

BakerlooNews

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

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Round one to RMT and TSSA!



Stations and trains staff join forces on the picket line at Queens Park

The magnificent strike supported by Bakerloo RMT and TSSA members alike showed London Underground that we mean business in our defence of jobs and safety. The Bakerloo Branch would also like to salute our friends and colleagues in ASLEF, who respected our picket lines and showed that they too, understand the importance of this dispute for the future of the Underground.

In the run up to the strike LU's black propaganda department were touting in the media that only 15% of the workforce supported the strike. The fact that the LU workforce stayed away en masse proves otherwise. In a statement to the press, General Secretary Bob Crow paid tribute to the support from RMT and TSSA members and said

"members have shown through their solid support for this week's strike action, and the indefinite overtime ban, that they will not sit idly by while staffing levels are hacked to the bone and management turn the tube system into a death trap through their dash for cuts."

LU managers attempted to indoctrinate staff through their magazines, bulletins and "wasting time" mind numbing sessions that the job cuts are necessary and inevitable. The workers on LU replied in their thousands that they are not.

The strike across the combine had a devastating impact on the tube. The few and infrequent services that did run on the Bakerloo Line offered little by way of "a world class tube service."

Management were shocked at the

response from station staff particularly and were seriously stretched attempting to keep the façade that the service was "running as normal." The LU black propaganda and disinformation machine was trying to say that there were only minor delays on the Bakerloo Line. But during the morning peak, 9 stations were closed out of 13 between Elephant & Castle and Queens Park! And nothing between Harrow and Wealdstone and Queen's Park. Indeed, there were 5 stations in a row closed due to no staff availability at times on the Bakerloo in the middle of the rush hour. As one of the pickets at Queens Park said "it's amazing how safety goes out of the window on strike days just to say a service is still running - drivers let-
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ting customers out at closed stations, scab managers working double shifts, and now the Marylebone to Queens Park Express: 'this is Marylebone, next stop Queens Park!'

Yes you read correctly, "professional drivers and control room staff" were running in passenger service non stopping between Marylebone and Queens Park. Procedures normally dictate the line is closed as a consequence of this. Indeed the magic number is 3 stations. Apparently strike days allow for new and dangerous protocols to be implemented. Were the drivers who crossed picket lines told prior to picking up, that their safety was being compromised? Or was that part of the bargain, cross the line and ignore all safety procedures. These drivers placed themselves at risk of opening the doors to let passengers off at closed, empty stations. They also put themselves at risk running trains with no assurance on staffing levels and a lax regard for normal safe operation of

the service. Very safe! Very professional! Even the most blinkered one eyed management stooge can see this is a recipe for disaster.

On the stations, safety procedures were thrown out as well. At Elephant & Castle 6 vital security checks were not carried out from 09:00 hours on the strike day. This from the GSM and a senior HR Manager who was supposed to be a DSM on the day in charge of the station! If a Station Supervisor failed to carry out such checks a CDI would be in the offing.

Furthermore at the commencement of the strike and as Station Supervisors were booking off they were instructed by the GSM to hand over keys to security guards who had no valid licences to be on the station - including such things as entry permits or fire training. This is in breach of LU's Safety Certificate. These unlicensed and untrained security guards then proceeded to book on contractors into the stations including Charing Cross station without properly checking the licences of the contractors;



Picketing the Elephant & Castle

another breach of LU's Safety Certificate.

The RMT has raised the above breaches of safety with the railway inspectors.

Our dispute with LU continues. All RMT, TSSA and ASLEF members who supported the union's action can be proud that we are striking for jobs and safety. Victory to the strikers!

'Carry on up the Bakerloo!'



If LU had asked the makers of the 'carry on' films to run the Bakerloo Line during the last strike they would have made a better job of it than the ham fisted attempt that LU management and 'staff' who crossed picket lines managed to.

This was more of a carry on movie than a safe system of work expected by London's travelling public and our safety regulators.

LU seems to think they have a safety amnesty during times of industrial action. They appear hell bent on running a service at all costs as a result they are playing Russian Roulette with passengers safety.

Cracks started to appear late on Monday night when instead of qualified staff, ie, Station Supervisors, booking contractors on to work on the stations,

tracks etc... LU suddenly realised they were all on strike. No problem to LU and their laissez faire attitude to safety: they just got unqualified, untrained agency staff to plug the gap. Essential safety controls brought in to stop terrorists, unqualified contractors and any Tom, Dick or Harry who fancied a wander round the Underground, went right out the window!

To give you flavour of the safety breaches on the line, the RMT have had reports of: failures to carry out pre-start of traffic safety checks on vital safety equipment such as, OPO monitors, main fire Control Panels, public address checks, lift checks before putting into service, station security checks were not done, staff working with no lift licences, and many, many more! And most of these breaches done by a senior HR manager seconded as a DSM. What training are they giving these people? Or is the operational running of the railway just too difficult to grasp by these types parachuted in from 55 Broadway?

When the Bakerloo management team, Sid James, Hattie Jacques and Kenneth Williams finally did manage to run a service things only got worse!

There were that many stations closed on the line that the drivers who did cross

the picket lines appeared to have difficulties realising which stations were open and which were closed. There were numerous incidents of 'professional' drivers opening the doors at closed stations. It seems we had passengers wandering all over the place trying to get out of closed stations. One driver actually found a passenger wandering lonely as a cloud on the platform at Regents Park station. LU admit that they have 'no idea' how they got there. That's about right!

The Bakerloo's claim to be running a service between Queen's Park and Elephant is stretching the truth to the limit; we all know that they were running a Marylebone to Queen's Park express. There weren't enough staff to open these stations safely (presumably they had run out of agency staff and punters off the street to do the job) yet they seem to think it is safe to run trains through these stations? Thank the stars that there wasn't a serious incident because the station babysitter and the driver would have been left to deal with the aftermath: CDI or up in front of the beak.

The RMT are busy going through all the available paperwork and will make the necessary representations to the powers that be.