



# London Calling

The Newsletter of the London transport Regional Council

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News & Views from RMT's London Transport Regional Council November 2013

## LU Attacks on All Functions Mount Up Build United Action to Defend Jobs, Safety & Conditions

In this edition of London Calling you can read about the threats facing members in many of the different functions within our region.

The report, re-printed from **Stations** Functional News, shows the contempt that LU have shown towards their own staff as they continue to refuse to talk to us about their planned cuts. Since this report was first published LU has written to RMT and stated their intention to impose mobile supervision on the Wembley central group and parts of the Hammersmith Group.

We made it clear, at ACAS talks, that this issue was a red line for RMT and that any attempt to impose LU's plans would bring us into dispute with the company. We must now start to discuss what action we believe RMT should take to force LU into a re-think.

At the same time our members in **Fleet** are considering whether to take action over LU's attempts to cut jobs by reducing maintenance schedules and LU **Engineering** reps are being asked to consult on a wholesale reorganisation of the engineering grades.

Like LU, **TfL** is seeking to make massive cuts and this threatens many jobs across London's transport infrastructure. Contactors too are fighting many attacks on pay and conditions including our members in **cleaning and catering** grades.

Even a limited introduction of driverless trains could be used by LU to attack **Train Operators'** pay and conditions. We have already faced attempts to establish cross line working and now LU is reneging on its agreement with RMT and Aslef to visually inspect trains before going into sidings. Effective industrial action forced LU into this agreement in the first place and we must fight again, for a permanent solution that defends jobs and prevents passengers from being carried into sidings and depots. Now Piccadilly line drivers could be taking strike action over local management abuses.

On top of all of this LU now wants to bring in a new, even worse, **disciplinary policy** for all grades.

**All grades are likely to be pushed into dispute over the coming months. Whether LU makes its long awaited announcement of job cuts this month or not we all know that they intend to push ahead with their plans. But we can stop them. RMT members, across functions and grades, must stand united and resist job cuts. We will not wait for LU/TfL to pick us off grade by grade, function by function. We must fight together and take decisive, effective coordinated strike action, when necessary, to win.**

John Reid, LTRC Secretary



# Isolated PEDs on JLE – If it ain't broke don't fix it!

Why replace a safe system with a high risk dangerous one? The RMT is very concerned by the dangerous plans by management on the Jubilee Line to alter our procedure for isolating a defective Platform Edge Door. We believe a member of staff must be positioned by an isolated platform edge door is essential to maintaining a safe operation.

Station staff are the eyes and ears for drivers in these situations, and their absence can lead to dangerous situations and possible injuries - most notably to children, visually impaired people and mobility impaired people.

Initial trials which were observed by the presence of all three unions have already proven the procedure to be unworkable and unsafe.

The two significant incidents detailed below, highlight the folly in respect to these PED isolation trials. One of these incidents was foreseeable and was used as an example by our safety council of what we knew would, and indeed did happen. The second and more serious incident was more dangerous than anything that could be expected. We believe that these trials should immediately cease based on what was witnessed during these incidents. We don't take this decision lightly but what happened at Canary Wharf Stn. was dangerous and can't be allowed to happen again. As stated previously LU have introduced a 'high risk' to an already ALARP (as low as reasonably practical) procedure.

Jubilee train arrived at Canary Wharf station. On board this train was a VIP with his dog. When train doors opened the VIP was standing by the PED doors that had been taken out of service for the purpose of this trial preventing him from alighting from the train. It can only be assumed that his dog refused to move, otherwise he would have walked into a closed PED. Luckily this PED was being manned by a member of station staff at the time who was able to run to an opened PED, alert and inform the VIP as to what was happening and escort the VIP and his dog off the train.

Had the member of staff not been on the platform then it is highly likely this VIP would have been over carried to the next station, in this case North Greenwich, which has a completely different station layout and the train doors opening on the opposite side to Canary Wharf. This could be highly disorientating to a VIP who may be used to a route/destination and then find themselves at a completely different, unfamiliar location. Not exactly the world class service we are striving for.

The second incident occurred about 40 minutes later, again on the E/B but this time the PED removed from passenger service was not manned by a member of station staff, which would be the case if this procedure was to be implemented.

On board the train were two adults, with two small children, aged approx. 2 - 5. When the train stopped



these customers were opposite the doors that had been removed from service for the purpose of this trial. The male was sitting down and the female was standing by the double doors on the track side wall side of the carriage. She appeared to be reading the posters on the trackside wall.

One of the small children then noticed the train doors were open and walked to open doors. The PED being in the closed position prevented him from alighting from the train. He then began to push the 'door open' button inside the train. He was then joined by the smaller child and he looked down in the direction of the gap between the train and the platform. He then started to pull and push the inside of the PED. Some of the Repls. who witnessed this

became very alarmed and thinking the T/O may close the train doors started to make their way to the train to alert the adults of the danger. As they did so the male adult recognised the seriousness of the situation and pulled the small children away from the PED/train doors. After this incident a child's finger marks could be clearly seen on the glass on the inside of the PED. Do we really need to go into the scenario of what would have happened had one of these small children managed to squeeze between the train and the PED barrier? This is not as unrealistic as you think; remember Queens Pk. and the youth who climbed over the barriers in the siding?

The possibilities of incidents similar to this occurring are endless, e.g. large parties of schoolchildren boarding one carriage through all doors and not being able to alight through all doors etc.

The position of the SHSC is very clear. From a Safety point of view these trials are dangerous, unsafe and must cease immediately. The RMT are absolutely determined to maintain the principal of ALARP. The removal of a very safe procedure to be replaced by a flawed and high risk alternative is something this union is not prepared to sit idly by and allow to be introduced without a fight.

**STOP PRESS: LUL have announced the roll out of this unsafe practice across Jubilee line stations with PEDs. RMT will now consider further action.**

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**RMT Stations Health & Safety Council**

# LU Proposes a New Disciplinary Policy that Attacks Worker's Rights

The Regional Organiser and I have been advised of a serious threat to our working conditions that affects all operational grades; LU is attempting to introduce a draconian new Discipline at Work policy.

**John Reid, LTRC Secretary**

In brief:

- **Single disciplinary process: abolition of LDI/CDI split;**
- **Abolition of the CDI 'panel';**
- **Warnings to start from date of hearing;**
- **Worse rights of representation at fact finds;**
- **Fact Find manager present at hearing as well – no TU right to cross examine;**



LU wants to make it even easier to Sack Workers who they want to get rid of. RMT will always fight to win reinstatement of victimised members like Eamonn and Arywn above.

In more detail:

The right to representation at fact finds. Hopeless. The new procedure would take us backwards. It attempts to 'clarify' the circumstances under which you will be allowed a rep at a fact find, i.e., it says you are 'suspended from work with pay in advance of the fact find'; this means you won't be entitled to a rep if you're 'stood down from normal duties' but not suspended with full pay. So if an SS or SAMF was shifted to CSA duties they would not be entitled to a rep at a fact find, whereas you are at present. Likewise if a CSA was moved to another location ahead of a fact find – no rep. Lately management have been playing games claiming staff are 'stood down at home' and how it's not the same as being suspended on full pay; it's nonsense, but you'd lose the right to a rep

'Gross misconduct' & 'safety-related' cases: the proposal is that one centurion manager only will hear the disciplinary case, (most likely from an adjacent group), accompanied by a PMA whose role, (hitherto contested by RMT), would be ce-

mented by this proposal. In other words, you'd still be up against two centurions, but with even less chance of splitting them, and management trying to maintain the fiction that the PMA 'isn't part of the decision-making process'.

For 'misconduct' cases: These would be done by your own employing manager (providing s/he hasn't been involved – ha ha ha) or even a Duty Manager.

For attendance matters: these would be done by Duty Managers.

**Warnings: these would be from the date of the issuing of the sanction!** You could therefore be stood down 6/9 months, (not uncommon) and walk away on day one of a 12 month written/final written warning. There's absolutely no incentive for management to investigate things in a timely manner under these proposals.

Attendance warnings would remain as at present, from the date of the last breach.

Investigating manager attendance at disciplinary hearings: this is one of the most dangerous of the new proposals. LU wants the right to have the investigating manager available at the disciplinary hearing to chip in, and **does not want our side to have the right to cross examine!** RMT is firmly opposed to the investigating manager being there, but the idea that we couldn't cross examine shows how out of control LU is.

These are the headline proposals. Taken together with management's other attacks on ticket offices, station access procedure, OPO checks, SS role, etc, it's clear we need to have our act together to link all these issues into one big fight rather than lots of little issues.

## Sack the Agencies - Not the Workers

As this edition of London Calling was going to press we learned that The RMT Council of Executives has voted to ballot members for strike action over casualisation and the treatment of RMT members, known as the J33.

London calling urges all members to vote YES in the ballot.

Further info will be provided in leaflets and material dealing with this issue ASAP.



## Fleet Workers Fight Tube Bosses' Plan To Cut Train Maintenance And Jobs

*The RMT Council of Executives has taken the following decision:*

We note the resolution from our LU Fleet branch, and share its disgust at London Underground Ltd management's attacks on the jobs and working conditions of our fleet maintenance members.

We firmly oppose the company's plans to reduce maintenance frequencies, cut jobs and replace skilled staff with unreliable automated processes. We further believe that these attacks endanger the safety of passengers and of Underground workers. Trains will be less safe and failures more frequent; and it is likely that a company that proposes that its trains be prepared for service automatically will then move on to proposing that they be driven automatically.

Accordingly, we instruct the General Secretary to:

- immediately ballot all our London Underground Ltd fleet members for strike action and action short of a strike
- send a personal letter to all members being balloted strongly urging them to vote Yes to both questions
- send an rmt mail to London Underground Ltd members in other grades and functions explaining the union's stance on this issue and why it affects them



## RMT Demands 24/7 Supervisor on Every Station No Ticket Office Closures

The issue of mobile Supervisors on the Wembley Central and Hammersmith (at Kew & Gunnersbury) groups moved to ACAS for the most recent talks.

LU has refused to implement the temporary arrangements agreed after a strike in 2008 and has tried to impose a model of mobile supervision.

RMT has taken a clear position on this question. In accordance with LU's published job descriptions and the terms of its safety certificate we demand 24/7 supervisor cover with each supervisor responsible for a single station.

At ACAS RMT reps made it clear to management that we will not accept mobile supervision and we will be in dispute with the company if it goes ahead and imposes

this model on the Wembley Central and Hammersmith Groups.

The talks at ACAS did not refer to the rest of the Underground, management still refuse to discuss their plans for widespread

organisational change. However, the company has declined to deny rumours that the mobile supervisor model will be rolled out across the network.

We are determined to defend the role of supervisors, who are responsible for the safe running of the tube and play an important operational, as well as customer service, role.

This fight is important for all members. Without supervisors on each station CSAs will be left to manage stations alone but will not be paid for taking on this responsibility. The abolition of many supervisory positions will destroy the promotion prospects for thousands of RMT members.

We are now waiting for a written response from LU about their position on the issues on the Wembley Central and Hammersmith groups. In the meantime, LU has agreed that the "Roving Supervisor" positions will not be filled.

*See latest SFC News for more*



**LU explains how 'Roving Supervisors' will respond to incidents during service breakdowns.**

## Arnos Grove Annual Leave Issue Could Lead To Dispute

*The RMT Council of Executives has taken the following decision:*

We note the resolution from our Finsbury Park branch and share its concerns at London Underground Ltd's refusal to honour annual leave commitments and abide by the established procedure. Accordingly, we instruct the General Secretary to write to LUL calling on it to ensure that its local management at Arnos Grove depot grant odd days leave and agree to allow members to carry over and use annual leave accrued from previous years. The letter is also to warn LUL that failure to respond fully to our request will bring our unions into dispute with the company over this issue.

We welcome the cooperation with ASLEF on this matter, and aim to coordinate with ASLEF any ballot and subsequent industrial action that may be necessary.

Reports and developments are to be placed in front of us.



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