

RMT up front



The newsletter for London Underground drivers

Issue 27, July 2013

Proposed Boxing Day bonus and changes to TOPRA RMT demands improvements to deal

The proposed arrangements for Boxing Day payments negotiated between London Underground and ASLEF behind closed doors fall short of RMT's aspirations. Following a meeting with all RMT drivers' reps, the union has written to LU demanding further talks to improve the deal.

We want drivers to get a choice: £350 payment for working Boxing Day or two days extra annual leave; and improvements to TOPRA so that new drivers can get established in the depots more quickly.

TOPRA (Train Operator Resourcing Agreement) sets out the arrangements for how drivers are moved around the combine. RMT has been looking to review and renegotiate it for some time. Drivers have been moved to lines and depots at the drop of a hat to satisfy the demands of 'Upgrades', creating real uncertainty for new drivers. New stock and road tests, and in some cases operational problems, added to the pressure. So RMT welcomed LU's proposals to review TOPRA and looked to discuss with ASLEF to agree a joint negotiating position. Unfortunately, the proposal being consulted on now was drafted in secret

between ASLEF and LU and falls short of our aspirations for all drivers – old and new alike.

At the Trains Functional Council meeting on 3 July, RMT reps were appalled when ASLEF read out a prepared statement which tied proposed amendments to TOPRA entirely around bonus payments for drivers for working Boxing Day. At no point had RMT been made aware that this was to take place or that discussions had been going

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Brian Munro RMT Trains Council

on in the background. ASLEF broke ranks and used LU's willingness to review TOPRA as a means to settle their long-running Boxing Day dispute. RMT's exclusion has meant the proposals on the table are not beneficial for all drivers on the combine. A recent meeting of RMT drivers' reps agreed that we demand further improvements to the deal.

THE ISSUES

The proposed changes to TOPRA will be a huge saving for London Underground, estimated to be over £600,000 - strangely just around the same figure needed to pay the 1400 drivers required to work Boxing Day and receive £350 bonus payments. **continued on page 2>>>**

In numbers

£557,500

LU's estimated cost of paying 1400 drivers £350 to work on Boxing Day

£600,000

The savings London Underground make from the changes to TOPRA

18

The number of months LU and ASLEF wanted new drivers to be barred from getting established at a depot

11

Once driving, the number of months a new driver can apply to the movements committee requesting a move to a depot following RMT insistence.

£350

The proposed Boxing Day Bonus

2

Additional annual leave days the RMT demands is offered as an alternative to receiving a cash payment for working boxing day.

Proposed Boxing Day bonus and changes to TOPRA

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The main saving for LU is barring upgrades drivers from moving to a nominated depot for 18 months and once established in a depot, for 12 months. RMT sees the rationale behind new drivers staying at a depot for set period of time - it allows for stability, the new driver to bed down and get experience and removes the uncertainty of being passed from pillar to post, new stock training and road tests. But the '18-month lock-in' was solely to increase the 'savings' to LU and get the monies nearer the total figure required to justify the Boxing Day payments.

RMT TFC spokesman Brian Munro said, "It is the new upgrade and pool drivers who are 'paying' for these Boxing Day payments. The changes to TOPRA finances the proposed deal. But we need to safeguard new drivers' ability to get established at depots and at the same time maximise the benefit for all drivers working on Boxing Day. That's why ASLEF's deal on the table is just not good enough and RMT is demanding improvements."

An adhoc TFC meeting met to 'finalise' the proposed TOPRA document for consultation on 8 July.

Despite RMT reps being handed the draft document that morning, RMT reps demanded that an additional clause was inserted allowing a project pool driver approaching the top of a waiting list for their nominated depot, near or after 12 months, to make a request to the Movements Committee that the 18-month restriction be waived. This is a significant improvement and will work for new drivers as the matter will be put in the hands of the Movements Committee, made up of TFC RMT and ASLEF reps and management.

Under the current proposals the nomination process for new drivers will change, from being able to nominate three depots to one, unless the first choice nominated depot has a waiting list of over five years in which case the driver can make a second choice nomination. RMT believes this is too restrictive and will disadvantage new drivers. The premise that if your first choice depot is a senior depot and has a long waiting list then a new driver can make a number two choice is sound, but the cut-off point at five years is too long: it should be two years.

RMT'S POSITION ON BOXING DAY AND TOPRA

LU and ASLEF negotiated the Bank Holiday payments of £350 behind closed doors and at no meeting with RMT involvement until the TFC in early July.

Given the cost benefits to LU on these changes to TOPRA, RMT's view is that the offer of a cash payment only for working Boxing Day is not good enough; train operators should be given the opportunity to have either the £350 payment or 2 additional days leave.

Quality time off work is paramount for LU drivers; RMT believes that given drivers are having to forego normal family festivities to come in on Boxing Day then having additional time off work to spend with family and friends is a suitable recompense. This gives all drivers the choice.

New drivers' ability to get established at depots should not be abused simply to settle the long running ASLEF/LU Boxing Day dispute.

RMT will keep all drivers informed of developments.

PICCADILLY LINE says cheerio to 'rainbow'



Rainbows mean a lot of things to different people outside LUL. Folklore has it that there may even be a crock of Gold at the end of them, for some of a certain age it holds memories of a popular kids programme with stars such as Bungle and Zippy. Unfortunately we all know life on LUL is different and at the end of Management's so called 'attendance rainbows' there tends to be nothing but a crock of Sh**.

However when workers are prepared to stand together and stand up to an out of control management it is possible to put an end to injustice. RMT drivers on the Piccadilly Line recently delivered a resounding verdict on the management abuses taking place including the Rainbow Interviews by way of a massive yes vote for strike action.

Resolute negotiations resulted in management agreeing to put a stop to these unagreed interviews until proper discussions take place at a higher level. The Union is now insisting that these interviews stop around the combine as is only right and proper to a company that has fairness and consistency as one of its' core values.

If you are called into one of these interviews contact your RMT rep immediately to avoid a meeting with Bungle or Zippy!

Join RMT

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