



## LU Plans To Remove Tunnel Telephone Wires



Late last year, management presented your reps with a Change Assurance Plan (CAP) to remove all Tunnel Telephone (TT) and the TT wires systems commencing April this year. Your Safety Council reps have opposed this change from the off and referred the matter to Director's level for further discussion there. That meeting has now taken place, and despite the Safety Council's of both trains unions arguing strongly against the removal, LU have informed us that they intend to plough ahead regardless.

### Rationale

The rationale behind LU's decision to remove this system stems from the reliability of the Connect Radio and its use of having traction current discharged effectively. The fact the TT wires are seldom

used was another driver; indeed they have not been used in the past five years as a method to discharge traction current. LU also claims that system has become prone to degradation and that wire breakages have caused significant disruption.

Tellingly, LU goes on to claim that *'there is no business justification to continue supporting two systems'*.

The RMT's rationale for wanting to keep the system operational is based purely on safety.

It makes no sense from a safety perspective to get rid of a system that is 98% reliable by LU's own figures. Yes it is seldom used but it is a back up system and a reliable and effective one at that.

With the SPTs now gone and the TT wires soon to follow suit, LU would appear to have put all their eggs in the one Connect basket. The only other available method for drivers to discharge traction current in an emergency, when there is no working train radio, is to lay a SCD on

live track. Strange how the people drafting and implementing these changes seem to think this is a standard operation! It's not too long ago that drivers were shown a video whilst doing CDP of a SCD being laid on live track on the Piccadilly line and the subsequent mini explosion that followed.

### Working live

The RMT are still not convinced that this action is fully compliant with the Electricity at Work Regs: this states that drivers 'working live', which this action undoubtedly is, should be issued with specialist gloves and eye wear and should avoid lone working. This is an avenue of investigation that we are still perusing.

We agree that it will be an unlikely, and extremely unlucky, scenario where a driver has lost train radio and also needs current off in an emergency, but not impossible. LU has appeared to acknowledge that this action is optional. We will be pushing for this to explicitly communicated to drivers in any further communications of the change.

## RMT complain to ORR over station strike train service



Train's Safety Council Reps have lodged a formal complaint with the ORR regarding the service that some lines choose to operate on the day of the industrial action by station staff in early January.

As you will remember, LU was running an 'express service' that ran, in passenger service, through multiple closed stations. Many of our current rules require the driver to go to the next station to seek assistance. Rules such as PEA operated and loss of door closed visual are just two such examples.

The RMT raised concerns with LU that there had been no review of risk assessments in relation to running this very different kind of service. Bizarrely, LU argued that there had been no change to way we work and there was no need for a further review of the risks. LU also claimed that all risks were covered in the generic Change Assurance Plan they carried out for this dispute. We do not believe this to be the case. Your Reps therefor submitted our complaint to the ORR in that we believe LU had breached Section 3 (3) of the Management of Health and

safety Regs, in relation to review of risk assessments. Initial feed back from the ORR has been positive in so far as they have stated, 'that we may have a point.' This investigation is ongoing and we will obviously keep you all updated.

### A HOT Review

At a recent meeting with management we were told of plans to review the HOT protocol following a request from the department for Transport.

This was regarding a new trial with changes to covert testing using a bag that will be (zipped) closed.

During the talks it was proposed that we have all been trained in opening suspect items. We disagreed and don't believe that we have ever been trained with or should be interfering with suspicious items during applying the HOT protocol.

The North Greenwich incident highlighted various deficiencies in our training and also in management's response and thankfully nobody was hurt. It also shows the fact that the HOT procedure is still relevant and when used correctly could save lives.

Unfortunately we will always have an issue of something that is 'Obvious' or 'Typical'

which seems always to be the fall-back to assume an item is lost property.

This issue is far from resolved. We will keep you updated.

### Peckham Spring

LU's long standing association with Eden Springs, our chilled drinking water supplier, has come to an end. Various rumours are doing the rounds as to why this may have happened.

Whatever the reasons, LU has a responsibility to provide our drivers with clean drinking water. This a basic human need. To be fair, LU have given assurances that where Eden Springs do remove water points then alternative drinking water sources will be provided.

As we all know to well though, these things have a habit of going pear shaped. Should you become aware of water points disappearing and no alternative being provided then raise with your local RMT Safety Rep ASAP, who will raise the matter with the Train's Safety Council.



## Get in touch

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