



London Calling

News and views from RMT's London Transport Regional Council

www.rmtlondoncalling.org.uk

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Support Alstom Workers' Fight Against Real-Terms Pay Cut

The 24-hour strike by Alstom maintenance staff on the Jubilee and Northern Lines on Sunday 5 September was rock solid. Pickets were out in force at all three Alstom tube maintenance depots. RMT received reports of disruption and delays to southbound Northern Line services on the northern section of the Edgware branch during the morning peak.

RMT General Secretary Bob Crow said: "Our members are sending out a clear signal that they are not prepared to see their living standards eroded by pitiful, sub-inflation pay offers that are frankly insulting.

"Alstom is a wealthy company and can easily afford a decent pay increase for the staff at the sharp end of its operations. RMT members are determined to secure that fair deal and are 100% unified across

all depots in support for the industrial action campaign that kicked off last night."

An RMT member on Alstom writes ... "Alstom is a multinational engineering company that was invited to supply and then maintain trains on the London Underground Northern and Jubilee Lines under that last Tory government. It was one of the first private companies in the Underground and may be the last one. Conditions in Alstom have declined massively in the past year, with the employer using severe disciplinary methods against staff for increasingly minor offences.

"Workers for Alstom on both lines have been forced to take action after the company responded to Tory transport cuts by trying to keep wages down. Engineering workers at Alstom are facing

a 2% pay deal that lags behind the 4.2% that they would have got under any of the other employers. RMT members returned a resounding vote for strike action and action short of a strike and on the 5th of September delivered 24 hours of solid strike action. Despite the company's attempts to organise a scab operation by offering inexperienced managers and office staff double time, full Monday service was not achieved.

"Alstom is still not back at the negotiating table, but the workforce has proved that it can act and must do so again. In the meantime, people who want to support the Alstom workers need to get the word out to Northern and Jubilee Line drivers that Alstom took big risks using barely-prepared strike-breakers to do train prepping."

Overtime Ban Keeps Up Pressure on LU

Arsenal, Liverpool Street, Lambeth North, Cannon Street, Charing Cross, Regent's Park ... These are all stations which have been forced to close because RMT and TSSA members are refusing to do overtime in protest at London Underground's proposed job cuts. We expect that by the time you read this, a lot more stations will have joined this list.

At other stations, London Underground is losing revenue as gatelines are left open and ticket offices closed, with passengers being allowed to travel without paying. Other stations are staying open only because managers are doing Supervisor or even CSA duties. London Underground can not sustain this way of working, and we will soon see

even more stations close.

Our overtime ban is designed to make London Underground face the consequences of its understaffing. In preparation for cutting 800 jobs, LU has already left several hundred stations jobs vacant and until now, has relied on overtime to cover enough of the uncovered duties to keep the stations open.

RMT General Secretary Bob Crow said: "The overtime ban is of vital importance in this dispute. With the already insufficient staffing levels the system essentially can't function properly without staff volunteering for overtime. I urge members to continue to refuse overtime to keep up the pressure on management to meet our demands."



Picketing and leafleting the public at Finsbury Park

Do not volunteer for any overtime, rest day working, or working through your meal relief (DMR).

John McDonnell MP has tabled the following Early Day Motion in Parliament with a number of other MPs: -

STAFFING ON LONDON UNDERGROUND

That this House pays tribute to the members of the Rail Maritime and Transport and the Transport Salaries Staff Association unions who as a last resort are sacrificing pay and taking industrial action to put safety first on the London Underground; notes the action is against proposals by the Mayor of London to shed, in contradiction of his manifesto promise, 800 ticket office and gateline jobs on London Underground; is deeply concerned that the cuts will adversely affect the opening times of 245 ticket offices right across the tube network and drastically cut the number of staff at stations and on platforms which will damage passenger services, discriminate against those who have a disability and make passengers feel less safe; welcomes the fact that a broad range of organisations including disabled and passenger groups and a majority of Members of the London Assembly are opposed to the cuts; and urges the Mayor of London to review his decision and open negotiations with the unions as a matter of urgency to ensure a fair negotiated settlement to the dispute which delivers safe staffing levels across the London Underground network.



Concerned about breaches of safety during our industrial action?

Please email your report to safety@rmtlondoncalling.org.uk

Dear RMT ...

I had a terrible journey today [Tuesday 7 Sept!] but nothing compared to how it would be every day with the cuts promised. And certainly nothing to how you guys are being treated.

You have this commuter's support.

Keep up the fight!

Sean Robinson

Wholehearted support to everyone striking in defence of services, safety and jobs. Thanks for the leaflet today which I picked up outside Camden.

Alison Cushing

As a regular user of London Underground I fully appreciate the concerns of the union about safety and

staffing cuts. Travel would be much affected by lack of staff. My own daughter was so nearly caught up on that fateful day of the bombing but was advised by the staff to go home. The presence of station staff is essential to safety but also makes travel on the Underground so much more endurable.

Kathy Adams

As a regular tube user I fully support the staff in their struggle against these crazy job cuts. None of us want to feel unsafe in our own tube stations, nor see a return to the station fires of the 70s and 80s.

Greg Brown

All the best to the RMT strikers. We are both tube users and support you and your cause wholeheartedly. Up the workers - power to the union.

Jodie Ward & Catherine Wardle, Librarians and UNISON

All power to you in your fight! Ignore the cynics and backbiters, your fight is just and principled and we need more like you!

Michael Gardiner, LSHTM / UCU rep

More messages of support at: www.rmtlondoncalling.org.uk/supportus

Royal Mail: Not For Sale!



Vince Cable has announced that the ConDem government is to sell off the Post Office - despite the fact that Post Office workers, and the big majority of the public oppose this.

Janine Booth, RMT Regional Secretary, said: "When this disastrous policy was floated by the last government a couple of years ago, our Regional Council unanimously passed a resolution condemning it. We know from the experience of PPP, and from mainline rail privatisation, that selling off public services only benefits private-sector fat cats. Working conditions, job security and the service itself always suffer.

"RMT will give our full support to our fellow trade unionists in the CWU as they fight this privatisation."



A Service Control RMT member writes:

Why Service Control Staff Support the Fight Against Job Cuts

1. When station staff are taken away, their responsibilities have to go somewhere and a lot of them are being heaped onto controllers. We are being given increasing responsibility for operational procedures such as wrong direction movements and we already carry a huge responsibility (and therefore potential for cock-up) and need more like we need holes in our heads.
2. The general climate of fear has certainly not passed Service Control by, a controller has been sacked out of our room this year for something which a couple of years ago would have got him reduced in grade for a year at the very worst.
3. Maintenance cuts mean that we're firefighting more failures and that's only likely to get worse. On the District, they struggle at the moment to provide cover for all the callpoint train technicians and to fix enough trains to provide a full service for the weekday peaks. All of this just adds more pressure to controllers and makes our job more difficult.
4. In our room we also are running effectively two controllers light so we're suffering from the same refusal to fill vacancies as elsewhere.