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# upfront

Industrial and health & safety news for LUL drivers

## The return of 'flash and dash'



Five years ago, management withdrew detrainment staff at termini locations on the Bakerloo. They wanted drivers to make three announcements, flash the saloon lights a couple of times, and depart to the sidings.

This process became known by the drivers as 'flash and dash.' It resulted in thousands of over carried passengers into the sidings. We also had to contend with passengers walking about in the sidings trying to get back to platforms and darting across the tracks to retrieve luggage left on the train.

Drivers on the Bakerloo Line balloted and took action short of strike and went back, at every termini, to close the doors manually themselves. The chaos this caused made LU think again and they soon reintroduced our detrainment staff.

As they often do, LU is back for a second bite of the cherry. Your

Trains Health & Safety Council are totally opposed to this change, but that will not stop LU pushing ahead with this issue.

Management claim that engineering solutions have changed the landscape and that the introduction on inner car barriers has mitigated against passengers self-detraining. We do not agree. As examples at Queen's Park depot and the fiasco at Notting Hill Gate, on Carnival weekend, a few years back has proven.

LU also claim that risk of assault to drivers from over-carried passengers is low. We do not share their optimism. Verbal assaults of drivers was such a routine occurrence that they didn't even bother to report it in the end.

LU claims that the ORR has raised no objections to this new process. That is not to say that they believe this process to be safer. Only by organising and using all of the tools available to us will we be able to push back.

### Staff assaults rife

The THSC have found at least nine instances of drivers being assaulted this year alone - these are just the ones that were reported!

The travelling public are using the network as a hotel and sleeping passengers left on trains is becoming the norm.

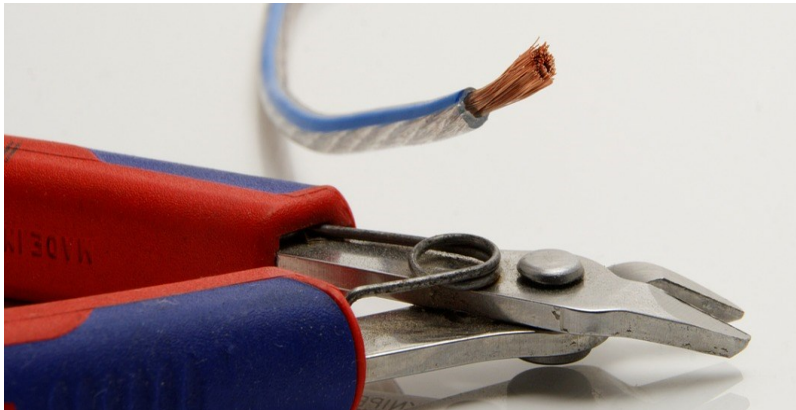
We are also getting reports that the BTP are 'getting shot' of drunks by putting them on trains. Add all of this to the issues at detraining locations and we have a lethal cocktail.

We currently don't have a procedure that we can follow for this according to LU management when pushed on the issue. The RMT have issued a notice *that no driver should touch a passenger, even if you do get assistance from station staff!*

We raised this at our recent Tier 2 Safety meeting with management. If we don't get the answers we want we will be referring the matter to one of LUL's directors. We'll be attending branches and recommending a ballot of our members for strike action or action short of strike. We will need a huge turnout and our members to stand up and fight this issue.

- Read more at [www.rmtlondoncalling.org.uk/trains](http://www.rmtlondoncalling.org.uk/trains) -

## Tunnel telephone wires face the chop



Having lost the argument to keep the TT wires in operation, LU are now hell bent on rubbing salt into our wounds with the proposed method of communicating this change to drivers.

Your Reps thought we had an agreement at the Tier 2A meeting that LU would adopt a robust method of communicating this change, the removal of safety critical equipment, to drivers. Instead, what do we get? We get a hand out at book on that we won't have time to read and a mention in the Traffic Circular.

A common theme over the years for the introduction of changes to rules has seen drivers receive a hand out at book on. This is despite Rule Book 1 and the PTOA clearly stating that safety briefings should be face to face. Even for the 'Active Shooter' changes, pretty important you'd agree, despite agreement that face to face briefings would be given, we got a plain old hand out. This is not good enough and it's a position that we are no longer willing to tolerate.

All drivers should make it clear, if they are asked to sign for this 'hand-out' before we have resolved this issue, to ensure you state you are signing to say you have received it, not that you

understand it fully. At the same time formally request that you are granted a face to face briefing ASAP by someone who fully understands the change and its implications.

### Clean the pipes



LU's dust busters in action!

An agenda item raised by the RMT at the recent Director's level meeting with LU was the issue of dust levels across the combine. A recent, well publicised survey by Surrey University has again thrust this issue to the fore.

It's no surprise that dust levels and what we are actually breathing in at work continue to be a major concern for all our members, across all grades. On trains we have inadequate cab air filters and door seals that are simply not fit for purpose; our station's members are exposed for up to four hours per day doing SATS duties on the platform; our track workers are con-

stantly exposed.

Unhelpfully, LU insist on feeding us the line that the main ingredient of our 'good dust' is iron which is not really that harmful. They also like to hide behind the fact that we are within the dust limits set by some health departments while ignoring the fact that we breach the guidelines set by other specialist organisations.

Once upon a time LU used to be in possession of a 'tunnel cleaning train.' This machine was decommissioned in favour of cleaners with hoovers walking the track. We can only assume that cost cutting was the driving factor here. LU also appeared reluctant to provide us the figures for how often these hoovers were actually sent out to clean the tunnels and how effective they actually are; this information was unsurprising not available. We'll leave you to draw your own conclusions on that.

A number of demands were put to LU: the return of the tunnel cleaning train, a fix to driver's air filters and door seals, masks available as PPE and for our colleagues working the platforms, a reduction in the total time spent doing SATS duties.

The RMT will continue to push for a cleaner, healthier working environment for all of us tube workers.

### Get in touch

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