

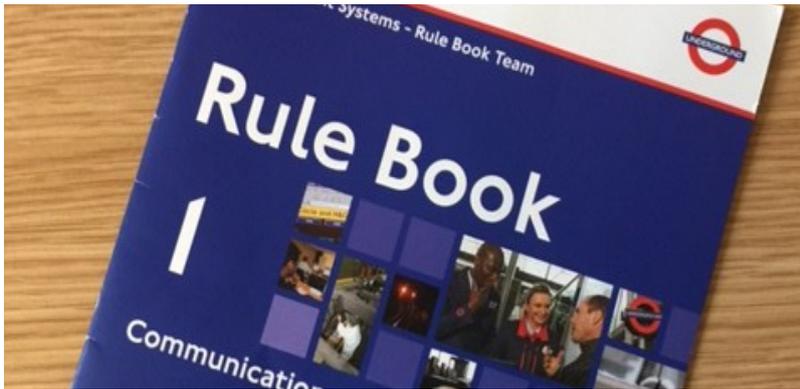
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# upfront

Industrial and health & safety news for LUL drivers

## Safety critical? Keep it brief



An ongoing issue for your Train's Health and Safety Council is how changes to rules and 'safety critical' briefings are conveyed to drivers. The RMT have always assumed that Rule Book 1, Section 5: Communications, was applicable for this task. And when you think about it, it's the logical place to put it. Not so, it would seem! At a recent meeting between LU and your RMT reps, management claimed bizarrely, that this section in the drivers' Rule Book refers only to Rule Book 20, Section 6, which is solely for the purpose of protection for track workers. It is curious that in all the years we have been using the Rule Book LU never thought to mention it.

Even more curious still, management then produced a TfL document that no one have ever seen or heard of and claimed this was the relevant document that covered safety briefings for drivers.

Cutting through the smoke and

mirrors, what's happening here is simple: Rule Book 1, Section 5 states that safety briefings should be conducted face to face. This would be time consuming and costly for LU as drivers would need a trip off for this to happen. The previously unsighted TfL document would allow LU to give a driver a piece of paper at book-on and ask them to sign to say they have received it. Cheap as chips.

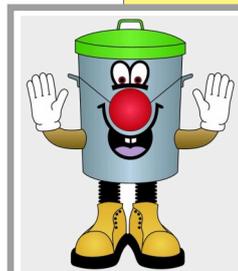
In recent times there have been a number of high profile changes to rules that could easily fall into the safety critical category. Most recently we had the new 'active shooter' guidelines on what drivers should do if a terrorist goes mad with a gun in the vicinity. You'd think that LU would want its employees to have a clear understanding of what they should be doing in such a desperate scenario to keep themselves and their

passengers safe. The RMT virtually had to drag LU to into the position of giving face to face briefings to drivers. Even then it was hit and miss whether some local managers followed through on this due them not wanting to take drivers off for a trip.

Rule book changes are arriving thick and fast these days as LU desperately try to save a few quid here and there. It is vital that drivers receive adequate, face to face briefings for these safety critical changes. We are operating the largest, sub-surface railway in the whole of Western Europe. We are professional drivers. All we are saying is give us the training and we'll do the rest.

### Dust Update

You will recall we previously reported that the RMT had raised the issue of 'tunnel dust' with the LU Director of Safety. We are please to announce that the sterling argument put forward by your RMT reps has paid dividends. LU have conceded to our demand and will be setting up a 'Dust Monitoring Committee.' Dave Rayfield will be the train's side lead dust man. All dust related issues should be directed to him.



Dusty gets to work

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

## NOT too HOT Procedure

The RMT would appear to be on yet another collision course with LU management on the methods of safely carrying out the HOT procedure. The safety issues surrounding the long established HOT procedure have been a difficult subject for all to address. With the recent North Greenwich bomb on a train incident, and the current climate surrounding terrorism this brings the issue sharply into focus.

LUL are claiming that the Department for Transport (DfT) are looking to change the covert testing for suspicious items/lost property and are compelling them to issue new guidance which instructs a person investigating an item to open it (if it is in a closed bag). The RMT Safety Council have attended numerous meetings on this subject and were extremely surprised to hear that the LUL security experts claimed that opening a suspicious item is already part of the HOT process! It is very strange that not one person in the room, with countless years of experience, had ever recalled being trained to open up a suspect bag!

The crux of this issue is that LUL have been pushed into having a look at the HOT

procedure and are looking at ways to reduce delays rather than have security alerts. At the moment this is being shown to us as guidance with a view to making it a compulsory action as part of a new HOT procedure.

The RMT will be raising this matter with the LU safety Director as a matter of urgency. We'll keep you updated.

We will fight this new attempt at putting the service before safety.

### Fire at Oxford Circus

On May 6th there was a fire at Oxford Circus Station with a blaze that required six engines and 35 of the LFB's finest to bring under control. So intense was the heat that the LFB had issues accessing the blaze.

Strangely, the fire started in a disused part of the station. Rumours abound but the actual cause of the fire is as yet unknown.

The fumes were horrendous with the LFB requiring breathing apparatus and a member of station staff requiring hospital treatment because of the fumes.

Drivers on the Bakerloo, the Central and the Victoria Line have all said there were smoke and acrid fumes in the tunnel. The concern for the RMT is that while LU suspended the Victoria Line the Bakerloo and Central Lines were only non stopping. Given that the Bakerloo and Victoria Line run parallel this decision is worrying.

We also have concerns that fires of this intensity are able to start in unused parts of the station. Could it be that all unused areas need checking and risk assessing?

Given the severity of this incident, the fact that it affected three lines and both station's and train's grades, the RMT have rightly asked for a Formal Investigation Report (FIR).

Not wanting to overplay the incident or attract too much attention LU has opted for the lesser type of investigation, the Local variety. They even claim that driver's reps can feed into this report via email. The RMT have tabled this matter for discussion at the upcoming Safety Forum.

### Get in touch

#### Functional reps:

Frank Curtis - 07931 130849  
Paul Shannon - 07800808 297  
Vaughan Thomas - 07720 297657

#### H&S reps:

Gary Doyle - 07830 221 543  
Jim McDaid - 07917131692  
Dave Rayfield - 07719 132 161

#### Upgrades rep:

Adam Evans - 0789 005 6868

