instate Kevin. But this is Bakerloo management for you.

The RMT is balloting our train driver members on the line because Kevin Dobinson has been treated unfairly in the extreme. At the same time the union is pursuing a Directors Appeal.

Management cannot be allowed to get away with this - if they do, who will be next?

Vote YES to re-instate Dobbo!

AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL

Quote of the month

“ Those who want to divide the workers have resorted to the foulest methods ”

Jim Larkin, trade unionist



Fixed links - come unstuck

Drivers at Elephant & Castle have given management's fixed-links rosters a resounding thumbs down.

With fewer than half the drivers bothering to vote LUL's half-baked scheme was dead even before the votes were counted. Next up is Queens Park where again the proposal is about as likely to get a yes vote as a referendum on more perks for merchant bankers.

Drivers are well aware that the fixed-links would remove any flexibility from the rosters and leave those drivers with less than five years seniority (the majority) with the shitty end of the stick.

Nevertheless, the management have used every trick in the book to try and force through these rosters. Originally they planned to interview drivers as to their voting intentions

and put out a heavily biased circular singing the praises of fixed-links. Then they announced that they were going to run some sort of banana republic style election with unmarked ballot papers and a ballot box next to the TOM's office. RMT reps on the line ensured that these plans were kiboshed and that a secret ballot was conducted.

At some point Queens Park management will get their act together and produce a fixed-link roster. Drivers are urged to reject it with another massive no vote. Remember mafias deliver for the majority in the depot, allow us to manage our lives and unlike fixed-links if you don't want to be part of one you don't have to. For workers control vote NO!

More broken promises

Before becoming mayor Boris Johnson signed a petition to stop ticket office closures. Then once elected on this issue he said "consider the threat has been lifted, annihilated, vapourised, liquidated, exterminated, removed, obliterated, as of now."

So that promise didn't last. It is becoming increasingly common for ticket windows to be closed so that staff can carry out SATS duties and for duties to be left uncovered in an attempt to save money and build a case for permanently shutting ticket offices altogether.

If staff believe that ticket offices shut and that their job will be safeguarded by moving into another

role, think again. Currently LU have over 150 vacancies that they are not filling at a saving of £4.6 million a year. This doesn't include the 12 vacancies in the RCI grade which saves LU a further £500,000 per annum.

Furthermore, LU ticket offices are losing £800,000 per year and rather than LU having a look at their flawed accountancy processes they are trying to make SAMFs accountable and we are seeing a drastic rise in members getting sent to CDIs and sacked. Another way of reducing SAMF grades.

RMT is in a battle for your job, only unity can win.

DISPUTE LATEST

By Steve Hedley,
Regional Organiser

Having listened carefully to your representatives on the 06th of July 2009 it was unanimously felt that London undergrounds offer in regards to pay did not meet our aspirations. More importantly LUL were still refusing to abide by cast iron agreements on no compulsory redundancies and breaking other agreements.

Furthermore Bullying and victimisation of RMT reps and activists was continuing and therefore we could not reach a settlement until all these issues were resolved. We have called for immediate talks at ACAS with a view to resolving all the issues by the 29th July 2009. We have requested a further reps meeting on the 30th July 2009 to discuss any progress made.

If we are unable to reach a negotiated settlement we will be forced to continue with the industrial action which you supported so well last month. This will of course be a last resort as LUL have now got weeks to come to the table and discuss a sensible resolution to the dispute with us. I reiterate that we never ask you to take action lightly and that your no compulsory redundancy deal is your guarantee of a job in this time of recession.

Branch Meeting

Thursday August 4th
16:00 Hours
Upstairs in the Clachan
Kingly Street
near Oxford Circus tube