

Bakerloo News



National Union of Rail, Maritime & Transport Workers

April 2007

Safety First

Detrainment staff provide an essential safety critical service to ensure that trains are free from passengers when entering sidings and depots.

They also expect safe working practises when carrying out their duties.



We will not accept 'lone working'.

The saga of so-called 'lone working' at detrainment locations on the Bakerloo line took a nasty twist at the end of March, when management moved to impose it. This is despite having withdrawn a previous attempt to impose the procedure when the issue was still in the health and safety machinery.

For those members not in the know, it is not about how many people it takes to detrain a train. It is about safe working conditions for LU station staff while working on or about the station environs. At Willesden Junction and Harrow & Wealdstone staffing minimums are two people. The social problems and associated crime levels at stations north of Queen's Park are well documented.

Having a minimum of two staff is hardly a luxury, but it seems it's too much for Bakerloo management. In the Safety Review (SRCC) that management issued, they said that the mitigation (i.e., how they were going to reduce vulnerability of staff to assaults, etc) would be that drivers would observe staff going from/to their safety before taking their train

off the platform.

We are totally opposed to this as it misses the point completely. In between tip-outs, we still work at the station. We still deal with the public. There are plenty of other passengers from plenty of other trains, both LU and Silverlink. The potential for an incident is still very high.

These are also locations that have a high proportion of medically restricted staff. The response of SQE, (Serving Quaint Excuses, er..., Safety, Quality & Environment) was to say that in the event of a collapse at say Willesden Jctn, the member of staff would be okay because there's a tip-out every 20 minutes. Thanks Mr Bootle. Nice to know you care.

But the real disgrace is that even in their own terms, they lied. The mitigations in the SRCC are not in place. Not one driver has been advised of the new procedure. Not one driver knows that in the event of an 'S' board, instead of an 'S2' board showing, they should act in such and such a manner – not surprising really, given that none of it is

agreed, and it's all a fig leaf for staff cuts. We think the mitigations are worthless. Evidently management agree.

Bakerloo RMT branch passed a resolution at the Annual General Meeting in November to say that in the event of this nonsense being imposed on us, we would defend our members industrially if necessary. This we backed up at an emergency branch meeting last week. In truth, the machinery of negotiation isn't exhausted – but our patience is. Now's the time to turn words into action before someone gets hurt. All relevant members of staff are reminded of their right to refuse to work on the grounds of health & safety.

BRANCH MEETING

16:00 hours

**Thursday May 3,
2007**

**Upstairs at The Clachan,
Kingly Street.
Oxford Circus**

ALL GRADES UNITED IN ONE COMMON OBJECT

SAFETY UPDATE

Metronet Industrial Action

All members should be aware, that our members on the Infrastructureside have voted for Industrial Action regarding the transfer of staff to private companies. A three day strike will commence on 18.00 hours on the 15th April until 17.59 on the 18th April. Industrial action by the people responsible for the maintenance of our trains, track and signals will have a serious impact on the safety of the railway.

Below we have outlined some issues that you should be aware of and the mandatory safety requirements that must be met:

Fleet

Management's usual trick is to apply for a concession to their normal safety requirements. This in itself is a disgrace; if these safety requirements are essential on a normal day then nothing should change during industrial action. Management will probably try to say they have a 'concession' but this still does not mean it is safe. Will trains offered for service by the depots be prepared by qualified personnel? Only staff who's licence says 'Offering Trains Fit for Service' will be qualified to do so.

'Call Point' staff should have a licence stating 'Offering Trains back into service.' If they don't, they will not be qualified to do so.

Control Tower staff, responsible for the movement of trains in depots, should hold licences that say, 'Operating Signal Control Equipment.' When asked to shunt trains in or out of a depot ensure that the people responsible for your safety have the correct licence for the job.

Track

Track patrols are mandatory. Any industrial action will seriously affect the safety of the track we operate over. Demand to know when the last time the track you are driving over was properly patrolled and signed off as safe. The onus is on management to prove to you that the track is safe. If you have a doubt, ask to see the paperwork.

It is written in the 'Safety Case' that Competence Assured signalling personnel are available at all times. It is difficult to see how this can be possible when the people responsible for the maintenance of our signals are taking industrial action. Will there be any staff available who will have the required licence to do the job. If they don't, it won't be safe, simple as that.

Again, all staff should report all signal irregularities as soon as possible.

We have seen numerous examples when LU put unqualified managers in unfamiliar locations in an attempt to operate the railway at all costs even if it does contravene their own safety standards. Metronet will be no different. We have the right to operate over safe track using safe trains and using safe signalling. Don't accept anything less.

It is your legal right to refuse to work on the grounds of safety and your union will support 100% should you decide to do so.

If you do have a safety concern and you feel the management are ignoring your concerns, contact your local safety rep.

If you would like more detailed information about fleet, track and signals, the phone numbers of the Metronet Safety Reps are:

Track - Andy Littlechild 07734911427 Fleet- Danny Canavan 07967000681 Signals - Paul Jackson - 07810643681

New Representatives

At the April Branch meeting the following reps were elected:

Detrainment staff - Patricia McDaid -07710 609816
North Group - Tony Rico - 07952 737096

Vacancy at Oxford Circus

There is now a vacancy for an industrial and health & Safety rep at Oxford Circus. The new reps will be elected at the May meeting.



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