

STATIONS & REVENUE COUNCIL NEWS



Bakerloo Line short staffing dispute

RMT station staff on the Bakerloo Line South Group have secured significant concessions from London Underground management after voting overwhelmingly to strike and naming two strike days on 26 December and 14 January.

Management committed to cover all duties, abandoning a previous policy of designating certain duties less critical and leaving them deliberately uncovered if staff were off sick or unavailable. Firm dates were given for the filling of all vacancies on the group, which were generating many of the uncovered duties. And a review of the staffing level across the group was also agreed, via which RMT reps will be pressing the case for additional jobs.

There is no question that these concessions would not have been secured without the ballot result and the threat of strikes. The campaign has sent a clear message to LU bosses that station staff are not prepared to be walked over and will not continue to bear the brunt of short staffing.

As this newsletter goes to press, RMT reps are due to meet LU directors for urgent talks over the issue of uncovered duties across the combine. Referrals have been received from the Level One Committees of the District Centre, District Junction, and Metropolitan North Cover Groups. Members on District Centre have already begun preparations for a strike ballot. If you're facing similar issues on your area, speak to the Functional Council rep responsible for supporting your branch.

Night Tube

The review of Night Tube station staffing conducted throughout 2018 via the Stations Functional Council has now concluded. Unsurprisingly, management refused all of RMT's demands for staffing increases at specific locations. Despite staff assaults and numerous other issues, LU bosses think Night Tube staffing levels are adequate, everywhere!

It's time for Night Tube workers to discuss other means of making gains. RMT Finsbury Park branch has recently elected Night Tube liaisons for all their Night Tube areas to make sure Night Tube workers' concerns are reflected in the branch. Why not propose something similar for your own branch?

Red Tabards

Despite numerous union objections, LU is pressing ahead with its imposition of bright red "Here To Help" tabards, which station staff will be expected to wear while in the ticket hall. These items are a bad joke; when a London TravelWatch survey concluded that passengers felt there weren't enough staff available to assist them, LU decided the issue wasn't one of numbers but of "visibility", and is now forcing us to don these aesthetic abominations which will apparently make us more "visible". What next, one wonders? Personalised spotlights? Neon signage on our name badges? The only real way to make staff "more visible" is to employ more of us.

Two RMT branches, Bakerloo Line and Finsbury Park, have passed motions calling on the union to consider balloting for industrial action to resist the imposition of the tabards. East Ham branch has also passed a motion expressing concerns. Make sure the issue is discussed in your workplace; if colleagues are up for a fight, take a motion to your next branch.

Ballot Forces LUL to Act against Management Bullying at Baker Street

Members at Baker Street have been suffering from a bullying management culture for some time. In the past a member spent months suspended only for the CDI to find evidence had been made up against them. Of course, LUL refused to act against those responsible.

Towards the end of 2018 matters came to a head. A probationer was sacked, a CSS was suspended on outrageous charges and our local rep was subjected to a formal H&B investigation on the flimsiest of pretexts. In addition to this there have been unacceptable practices such as CSSs being booked for CSM night turns even though there is a CSM available on cover. That's bad enough but the Area Manager then refused to pay higher grade working to the CSSs!

Probationer Sacked

Our member was sacked after nearly 11 months in the job. He had been set a 100% attendance target and was sacked when his sickness did not even breach the AAW. At his appeal we made it clear that

RMT will not accept probation targets of 100% attendance and we will not have probation extended from the contractual 9 months to eleven. If you get through 9 months' probation that must be the end of matters. You are then permanent.

Once again senior management declined the opportunity to put things right at the appeal. They upheld the sacking.

CSS Suspended

Another RMT member was suspended after refusing a management instruction to break the rule book. As a punishment for correctly applying the rules our member was instructed to work in breach of the framework agreement on a different area. He was then suspended when he objected. The fact finding notes showed that the Area Manager had told the CSM to suspend our member.

Rep subjected to H&B Investigation

Our local rep at Baker St then had a complaint made against him about the content of a report he made of a Level one meeting. If you make a complaint against a manager you will find that LU routinely refuses to accept it and says you need to raise a grievance instead. It's a fair bet the outcome of the grievance will be that the manager did nothing wrong. But make a complaint on a very minor issue about the content of a union report and not only did LUL take it as a formal harassment and bullying case, they even paid to use an external investigator.

Strike Threat Piles the pressure on..

RMT reps tried to get senior management to intervene and resolve matters quickly. Unfortunately this did not happen. We had no option but to ballot members at Baker St. All grades were balloted including CSMs. The strike was not against CSMs themselves but against the particular incidents of bullying of RMT members and the practices that were overseen by more senior management. Members voted 41 to 3 for strike action but just the ballot starting appears to have focused the minds of senior LUL management.

Our probationer was reinstated with back pay. No action was taken against our CSS at appeal and the H&B investigation against our rep has concluded with no further action.

LUL have also committed to promote a better management culture at Baker St and to audit duty sheets to ensure all HGW by CSSs as CSMs has been paid.

This is a great vindication for standing by each other and refusing to accept management bullying and unfair working practices. SFC reps will now continue to work with our local reps to make sure that things change as promised

Pay award 2019

As you'll know we have to negotiate a pay deal for April this year and SFC reps recently met with the R.O. station safety council reps and L2/T2 reps from all functions to discuss the claim.

From the point of view of stations our demand for CSA2 to be abolished and all members in the grade to be made up to CSA1 is of particular importance. So is the demand for a minimum increase that means the lower paid get a higher percentage rise than the higher paid.

All grades agreed that it is now time to deal with our unsocial shift patterns and fatigue and that means winning our long-standing demand for a 4 day 32 hour week.

To be clear, this is not about condensing current working hours into fewer days with longer shifts. This means a shorter working week with more rest days. This could allow us to address the problems we face with station rosters by giving more rest either side of nights or extreme shifts and eliminating runs of 7 dead early, dead late or night turns.

Your reps will shortly start circulating leaflets on Pay from the SFC and from the LT Regional Council.

Should any member not have access to a local rep, then please call Stations functional rep Neil Cochrane on 07947 784950.

Listed below are the SFC reps and the branches for which each is responsible.

Glen Hart - Finsbury Park, Central West - 07809 471289

Eamonn Lynch - Jubilee South, East Ham, Central East - 07578 769943

Daniel Randall - Bakerloo Line, Piccadilly & District West - 07961 040618

Paul Schindler- Morden & Oval, Camden- 07730 032665

Jared Wood - Neasden, Hammersmith & City - 07796 698747