



# **Who is for a Pay Cut?**

## **...Well not the RMT!**

**A** packed hall of over 150 RMT reps from around the combine met on 6<sup>th</sup> October to discuss the latest "offer" from LUL, an offer which has not really changed in well over 2 months. Whilst noting our considerable achievements in reducing the deal from a 5-year to a 2-year insult, and a fantastic defence of jobs in the face of a massive onslaught from the Tory (Night) Mayor, a hostile media and open scab mongering from the leadership of our (twisted) sister union, the pay offer remains an effective pay cut. Despite our efforts to build a united front on the issue with the other unions, TSSA seem ready to accept the offer whilst the leadership of ASLEF looks likely to roll over and recommend the deal to their members by way of a referendum. The pay offer this year was spelt out by our negotiators: ***a 40 pence a day rise for drivers and 26 pence for station staff.*** With real prices still escalating and millionaire Tories telling us to tighten our belts, the deal was

unanimously rejected by every rep in the hall. The only debate was what we do next. It was agreed that the only way to improve this offer was to go back to the membership and see whether they are prepared to fight for more. So rather than put an unacceptable deal back to you, the members, and pretend it is good, our leadership have decided to re-ballot you and ask whether you are not only prepared to take strike action but also action short of a strike – a tactic which has never been tried in a pay dispute, but which could be very effective. It is now time to put up or shut up and the branch would encourage each and every one of you to at least use your vote to give a clear message one way or the other to management. We can lie down and take a slap in the face from our bosses or we can stand up and fight for a respectable deal – the kind of deals, indeed, which have been secured for rail workers in other rail companies across the country. The choice is yours, but we say ***VOTE YES*** to fight for a fair and just pay deal!

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### **FIVE ROUNDERS:**

### **BOSSES BACK DOWN**

**B**osses on the Victoria Line have been forced into a u-turn over their recent attempts to impose 5-rounder turns on the line. A standing agreement that there would be no 5-rounder turns on the line because of its hot and noisy environment was ripped up by local management who had hoped to be able to squeeze more work out of their drivers. These plans are now in shreds as a result of drivers' threat to strike on for 24 hours on 5/6<sup>th</sup> October and to work to rule in the week leading up to the

strike. RMT members at Seven Sisters and Brixton depots should be saluted for showing, once again, that united action and solidarity are vital to ensuring that negotiations

achieve results which benefit ordinary members.

Management has now agreed to use pool operators to cover the fifth rounder of a 5-round turn. Further meetings to discuss new

Victoria line rosters for January have taken place and reps have put forward positive suggestions with the threat to impose 5-rounder turns now lifted.

## Goodbye 5 Rounders – Hello Victimisation of Glenroy Watson (again!)

Meanwhile, management seems to have seen the resolution of the 5 rounder issue as a green light to continue their vindictive campaign of harassment and intimidation against Glen Watson, our rep at Seven Sisters depot. Not happy with taking over £4,000 off him in wages for representing our members, attempting to break into his email account and routinely stitching him up over attendance issues, they seem to see now as the right time to send him to a Company Disciplinary Interview (CDI) on trumped up misconduct charges for refusing to take a letter off a DMT who was chasing him around the depot and the platform at Seven Sisters in a scene reminiscent of a Benny Hill sketch! They have been "investigating" this nonsense since March and only now feel that the time is right to use the heavy stick – in the

middle of local and company-wide disputes, what a coincidence, eh?? The CDI is pending and the branch will be keeping a close eye on the outcome, with a ballot for industrial action still active regarding this issue. We also have a mandate to ballot the rest of the branch if this victimisation continues. You have to start asking yourself the question of whether the management team on the line have a problem with black reps and activists as it was not too long ago that they were trying to stitch up our safety rep at the depot, Mark Walters, and trying to send him to CDI for refusing to move a suspect package on a train at Brixton. Meanwhile they have upheld the vicious sacking of **Carl Campbell** who takes his case to **Employment Tribunal at Stratford commencing Monday 26th October** and is claiming unfair dismissal and race discrimination. The case is

due to last the week and anyone wishing to support Carl is welcome to come and observe the proceedings. Meanwhile another black driver at Brixton has recently had a complaint of bullying, with evidence of a breach of the harassment policy on the grounds of a racist comment, upheld against one of the managers at the depot - a manager who was heavily involved in bullying Carl prior to his dismissal. You would think that management would be better occupied in implementing a failsafe mechanism to stop the doors opening on the wrong side, especially considering the increasing frequency of such incidents; yet another of our members is currently stood down for a WSDO incident. But no! They are too busy victimising our reps, sacking our people, ripping down our propaganda and even putting up ASLEF notices encouraging people to scab!

## Management Out of Control

### But Finsbury Park Members say 'Enough is Enough'

Finsbury Park managers are lashing out against grievances and harassments

against them by fed up RMT members who say "enough is enough". One member has been so

traumatised by the harassment that they suffered they have been sent back to LUOH counselling after a

fact finding interview 8 months after the incident. A culture of fear and threat has been imposed on the most vulnerable members to assert control but it has backfired and members are united that they shall take it no more.

### **One Rule for Us...**

There seem to be two sets of harassment and grievance procedures: one for managers and another for the rest of us. There are plenty of examples where operational staff are suspended when there is an allegation of harassment against them, which is what the harassment policy says should happen in order to protect the victim. Yet when allegations of harassment were made against two managers at Finsbury Park, no action was taken against them to protect their victim.

### **Bullyboy Management**

Serious bullying at Holloway Road has led to yet another grievance against management following ranting and raving against an SAMF in full view of customers for the crime of assisting an engineer who had come to work on a ticket machine.

There are numerous grievances against managers at Cranbourn Street that are not being investigated and there is covering up of managers' disgraceful bullying behaviour at Finsbury Park. There are serious professional failures to investigate grievances and harassments. To avoid properly investigating grievances, management are asking outside investigators (CMP) to do it, which although not confined to Finsbury Park Branch, we believe is a breach of Acas guidelines and LUL policy.

Phone calls to sick members at home has become commonplace and the local reps have complained many times and been given

assurances that this would stop, yet it continues.

Managers fail to sign the evacuation register yet criticise staff when they forget to sign in or out; managers who regularly leave before their proper finishing time. Again, there seem to be two sets of rules: one for them and one for us. Management should get their own house in order before disciplining any staff on the Finsbury Park Group. This follows two members of staff being stood down for "inappropriate roster and working practices" and the threat of an internal audit. Reps have identified what can only be described as "sharp accounting" regarding framework issues. This includes phoning staff at home when on annual leave and pressurising them to come in to work and suspicious overtime payments. When will an audit of these practices begin on these management behaviours?

### **Favouritism**

Favouritism is rife and seems to extend to breaches of the company secondment policy which should be open to all staff but seems not to be; an apparent face fits policy seems to be operating. If your face fits then you get what you want if it doesn't then you are targeted for removal.

Because of the closing net on the management team with such a high number of grievances and harassment allegations against them and the high level of resistance to their bullying, they have attacked common working practices as a smoke screen to cover the glaring failures to manage. Pressure from above to control an overspend on overtime has triggered an attack on RMT members to distract from these failures of managers.

### **An audit on misuse of company funds?**

Serious misuse of company funds should be investigated. This extends to a misuse of the staff taxi facility on at least one occasion by management. How many more of these incidents are taking place and when will an audit take place into them?

### **Cruel and Vindictive**

On an away day 'team event' a SS was told by an acting GSM that due to domestic issues it was OK for his colleagues to assist him with his duties. As caring friends and colleagues they were working together to help without a problem and this was endorsed by DSMs. This was confirmed by the managers that visit the station at least once a day by not mentioning that there was a problem. A blind man could see what was happening and it was common knowledge amongst managers and given the seal of approval as it was only a change-over of duty and did not breach any agreements.

However, when a more senior manager turned up one Sunday it did become a problem. Two supervisors suspended for helping each other. Both have relatives with disabilities. This is the cruel, resentful actions of a management team out of control and under the microscope from HQ. When they have a problem for which they are being held to account they create a bigger one in order to hide the original one.

### **Kangaroo Court**

A one-sided audit is happening to snare supervisors and kangaroo court them under the guise of them being responsible for the out of control budget on the Finsbury Park Group. An audit of the managers accounting and failure to manage and the bullying and harassment of staff must be undertaken immediately to expose the mismanagement on the Finsbury Park Group.

# TAKING THE P\*\*\* AT VICTORIA

In yet another indictment of the privatized railway system, staff at Victoria station were recently shocked to discover that an ongoing leak into their mess areas contained more than just water.

As part of the upgrade of Victoria station, staff mess facilities had been moved to a part of the station owned by Network Rail and leased by Southern Rail Group. Water was first seen leaking through the ceiling in the men's locker room and then, on another occasion, through the lights in the catering area. These were reported each time to the Victoria Line Upgrade Team and were brought up by the local Safety reps at two consecutive Tier 1 meetings. At

the time, the leaks were believed to be nothing more harmful than water.

On 19<sup>th</sup> September, water was found leaking into the women's locker room. Network Rail sent their plumber to look at the leak; while he was there talking to the local Safety reps, he dropped a bombshell: *the leak was actually coming from a urinal waste pipe.* Upon receiving this shock news, local Safety rep, Peter Basley, asked management to close the mess room and told staff to use the Supervisors' area instead. He also conducted his own enquiries and discovered that the landowner (Network Rail) was already aware of this problem and that *it had existed for the last five years.*

Apparently, Network Rail and Southern were still haggling about who was contractually obliged to fix the problem and pay for repairs. Reps called an Emergency Tier 1 meeting with the local GSM and handed in a collective grievance stating that Network Rail had failed in their duty of care under health and safety law. Meanwhile, the female locker area has been shut and alternative changing facilities are being provided in the BTP room. *And while Network Rail and Southern continue to point fingers at each other, our members at Victoria are having to eat their meals in the computer room.*

## RMT ramblers raise £3,000 for charity

Arnos Grove driver, Dave Rayfield (*pictured below left*), recently undertook the gruelling '3-peaks challenge' as part of an RMT group to raise money for the Railway Children charity. The challenge involves walking to the tops of Ben Nevis, Scafell and Snowden, the highest peaks in Scotland, Wales and England respectively. As a result of the group's efforts, over £3,000 was raised for the Railway Children. Much of this sponsorship came from RMT members and the RMT ramblers wish to thank everyone who contributed to this good cause. LUL entered several teams but the RMT Ramblers came out on top with the fastest finishing time overall.



Dave takes a breather



A short rest in the middle of the night

# Are you going Train side?

If you're leaving Stations to become a Train Operator, staying with the RMT couldn't be simpler. The RMT is the only union on the Underground that represents all grades and so, as a member changing jobs, you do not need to do anything to maintain your membership and remain protected. The only thing we ask is that when you arrive at your new depot you inform your new rep so we can amend our records.

You will probably be approached by a representative of the single-grade union, ASLEF, hoping to sign you up into their union. When this happens, it's worth remembering that, unlike the all-grades RMT, their union has never lifted so much as a finger to improve your working conditions or to offer any support and protection you may have needed during your career thus far. But the RMT will always be with you wherever you choose to go in the company.

Below is a list of RMT Trains Functional Reps who will be able to put you in contact with the local reps at your respective depots and assist with any queries that you may have.

**Bill O'Dowd: 07739 834 688**

**Dean O'Hanlon: 07889 089 064**

**Vaughan Thomas: 07720 297 657**

## *Next Branch Meetings*

November 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 1600hrs, Twelve Pins Public House (near Finsbury Park Stn)

## *Annual General Meeting 2009*

Friday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 1700hrs, Twelve Pins Public House (near Finsbury Park Stn)