

RMT up front



The newsletter for London Underground drivers

Issue 24, December 2012

RMT will not accept LU's proposals to sell annual leave on Boxing Day.

London Underground's proposals to sell annual leave to work on Boxing Day are totally unacceptable to the RMT.

We have fought long and hard for our annual leave arrangements and for train drivers to maximise the amount of quality time away from work. This proposal would drag all train drivers back decades and must therefore be resisted.

RMT believes in running a service over Boxing Day but at a level which allows a reasonable number of train drivers to be booked off and spend time with their friends and family. The service should start later, finish earlier and provide a limited frequency commensurate with need. It is pointless running empty trains for large parts of the day.

LU's proposal also penalises junior drivers by forcing them to take up the slack if there are not enough "volunteers" to work Boxing Day – bear in mind that these drivers have already been pushed from pillar to post due to the consequences of Olympics and Upgrades issues. In short this proposal from LUL would cause division and bad feeling in the depots and we cannot allow our members to be exposed to it.

The RMT is therefore balloting all its driver members for strike action and action short of strike

action.

This decision has been forced on the RMT because London Underground has refused to withdraw the offer. Our members cannot be put in a situation, as they were over the Olympics where a deal was cobbled together with ASLEF and presented as a done deal affecting all train staff. ASLEF sold the framework agreements during the Olympics for a few pieces of silver; we will not allow our members to be presented with a done deal selling our annual leave agreements.

London Underground hates our terms and conditions. They hate our framework agreements and annual leave arrangements. They have made it clear that they want to tear up those agreements in order to bring back overtime working, rest day working, increased driving spells and to reduce our annual leave. To accept these proposals is a huge step in that direction.

The RMT hopes that common sense will prevail and that these proposals are not forced on train drivers. A strike mandate for Boxing day would only be used in these circumstances – as a last resort to protect the long term interests of our members.

Vote YES.
Defend our agreements.

**HANDS
OFF
OUR
ANNUAL
LEAVE**

RMT agrees fault lines affecting driver grade

London Underground is on the back foot about driverless trains, but continues to research possibilities. And it is nibbling away at our rights in order to prepare the ground for future attacks.

LUL is clamping down on discipline and attendance, and moving new drivers around like pawns. It is trying to get C&H drivers to operate S7 trains on the Met line, and to have Instructor Operators train different lines' drivers.

LUL plans to use the new S stock as a pretext for deploying drivers across all the sub-surface lines, and would like to develop a pool of drivers covering a larger area than just one depot, or even one line. And it wants to do away with physical detrainment.

These seemingly-different attacks point in the same direction: increased automation + deploying drivers over a wider area + regime of fear -> future cuts in jobs and conditions.

RMT is responding with our own demands:

- scrap 'Rainbow'; stop the clampdown
- I/Os to work only on their own lines and only with T/Ops and I/Os on their own lines
- review the 2009 Agreement and the treatment of new drivers
- drivers to work only at one depot on one line
- passengers to be physically detrained by staff from any train going into a sidings or depot
- stop commissioning and research work on driverless trains
- all new train stock to have a driver's cab
- no more cuts in train maintenance frequencies
- stick to the machinery of negotiation

We have drawn our lines and are determined to stop LUL's preparations for attacks on jobs and conditions rather than wait for them to come.

Thrill rides on the Metropolitan line

Ever been pulled by an over excited manager, holding their little gun, telling you that you have exceeded the speed limit by a couple of miles per hour and that due to your unsafe performance you will need to be disciplined or monitored?

Well it would appear that the Metropolitan line may be the place for you! Get your transfer requests in pronto!

Recently the last A stock train ran in passenger service on the Metropolitan line in a very public and well publicised event. As you would expect this was all too exciting a prospect to turn down for the usual assortment of over eager managers and thrill seeking train enthusiasts.

Unfortunately, this toxic mix of over excited managers and the thrill seeker led to this train being driven on the line, which has a line speed of 50mph, at a mind boggling 74mph!!

Indeed rail magazine went on to report this incident thus "saw the speed rise past the normal 50mph. Knowing that this had to be authorised, as there was a number of 'top brass' present, hope of something truly special rose with the speed as people began calling the numbers out. 55mph...60mph...still climbing...big grins on everyone's faces...65mph...just like the old days...70mph...a huge cheer from the carriage D was heard throughout the train...still the speed rose. Finally it peaked, hammering through Dollis Hill at 74mph, before the inevitable hard braking through Neasden for the stop at Wembley Park."

One can assume at this point the author had to put down his pencil and note pad and wipe away the excitement?

The hypocrisy of this event is it appears that the railway can be used as some sort of theme park thrill ride for people who would be the first to castigate any of our members if they were deemed to be working unsafely.

Remember the Metropolitan line thrill ride the next time your manager approaches you with that steely glint in their eye and tells you that you are being disciplined because you crept a few mph above the speed limit.

What does PTI actually mean? *Platform Train Interface or Prison Time Inside?*

We have all read the recent headlines on the guard from the St James Street incident, if not we will remind you, a Guard got 5 years in prison for not observing the PTI properly!

The guard carried the whole of the blame for the incident even though Mersey Rail "understood" the short cuts being taken by guards to keep trains on time and did nothing to stop it (after the incident Mersey Rail stopped the short cuts and had wholesale late running and continue to have late running). Even after a similar incident for Mersey rail at Ainsdale in 2004 where the HMRI pointed out that the guards panel was not in the right place or that the open/close buttons could not be told apart without looking, Mersey Rail made no changes.

This incident confirms why the Union has taken a strong stance on unsafe procedures such as OSN 101 and the re-recategorisation of platforms who's very essence is to trade off robust safety procedures for time saving procedures and cutting delays to the service. As this case proves you have to be very certain that it is safe to proceed and use all the information available including getting station staff to assist with the despatch as one split second decision can lead to the loss of life and potentially putting you in prison. The RMT will continue to campaign against and resist unsafe procedures being imposed on you and you should defend yourself by supporting your union's stance.

This incident also confirms why your right to refuse to work on grounds of health and safety is so important and why you should stand up to bullying managers.

So when your manager asks why you were running late or makes that big statement that London Underground will take the "CORPORATE RISK" just think of St James Street station and how little Mersey Rail were to blame. If you're running late or about to finish and some fools playing around with the doors TAKE YOUR TIME, because the moral of this story is; take your time or the judge will "take your time from you!"