



# tubeworker

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## FIGHT THE 12.5% CUT!

In June, the Government cut 12.5% from TfL's budget. The Evening Standard proclaimed "hundreds of London Overground and Tube jobs" would be "axed".

TfL made a start by removing guards on its London Overground contract. London Underground announced plans for "mobile station supervision" and continues to prepare ticket office closures.

But mass job cuts and ticket office closures are not inevitable. True, TSSA and RMT misled 2010's unsuccessful showdown against LU job cuts. But with the right leadership, we can win the next fight.

What do our unions need to do?

### Build solidarity!

The 12.5% cut will affect all working on and using London's transport.

Workers in all companies must support each other. RMT London Overground workers are voting whether to strike over the sacking of guards.

Unions need to prepare us to fight on LU too. By standing together, we can defeat cuts on the Overground and the Tube.



### Fight politically, reach out to the public

It's excellent that RMT has launched a London-wide campaign against the 12.5% cut. Public transport cuts are unnecessary.

Like all public services, there's plenty of money to pay for it. A 50% tax on the country's top 1% (who hold £240 billion) could wipe out the deficit.

Instead, the rich are getting richer as the Tory government protects their wealth at our expense. Unions need to pressure the government and Mayor: let's reach out to passengers to defend transport as a public service.

### Act decisively

Some union officials have said unions will fight "big job cuts" when they're announced at the end of the year.

This is letting management sneak in attacks and get

prepared. Instead, unions need to make demands of our employers now. Demand no ticket offices closures, no cuts to our pensions, no removal of night turn station supervisors. If bosses say no, we'll be able to organise industrial action on our own timescale.

### Have a strategy that can win

Unions need to see every attack in the context of the bigger picture.

Fighting Whitechapel and Vauxhall ticket office closures with maximum pressure will prepare ground for fighting

LU's overall ticket office closures plan.

LU's salami-slice attacks, such as closing one ticket office, might not alone seem big enough for all-out action. But unions must join the dots together: seemingly small-scale attacks breach huge principles; they cross lines in the sand.

Our unions must say that now that these lines have been crossed, there is no more waiting. It's time to draw disputes together in a strategy that involves effective industrial action.

## MOBILE STATION SUPERVISION MAKES AN UNWELCOME COMEBACK

In April, *Tubeworker* reported that mobile station supervision was creeping onto LU stations, with reports of supervisors covering Turnham Green, Kew Gardens, and Gunnersbury Stations simultaneously.

Now London Underground has written to the RMT, saying "mobile station supervision" has proven so "effective" that it will be introduced on the Wembley Central group too. "Mobile supervision" was proposed in 2007. RMT and TSSA led a campaign against this. Both unions named strike dates but then pulled the action at the eleventh hour.

*Tubeworker* said at the time that the action should have gone ahead; the dispute settlement was unsatisfactory as it allowed LU to continue to use agency

staff and abandon their commitment to 24-hour supervision.

But one of LU's concessions was to completely withdraw plans for "mobile station supervision". The dispute settlement ensured a supervisor on every station (for the full text of the dispute settlement, see [workersliberty.org/whatitsays](http://workersliberty.org/whatitsays)).

If this issue was big enough in 2007 to motivate joint strike plans between RMT and TSSA, then it is surely a big issue now.

Mobile supervision is unsafe, requiring supervisors to literally be in two places at once.

It is a threat to the supervisor grade; this model will be rolled out with the aim of cutting jobs. It must be resisted.

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Contact us: Workers' Liberty, 20E Tower Workshops, Riley Road, London SE1 3DG

**Tubeworker's blog - daily updates - [workersliberty.org/twblog](http://workersliberty.org/twblog)**

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## CLEANERS' COLUMN

As London experiences a heatwave, conditions in some parts of the Underground become unbearable.

On a lot of stations, air conditioning hasn't been able to cope with the heat. It's either so ancient and badly maintained or it's brand new kit that's been installed on the cheap.

Platform duties in these temperatures are unbearable. An official temperature check on Central Line platforms came up at 104° Fahrenheit!

These temperatures are dangerous. If the blood rises above 39°C (102°F) then there is a risk of heat stroke or collapse. In the recent heatwave a cleaner who picks litter from trains on sub-surface platforms at Elephant and Castle collapsed from heat exhaustion and later died. LU and Initial need to be made to answer for this tragedy.

Workplace health and safety regulations state temperatures should be "reasonable", but disgracefully there's no legal maximum. MPs and the TUC have started to call for a legal maximum temperature of 30°C (86°F).

[workersliberty.org/ltsafety](http://workersliberty.org/ltsafety)

## EVERY JOURNEY MATTERS?

The "Every Journey Matters" workshops have invited selected station staff to suggest innovations to improve the service.

Suggestions so far include touch-screen help points for passengers.

*Tubeworker* would never wish to stand in the way of progress. Sometimes technological solutions do benefit passengers.

But LU sees technological solutions as a substitute for staff. An interactive, touch-screen help point is clearly designed for an unstaffed station.

LU does not care about its customers. These workshops are designed for one thing: to give the impression that staff are being "consulted" on attempts to remove their own jobs! Despite LU's attempts, the vast majority of staff have called for more staff and ticket offices.

Technology in the hands of the bosses has always been used as a tool to reduce the number of workers they pay, thus increasing the amount of money bosses can keep for themselves. High unemployment also increases the bosses' power by making us feel vulnerable in our jobs.

We need a transport system run in the interests of passengers and workers so that technology can bring genuine benefit to all of us.

## WAVE AND PAY WILL STING PASSENGERS

Details have emerged about the "Wave and Pay" system that London Underground would like to foist on the travelling public.

It promises quick and easy payment and no need to top up an Oyster card but it cuts ticket office (and other) staff out of the system. It relies wholly on a website/telephone helpline.

Staff will have no access to fares, so it will be impossible for passengers to obtain an immediate refund in the event of a breakdown in service.

Anyone who has worked on a station during such a breakdown will be familiar with the irate passenger who wants "my money back right now".

This system will inevitably result in more assaults on vulnerable gateline staff.  
[workersliberty.org/ticketoffices](http://workersliberty.org/ticketoffices)

## DEFEND LONDON OVERGROUND GUARDS

RMT has launched an industrial action ballot amongst LOROL guard members. The conductors deserve the support of workers across TfL.

Don't think that because guards are long gone on the Underground, others should share our fate.

Quite the opposite: we should learn from our failure to save Tube guards, and put every effort into saving them on the Overground.

## BYE BYE BROADWAY

London Underground Ltd has upped sticks and moved out of 55 Broadway to its new HQ at Palestra.

Perhaps the sound of daily "Justice for the 33" protests finally drove them out? More likely, there is a money-making scheme behind it. Yes, central London's best example of classic art-deco architecture, demonstrating style and planning sadly lacking in LU today, is going to be converted into luxury flats (not for the likes of us, mind!).

Through fares and taxes, workers have paid for this building for decades.

It should be converted into stylish social housing, not luxury flats for the rich!

## BEST DEAL FOR DRIVERS?

London Underground has proposed changes to drivers' working agreements that could save £600,000, freeing up money it says it will use to fund ASLEF's long-term demand of payments for Boxing Day working.

Drivers have been debating the merits of the deal on Tubeworker's website. Some believe it represents a positive change for drivers, but most Tubeworker supporters feel the proposed changes are too restrictive, and that terms and conditions shouldn't be sold off.

What's your view? Join the debate!

[bit.ly/box-day](http://bit.ly/box-day)

## STOP THE EDL!

Anti-fascist campaigners in the Anti-Fascist Network have called a counter-mobilisation against a planned march by the English Defence League through Tower Hamlets on Saturday 7 September.

Last time the EDL tried to march in East London, RMT activists at various stations tried to get their stations closed on health and safety grounds to prevent the EDL from getting around.

Having large gangs of organised racists marauding through the transport system is a danger to workers and other passengers.

[ldnantifascists.wordpress.com](http://ldnantifascists.wordpress.com)

## VULTURES SWOOP ON POSTERS BUSINESS

CBS has sold its advertisement-posting business to private equity company Platinium.

It promises that things won't for the workers. So — more of the same rubbish pay and job insecurity, then? More of a threat than a promise!

This contract has passed between numerous companies since London Underground outsourced it: remember TruForm? Or Viacom?

TfL/LUL should bring advert-posting back in-house, along with every other contracted-out piece of our Tube.

[workersliberty.org/cbs-outdoor](http://workersliberty.org/cbs-outdoor)

***Tubeworker is produced by Tube workers and published by Workers' Liberty, an organisation fighting as part of the labour movement for a socialist alternative to both capitalism and Stalinism, based on common ownership and democracy. We want one democratic, fighting union for all railworkers. We reject artificial divisions between workers of different grades. We oppose racism, sexism, homophobia and all prejudice that divides us.***