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upfront

Industrial and health & safety news for LUL drivers

Terrorist attack at Parson's Green *Management response highlights shortcomings*



A terrorist attack on London Underground has seen a bomb partially explode on a train at Parson's Green Station. It is essential that we are prepared and trained on how to deal with the aftermath safely and professionally. Right now, this is not the case.

Despite the fact that we had a 'bomb' on a train, the communications to our drivers on the day was patchy at best. This was a common theme across the combine when the Trains Health and Safety Council (THSC) asked for feedback. Most drivers were finding out via social media what was going on.

At many depots the common theme was, "it's an isolated incident, keep calm and carry on." Some drivers even thought that LU had employed an information black-

out policy, but we can confirm that this was not happening.

The RMT are concerned that London may be suffering from terrorist attack fatigue, whereby we've had that many terrorist attacks of late that we are becoming sanitised towards them. According to some reports, the bomb on the train was similar in make-up to the bomb at the Manchester Arena. Had it detonated as intended it could have been catastrophic. We asked the BTP for confirmation of this but they declined to comment as the investigation is ongoing.

The RMT THSC has put these concerns to LU who agreed to work with the unions to establish what went wrong with communications on the day and to work with us to get a better plan in place.



Not HOT, and what's WHAT?

Bulletins on the day of the Parson's Green bomb reminded staff to use the HOT and WHAT processes. Talks on these procedures have been ongoing and we are no further forward.

LU had recently proposed changing the HOT procedure to incorporate compelling members to look inside bags and also wanted to introduce a rule whereby decisions taken by frontline staff declaring items suspicious could be overruled by management.

We found out at a recent security meeting that this new process has been temporarily canned which we welcome. But, it just highlights how all over the place bosses are. The RMT position remains clear: we do not look inside bags.

The bombs at North Greenwich and Parson's Green were not hidden, not obviously suspicious and were typical of lost property. They did not fit the HOT profile. The RMT believe this process may be redundant. At best it is deeply flawed.

- Read more at www.rmtlondoncalling.org.uk/trains -

Flash & dash rehashed

At a time of an unprecedented security threat we need more staff checking trains. But LU appear to disagree, as the 'flash and dash' issue, where bosses want to remove staff from detrainment duties rumbles on.

The Safety Council met management recently. LU are proposing that we look at moving detrainment staff away from platforms at several detrainment locations across the combine. This would mean drivers making three announcements, flashing the saloon lights, closing the doors and heading into the sidings without physically checking the train.

Your THSC reps have argued strongly against this move because, as well as the security issues, it would

force our drivers to walk back through the train not knowing who or what was on board. This is not a safe way of performing detrainments and we stated this at the meeting.

Management informed us they would look at engineering solutions. For example, installing new walkways down the side of the train in order to mitigate the need for us to walk back through the train. They have since come back to us and proposed a trial at Barking sidings

and Waterloo on the W&C line. These locations are the first to be looked at because of the existing walkways and relative low cost to introduce. We will be talking to local H&S reps to discuss this and we have a couple of weeks to respond. to management officially.



our radios really do this? The answer from the BTP was that it was highly unlikely. However, it was good practise for staff to move away from a suspect package before calling it in. On this we are in full agreement.

SPAD Rule Amalgamation

Management had wanted to amalgamate the Auto and Semi Auto rules in the rule-book. They planned to have a new flow chart method to explain the relevant rule. However, after receiving feedback from the THSC they have now consigned this unnecessary change to the dustbin.

Cab Security

Despite some slight movement on the issue of 'cab security' recently the whole issue is still moving too slowly. We've had assurances that LU will be looking at this but it is not be happening soon enough. We have had several new stocks since the 7/7 bombings; why has cab-security not been considered sooner and implemented?

Role out of training is not good enough

The roll out of training for active shooter and bladed weapon attacks is not good enough. Some depots have given face to face briefings to drivers and some have not.

LU are still advising staff to use the WHAT process. This is despite many of our members still not knowing what it is. Many assurances have been given at all levels that 'face to face' briefings will take place, but they still

haven't at many locations. This is blatantly cost before safety as LU are reluctant to take drivers off the train to brief them, but this should be a priority, even if trains have to be cancelled.

Radios and suspect packages

LU instruct us not to use hand held radios in the vicinity of suspect packages, for fear of detonation. Some drivers have questioned whether this advice is still valid. Could the signals from

Get in touch

Functional reps:

Frank Curtis - 07931 130849
Paul Shannon - 07800808297
Vaughan Thomas - 07720297657

H&S reps:

Gary Doyle - 07830 221 543
Jim McDaid - 07917131692
Dave Rayfield - 07719132161

Upgrades rep:

Adam Evans - 0789 005 6868