



PTI Fiasco

How confident are you in your OPO equipment?

A discussion at the recent Train's Health and Safety Council meeting confirmed what your *RMT Safety Reps* have suspected for a long time: our OPO equipment is not as safe as it should be! While SPADs seem to have a bottomless pit of money thrown at them, OPO safety has fallen by the wayside.

The problem with the current OPO system is that we just cannot be sure that the cameras are aligned and that even when they are aligned if we can fully see every door on the train. This is an unacceptable state of affairs!

Walk tests by local safety reps have highlighted a number of areas where cameras are out of alignment. Despite taking our evidence to management and voicing our concerns LU's own safety experts insisted there was no problem.

A subsequent Infracos document obtained by the *RMT Safety Council* contradicted that view: *it was noted that across the combine there was almost 100 locations with cameras out of alignment and therefore affecting the driver's view of the PTI.*

LU claimed the cause of this misalignment was contractors knocking the cameras with tower scaffolding or over exuberant passengers. As far as the RMT are concerned this just highlights that the systems safety checks in place were just not robust enough.

The checks that Station Supervisors undertake in the morning before start of traffic should surely highlight any misaligned cameras? What about the 'cone test' I hear you ask? The trouble with the 'cone test' is that the new Rule Book is too *wishy washy*: Rule Book 8, Section 7, page 24 suggests that the 'cone test' is now an optional extra. How

can that be? The PTI is LU's largest source of risk yet systems safety checks for OPO are now deemed an optional extra.



OPO on the Underground is in a sorry state!

But the problem gets worse! Even with the cone test we would not be able to confirm that we could fully see every part of every door on the train. Recent reports of drivers observing that OPO cameras were fully aligned yet they could still not see all the doors are becoming more frequent.

The only way to guarantee the OPO equipment is doing what it should be doing can only be done by someone walking the length of the platform, daily, with a train berthed. If this is what's required to ensure the safety of the PTI then this is what the RMT will be pushing for.

Council Reps will continue to raise this issue and in the meantime drivers are reminded that this system is not as safe as some would have you believe.

RMT Ballot for Strike Action

Ballot papers will be arriving this week for all RMT members as we try to secure a decent pay rise, fight job cuts and put an end to bullying by managers.

Where as the pay has no obvious safety implications for drivers the other two items clearly have: the loss of 970 so called "back room staff" as part of an operational cost review will impact of the safe running of our railway. With large numbers of engineering and safety jobs being slashed LU will soon be on the slippery slope that led to accidents galore on the old BR. It is a disgrace that at a time when billions of pounds are being found to subsidise the banks, London's railway infrastructure and services are being cut back to unsafe levels.

Harrasement by managers and failure to follow their own procedures has a more immediate impact on drivers: we have the right to come to work and be treated with dignity.

All to often these days drivers are falling foul of LU's punitive attendance at work procedures, even when they do apply them to the letter of the law. Driving trains is a stressful occupation and our members need to be focused on the job in hand, i, e, the safety of the thousand odd passengers that we are responsible for.

If we have to work with the 'sword of Damocles' hanging over us and wondering which loop-hole will be exploited to punish us next, this will impact on our performance and safety levels.

We demand to be treated with dignity and that LU let us concentrate on doing the job at hand.

We carry more passengers than ever; we run more train miles than ever; our customers think we are more professional ever. Perhaps it's time that management acknowledged these facts!

Connect Radio

Regular meetings with management are again taking place to discuss Connect Radio concerns.

If you notice any problems with the system on your line it is important that you report them to your local safety rep ASAP.

We are still experiencing all the usual problems: trouble logging in and out, calls stacked for too long, losing signal moving from cell to cell etc...

Plans are afoot to introduce Phase 2 of Connect on SSR. It appears that management are so worried about the scale of this project they want to stagger implementation. More about that in the next newsletter.

More training please, less corporate Bullt***

Anyone how has done their '5-day-block' recently (or is that 4?) will have noticed that the emphasis appears to be less on under-pinning the knowledge required to do our jobs safely and more to do with American style corporate nonsense.



LU Training Aid circa 21st Century

Where as we acknowledge that the train set table tops are an improvement, we just don't get enough of that. The role play incorporated in these exercises help to underpin our existing knowledge and practise doing seldom used procedures. The trouble is that on some lines they seem to spend the whole time doing 'wrong direction moves'. When was the last time you had to do one of them?

Surely it would be more useful to practise the bread and butter procedures as well?

The THSC will also provide an Easter egg to any driver who has been able to use 'diversity training' to improve their job performance.

The least said about 'hazard perception' the better. We are not children!

RMT Council members have asked that we be more fully involved with training content for next year to push for the type of meaningful training that drivers want. Assurances have been given by management that our concerns will be taken on board, but to be honest, I think we have heard that one before!

Contact the Safety Council
trainsafetycouncil@rmtlondoncalling.org.uk
Jim McDaid – 07834 117378
Garry Houghton – 07834448956
Dave Rayfield – 07753 878933

trainsafetycouncil@rmtlondoncalling.org.uk