



tubeworker

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Station staff: all out on 6-8 February **STRIKE FOR YOUR FUTURE**

Other grades must show solidarity



As London Underground prepares to impose "Fit for the Future" on three station groups from 7 February, and elsewhere from April, RMT has called a strike of all station staff from 21.00 on Saturday 6 February until 20.59 on Monday 8 February.

What we want

No member of station staff needs reminding what a nightmare "Fit for the Future" will be. We oppose the entire model, top to bottom. But even if we don't force LU to abandon it, we can still win concessions. For example, we demand:

- Redrawn rosters to guarantee no-one works more weekends than presently
- Jobs put back into rosters and guarantees that vacancies will be filled
- No worsening of the existing Framework
- Protection of earnings for all SAMFs who cannot do the night working required by their new forced promotions into Supervisor grades
- Adequate training and remuneration for CSAs forced to undertake former ticket office work.
- Don't turn supervisors into bosses who discipline their workmates.
- Bring back seated roles on stations, as many staff can't stand up all day.

Can stations-only strikes be effective?

Yes. A solid strike of station staff will lead to station closures, hitting the company's revenue hard. It won't be a total shutdown, but if our strike is solid, we can cause chaos.

Even where stations don't close, management will be sent into panic mode. It would throw management off balance.

Tubeworker has always called for the maximum possible unity of grades; we opposed the decision to de-escalate the dispute against "Fit for the Future" into a stations-only issue last summer, and we opposed the suspension of the planned all-grades strikes on pay/Night Tube on 27 January, and once they were suspended, we also opposed calling of strikes in the "Every Job Matters" dispute for that date. The current stations-only approach is not without risks. We have to work to make the upcoming strikes as solid as possible.

Other grades can show solidarity (see box, right).

What next?

The 6-8 February strike must a precursor to ongoing action, aimed at disrupting the implementation of "Fit for the Future" and forcing concessions from the company.

We should consider creative forms of action: how about a day where everyone books on two hours late for their shift? How about the late turns booking off two hours early? How about staff on groups where the "Fit for the Future" rosters are imposed "reclaiming" some of our weekend rest days by striking? There are lots of possibilities. Unions could use hardship funds to help out members who end up taking more action than others because of how their duties fall.

Everything should be considered. The only thing that should be ruled out is doing nothing. Let's start with a solid strike on 6-8 February and keep the pressure on.

AN ALL-GRADES FIGHT

It's frustrating that the all-grades unity with which the "Every Job Matters" campaign was launched in 2013 has now broken down. That needs rebuilding.

Immediately, other grades should support the stations action. Drivers can refuse to drive if stations aren't staffed to safe levels. They can insist on assisted dispatch.

RCIs, who were not balloted as part of the most recent "Every Job Matters" strike ballot, can refuse to cover work on stations during strike days. Admin and other staff should do "ICSA" work (which is not compulsory), and engineers can refuse to book on at stations without qualified supervisors.

This is not about other grades taking action "for" station staff. It's about all of us resisting an attack on us as a workforce.

PAY/NIGHT TUBE: REJECT THE DEAL

LU is still insisting that the pay offer, the Night Tube settlement, and "Fit for the Future" are all linked.

Tubeworker believes the pay offer is shoddy and should be rejected on its own terms. But if LU insists on making it contingent on accepting "Fit for the Future", there's even more reason to reject it. We cannot allow our bosses to tell us we can only get a pay rise if we agree to huge job cuts on stations!

Unions may soon begin referendums of members on the deal; *Tubeworker* encourages you to vote no.

VOTE YES FOR STRIKES TO DEFEND GLEN HART

Return your ballot by 4 February. Don't let the company victimise Glen! For info on Glen's case, check out the RMT website: bit.ly/defend-glen

CLEANERS' COLUMN

AS SHORT PAYMENT SCANDAL CONTINUES, LU MUST ASK QUESTIONS



Rarely a pay period goes by in which Interserve cleaners are not short paid. We only earn £9.15 per hour; even a few hours missing from our pay can make a huge difference.

In some parts of London, average rent now accounts for 60% of average monthly income. Current figures show that 80% of all new housing in London is affordable to only 20% of Londoners. As many as 50% of renters in London are officially living in poverty. How are low-paid workers meant to get by?

Interserve blames administrative errors for the ongoing problem. *Tubeworker* believes it's time for unions to demand that LU, as the source of the contract, asks questions of Interserve.

Cowboy cleaning company Blue Diamond, which ripped off its workers in a similar way, was kicked off its contract in 2006.

Our ultimate goal is for cleaning services to be taken back in house, with cleaners put on LU pay scales, with access to the TfL pension scheme and staff travel passes. The London Living Wage should be raised to £10 or more.

Short of that, LU needs to tell Interserve that if it can't pay in full, on time, every time, its contract will be cancelled.

NYE ON THE CHEAP

We hear some managers staffed New Year's Eve on a budget.

Managers moved reserve CSAs from dead lates to night shifts with only a few days' notice, and told them they were not entitled to the enhanced payment because they hadn't volunteered. What a delightful way to thank someone who has been forced to cancel their New Year's plans!

Management should not get away with this.

KEEPING AN "i" ON US

Tubeworker hears that station staff will soon be expected to use an app on our company-issued iPads to book on and off. "Customer Service Managers" (current Station Supervisors) will be expected to take action against any lateness.

This turns former Supervisors into disciplining managers, and gives the company greater micro-managerial powers over us than ever before.

We need to guard against these developments.

MIND THE GAP

According to stats dug out by a Freedom of Information request, PTI incidents have been increasing at such a rate that there were five times as many in 2014 than in 2003. The number of incidents rose every year between these two.

On what planet is the appropriate response to this to cut station staffing?!

FULLY AUTOMATED?

On 18 January, LU sent out an "invitation to tender" to a shortlist of suppliers for new trains for the Central, Piccadilly, Waterloo and City, and Bakerloo Lines, due to come into service in the early 2020s.

LU wants the trains to have driverless potential. But it also says that full automation would require massive updates of signalling and other systems. LU is unable to tell us specifically what benefit driverless trains would bring to passengers; would this really be money well spent? Plus, Bombardier, which messed up the SSR signalling upgrade, wasting millions, is a potential provider!

Technology should be used to make our lives easier, not to de-skill workers' jobs and undermine organised labour. RMT has policy that it will go into dispute as soon as LU begins commissioning driverless trains; that process has now begun.

The policy should be acted on.

PROMOTION WITHOUT A PAYRISE

LU is proposing to force CSAs to handle cash, service machines, and carry out procedures currently done by ticket sellers. But it won't pay us adequately or train us properly. It wants us to do extra training, in our own time, on our iPads.

We must not accept this promotion without a pay rise. If our stations sell tickets, they need properly trained, properly paid ticket seller staff.

DRIVERS REFUSE UNSAFE TRAINS

TfL's claimed "temporary shortage of train operators" caused suspension and delays on the Piccadilly Line on 17 January. What it didn't say was that drivers refused to operate trains following a door opening on a train travelling through the tunnel under Heathrow airport the day previous.

Management didn't make strenuous efforts to resolve the problem and verify that the fleet is safe, so drivers matters into their own hands.

If the company won't look after passengers' safety, then they can rest assured that we will.

Engineers return solid yes votes for strikes on safety. More online at workersliberty.org/twblog

MAYORAL ELECTIONS: TORY MAYOR WOULD BAN TUBE STRIKES. KICK THEM OUT OF CITY HALL!

Bosses want to make us do more work for less; our ability to strike throws a spanner in their works. That's why the Tories want to stop us from striking.

Tory Mayoral hopeful and multimillionaire Zac Goldsmith has been lobbying Tory ministers to classify the Tube as an "essential service" for the purposes of planned anti-strike laws, which will make it even harder for us to take official action. Labour's policies are far from perfect, but Labour (whose mayoral candidate is Sadiq Khan) have said they will repeal the Tories' "Trade Union Bill" if they win in 2020.

Kicking the Tories out of City Hall in 2016 will help us kick them out of Westminster in 2020.

Labour's policy doesn't go far enough in terms of repealing all anti-union laws, but it is a clear difference between them and the Conservatives.

What conditions would we have if we couldn't take unified industrial action?



What is *Tubeworker*?

Tubeworker is a rank-and-file socialist bulletin, published at least monthly, written by Tube workers, for Tube workers. It is published by the socialist group Workers' Liberty, but is produced in editorial meetings open to all workers. Supporters from outside London Underground can help with public distribution.

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