



Resist Management Attempts to Split Unity of Station Grades

The 'Managing our Stations' training course set out the company's stall in relation to CSMs. They want CSMs booking CSAs for being one minute late. LDI warnings are to be issued almost automatically and always at the full 26 weeks. There should be no cutaways and an overworked CSA who can't service a POM and issue tickets to three passengers at once while dealing with lost property must be put onto an action plan!

Yet the same oppressive management regime is being unleashed by many AMs against the CSMs themselves. RMT cannot allow this to develop. We must fight draconian disciplinary action and unfair pressure at work by remaining united across all station grades. We must not allow a division between CSM/CSS/CSA grades.

One of the unspoken management aims of FFFS was to weaken the unity and cohesion of the grades. LU originally wanted to formally separate the grades as a deliberate tool but a combination of strikes and good negotiating fought it off because we benefit from all grades uniting and all grades acting together.

One of the key ways in which the company has sought to change the management culture on stations is by seeking to micro-manage CSMs and pressurise them to crack down on other grades.

While creating five times as many CSMs as the old DSM grade, LU has also tripled the number of 'centurion' managers who are directing CSMs in every aspect of their work. Most AM's manage fewer staff than the average McDonald's manager and the level of micro-management is bonkers. CSM2-type stations/areas often have, say, 13/14 CSM's and roughly the same number of CSA's. Under the guise of 'saving money', 'efficiency', etc, we've gone from having 37 Station Groups to 96 Areas, and each of the AM's draws a GSM salary. Even senior management have accepted this is a ridiculous position although the proposed reduction of 11 AMs on station areas will do nothing to fix a flawed model.

CSM's in some places are getting a kicking at the moment, and it needs turning around. LU's creation of the CSM grade has created problems all over the combine for CSA's, for CSS's and for CSM's themselves. At the same time as management are actively encouraging CSM's to break the rules, abuse the disciplinary process and dish out warnings left, right and centre. CSM's themselves in a number of areas are the subject of an onslaught of disciplinaries of the most serious type, CDI.

Two issues are causing real aggro. Start/finish times on the one hand, and on the other, what happens when sickness has occurred, i.e., how the 'return to work' is dealt with, and any consequent action that follows.

Firstly, in regards to start/finish times: certain AM's are getting on the CSM's case, telling them that staff deployment has to be 'to time' and 'to the BNS', even though such a rigid way of working is ridiculous. On the one hand the former SS grade has had the grandiose title of 'customer service manager' foisted on him/her, but on the other they are told they can't manage staff in a way that benefits the staff, the customers and ultimately the business. After all, if coverage permits, why on earth wouldn't you let the dead early away 30mins ahead of the BNS - this is probably someone who was in a staff taxi from Purfleet at 02.30 and after about half ten they're in zombie mode anyway.

Likewise, you let a 23.00 away early cos you know you might need a favour next week when they're dead lates and the last eastbound Picc is delayed due to "passenger action" at LSO and the service grinding to a halt.

In regards to sickness and RTW's, and the follow up: CSM's need to take control of the procedures they've been given and make them 'their own', whenever we can.

We all know that with the AAW, SS's were often on the end of refusals to rightfully link their items of sickness, or refusals to grant leave in some domestic situations, etc. Accidents at work were often wrongly chalked up as 'items'. SS's were hassled at home with unwanted phone calls, and bullied back to work while still sick. AM's are now leaning on CSM's to put the same pressure on other grades. Worse, at LDI we know that AM's are saying 'just

issue the 26-week warning and I'll sort anything else out after, if needs be'.

This is a breach of the AAW policy and puts the CSM in a position of acting unreasonably as a 'manager'. Remember, you're in control of the LDI; make the decision yours. Not the AM's. Otherwise it's a farce, a charade, a rubber stamp (see panel on AAW & LDIs).

There's now a chance to apply the policy as fairly as is possible. The Discipline at Work procedure explicitly allows the 'manager' - that's you, to exercise discretion. If you feel discretion fits, use it. Too often in the past the DSM would sit there at an LDI saying, 'sorry, but my hands are tied', meaning they were not prepared to say to the GSM/AM, 'you know what, this doesn't need to be a warning', or doesn't need to be 26 weeks long.

CSM's should not be recreating all the old failings of many DSMs. At a return to work interview if you think the items are linked you go ahead and link 'em. Let the AM and PMA be unhappy. It's the CSMs decision to make. As long as you're fair and consistent, there's nothing to fear.

CSM's will have to do fact findings. So do it properly, do it fairly. Too many former DSM's approached investigations with the view of shaping it up for a disciplinary. Don't go down that road. Instead, investigate it properly, apply your previous experience, and resolve the matter how you see fit. Don't be bullied by the AM into another road.

A lot of staff, SS's among them, have had a poor deal at the hands of People Management Advisors, (PMA's). Even where local management have on occasion wanted to deal with matters 'in house' and not use CDI's or even LDI's, PMA's have intervened and overridden the investigating manager and/or the employing manager. Now is the time to take control; if you're the LDI or investigating manager, you decide what happens. A PMA can advise you but the disciplinary policy is clear that the decision is yours.

There's no way LU will continue with such a top-heavy stations set up forever. The current reduction of 12 AMs is likely to be followed with other cuts as City Hall demands £6bn cuts from TfL's budget. The number of managers will be looked at again. You could be next. If you need the support of the other grades on your station, make sure you can count on it...

Managing Attendance

Area Managers are putting pressure on CSM's to manage non-attendance "more effectively" to meet attendance targets.

CSM's are reporting that some Area Managers are telling them to phone members at home and have a discussion about getting back to work. Some CSM's have even been instructed to phone staff who have been off sick for a matter of days instructing the member of staff to come in for an attendance review with no right to union representation at the meeting.

There is no such requirement for members of staff to attend these meetings. Only when a member of staff is off sick for 28 days or more or is likely to be off for 28 days or more can they be required to come in for a meeting which is usually a Case Conference and held with the AM and not the CSM. Members are entitled to union representation at these meetings.

AMs in some areas are putting pressure on CSMs to contact staff in ways that breach the AAW. Of course, if someone puts in a complaint you can bet there will be no written instruction from the AM and the CSM will be left to carry the can.

RMT is not seeking to instruct any CSM on how to manage any case of non-attendance but your union is asking all CSMs to remember:

- The AAW requires a member who is off sick to "agree" contact arrangements. It is up to you to agree what is reasonable in any particular situation.
- LU Company Council has confirmed that sick pay cannot be stopped just because someone does not attend an informal meeting when off sick. The only formal meetings that should be used to manage ongoing sickness are case conferences.
- A CSM has the right under the LUL Disciplinary policy to use discretion and not issue a warning where informal action might better help and encourage staff.

"In many cases, the right word at the right time and in the right way may be all that is needed and is often a more satisfactory way to help and encourage staff to achieve and maintain standards of conduct/behaviour and performance than immediate disciplinary action. With this in mind, minor cases of misconduct or poor performance will, in the first instance, be best dealt with by informal advice, coaching, training or counselling.

Employees and their managers should not view the discipline at work procedure primarily either as a means of awarding sanctions or as potentially leading to a dismissal. It is an aid to good people management."

LUL Discipline at Work Procedure

Remember, the Disciplinary policy says you should seek to assist an employee to improve their performance. If informal action is the best way to achieve this you have every right not to issue disciplinary sanctions.

Most CSMs did not ask to become managers but if you have been forced to take on this role then insist that you be allowed to do it properly and in accordance with the policies you work under.

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