

Written for train drivers, by train drivers



# upfront

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## LIES, DAMNED LIES, AND UNATTRIBUTABLE BRIEFINGS

Regular readers of "Up Front" will remember the report in August describing how Alex McGuigan was wrongfully dismissed following a false positive reading arising from an unannounced breath test. Alex's rep proved that a number of medical conditions had affected the reading and also that the Drug and Alcohol Procedure hadn't been properly followed.

At the Appeal stage, the manager rubbished the original statement from an LUOH doctor

which agreed that false positives were possible by producing a statement from a different doctor – also from LUOH! This is a clear case of constantly seeking opinions until you get the one you want!

Alex's rep raised the breach of procedure at the appeal hearing but the manager didn't address this at all. It is accepted that Alex didn't have a medical review following the D&A test. The LUL procedure clearly says that no test will be declared positive unless and until there has been a medical review. But at the Director's review it was asserted that although that's what it says – that isn't what it means!

The well-supported RMT campaign to have Alex reinstated is having an effect, with LUL lying to the media to undermine our arguments. In the Evening Standard on October 30th it was alleged that Alex



had been sacked for "drinking on the job". This astonishing lie was challenged by the RMT press officer who was informed by journalists that the information came from a LUL spokesperson giving an "unattributable briefing".

This lie was fed to journalists who lazily accepted it and repeated it without doing any actual "journalism". The RMT contacted media outlets to issue a factual statement - that Alex wasn't even accused of

drinking on the job. At this point the BBC and ITN revised their stories; the Standard and the Mail chose to stand by the lies they had published earlier.

None of us should be surprised that the Standard and the Mail print lies about trade unionists; but every employee of LUL should rightly be outraged that a fellow employee is openly lying to the media. It is this "anonymous" employee who should be sacked for gross misconduct, not Alex who has an exemplary record going back 29 years.

The choice is clear – do you support a long standing colleague who has been wrongfully dismissed? Or do you allow LUL to ignore their procedures, lie about the details and send an honest member of staff off to a life of unemployment?

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- ☆ Defend Alex McGuigan
- ☆ Night Tube
- ☆ Boxing Day Blues
- ☆ Join the RMT at [www.rmt.org.uk](http://www.rmt.org.uk)



## Night Tube By A Night Mayor



In the usual way LUL conduct consultation it came as a surprise to the RMT that Night Tube was going to be happening on 15th September 2015 just in time for the Rugby World Cup. So says the Evening Standard: it must be true!

LUL negotiations with the RMT have only just begun yet management's opening gambit for drivers was to drop the bombshell that Night Tube could be accommodated within existing agreements. They reckon they only have to increase the establishments on the affected lines and roster more nights! Well that's that then...

...Wait a minute! Won't that mean a massive increase in night working for our members on those lines? Do we have an agreement under the PTOA that all night running can only be run 3 times a year with volunteers and additional payments? Yes.

It appears bosses have overlooked this. Their proposal is not acceptable. Look out for future bulletins on the development of the talks. There is no way we will be letting our members' interests be railroaded for a political stunt by the Mayors office and LUL need to know this.

Meanwhile management recently consulted your Safety Reps but without giving much detail. It was agreed that all things to do with 'Night Tube' would be discussed at Safety Council level.

Our initial safety concern is whether or not the infrastructure: trains, track, signals etc.. can cope with all night running at weekends? Night Tube means less time for maintenance, which is a massive shortfall. Then there is the question of security. Would the BTP be able to ensure the safety of our members working at these times?

There are many concerns that will be addressed prior to the RMT signing this one off as 'good to go'. Watch this space!

## BOXING DAY BLUES

Despite an agreement between LUL and ASLEF which ripped up sections of a transfer agreement that made life a lot harder for newer drivers to make savings to pay for a Boxing Day bonus it appears that even this is not enough to tempt drivers at numerous depots to give up quality time off with their families during the festive season, with a lot of depots pulling up short on the required volunteers. This deal was done behind the RMT's back and attempts made at the time to make amendments to it were refused flat blank by LUL.

The RMT position is that no RMT driver should be disadvantaged under an agreement that your Union never signed up to and it is clearly not acceptable that our members, many of whom may have had a rostered rest day or not booked to work will be forced to work under an arrangement not agreed with your Union.

Therefore at the time of going to press your Union has asked for the release of all local depot reps to discuss this situation so if you have any thoughts on it you should speak to them immediately and let them know. The RMT believes in equality for all drivers and not to have a two tier system that disadvantages drivers who have not been around for as long as some others.

## Get in touch

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