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Stop the Night Tube jobs robbery: Vote Yes for Action!



**RMT IS BALLOTING DRIVERS
FROM 1 JUNE TO 29 JUNE:
VOTE YES FOR ACTION!**

LU has unilaterally incorporated Night Tube train operator duties into full-time rosters, consolidating the former TO23 (Night Tube) and TO21 (full-time) T/Op grades into a single grade.

This will mean fewer jobs, increased night and weekend working for full-time T/Ops, and an end to driving parameters that stop us starting or finishing a duty at any time of the night. It is also an end to the “clean wage” - the principle that we all earn the same for doing the same job - as those who volunteer for Night Tube duties (or are forced to if there aren't enough volunteers) will get a bonus payment in most circumstances.

Bosses began negotiations in January looking to make current Night Tube T/Ops full time, as they are desperate for more drivers, and came out of those negotiations securing that goal, which both unions supported, but also grabbing a plethora of gains on work/life balance and conditions, eagerly handed over by ASLEF, in a move that is largely unsupported by full-time drivers, the RMT, and many rank-and-file ASLEF members.

LU forced this attack through ignoring the “machinery of negotiation”, which lays out the parameters of how such issues are

discussed, and overriding the 2015 deal which workers in both unions took action to win and defend. This demonstrates that we cannot trust management to abide by deals they have agreed with us in the past, or to interact with our unions in the way they say that they will.

Where next?

Tubeworker believes the following factors are crucial for all unions and Tube workers to ensure:

- No jobs lost or reduction in headcount in full-time or Night Tube T/Op grades
- No increase in night or weekend working for the full-time T/Op grade
- Waiting lists must be protected; station staff shouldn't see training dates for a train operator role further delayed.
- Promotional options must be preserved: many Night Tube CSAs want Night Tube T/Op jobs as these are, demonstrably, the hours they can work.

Many Night Tube drivers have moved into full-time roles, which is to be welcomed. They should join the fight to ensure the role they are moving into keeps at least the same terms and conditions it has at present.

It is time for all of us to fight back against London Underground management's detrimental attack on our terms and conditions and work life balance. We also need to make clear to ASLEF's Trains Functional Council reps, who proposed and backed these plans, that the membership does not support these changes. Reps must listen to members, and speak on our behalf to management.

They must not speak on behalf of management to the membership.

Drivers: vote for strikes to win reinstatement for Gary Carney!

RMT is balloting driver members across LU for industrial action to win reinstatement for unjustly sacked rep Gary “Gash” Carney.

The ballot opens on 28 May and runs until 29 June. *Tubeworker* encourages all RMT driver readers to vote yes, and drivers in Aslef to respect prospective RMT picket lines.

Gary booked off sick after experiencing Covid symptoms. LU accepts that he did this, and correctly followed company procedures in doing so. Nevertheless, he has been sacked for allegedly “avoiding” an unannounced Drugs and Alcohol test... which he was not aware of. This could happen to any of us: we book off sick, or leave work for another reason the company accepts as legitimate, and find ourselves being disciplined for “avoiding” something we didn't know was happening.

During his disciplinary proceedings, a manager told Gary that he should “know better” as a rep, strongly implying that Gary is being dealt with differently because he is a rep. Whether or not someone is a rep, or otherwise active in the union, should have no bearing on due process - all members of staff have a right to fair treatment under the company's disciplinary processes.

Drivers at almost all depots on Gary's line, the Central line, already voted to strike to demand his reinstatement. A planned strike was suspended to allow further talks. With no progress, it's right that RMT has extended the ballot to all drivers.

Vote yes!

FIGHT FOR PROPER FUNDING!

The government extended TfL's funding to 28 May. Negotiations between TfL, City Hall, and the Department for Transport continue.

The pattern of short-term funding bailouts is unsustainable. It suits the Tories, as every round of negotiations is another opportunity to attempt to attach strings to the deal. The government commissioned a financial review, conducted by accountancy firm KPMG, which was explicitly instructed to identify cuts and workplace reforms. The full contents of the KPMG review have never been published.

Sadiq Khan then commissioned his own independent review, which also urged cuts, and explicitly identified the TfL pension scheme as in need of reform.

Bosses previously told unions that jobs cuts or attacks on terms and conditions would not take place as long as the existing funding arrangements were in place. That commitment has already been broken by LU's decision to consolidate full-time and Night Tube train driver grades, meaning full-time drivers will now have to work nights. Driver jobs are also being cut on the Bakerloo line.

Previous funding deals committed TfL to returning to being "self-financing" by 2023. This is a trap; for a transport system like TfL to rely solely on fares is ridiculous. TfL needs stable, sustainable, central government funding. It is the only metropolitan transport system of its type in the world not to receive state subsidy. Pre-pandemic, it was reliant on fare revenue for nearly 75% of its income, nearly double the amount of similar systems in Paris and New York. Sadiq Khan should be demanding the restoration of the grant the Tories abolished in 2018, not making cuts proposals of his own.

RMT has already declared a dispute over grade consolidation for train drivers. That dispute should be progressed to a ballot as soon as possible. Drivers' union Aslef, although it has scandalously supported LU's grade consolidation plan, still has a live ballot mandate from a pre-emptive ballot it conducted in March over potential threats to terms and conditions.

As we lurch from one short-term funding deal to the next, it's time for RMT to prepare a wider ballot for pre-emptive action against the cuts we know the bosses will be planning.

SATS STOOD STILL?

Floor markers indicating a tiny "staff only" square, of 1.9m by 1.9m, have started to appear on platforms.

This is clearly in preparation for the return of SATS, platform duties for station staff. Presumably this is LU's way of helping us maintain distancing from passengers.

Expecting staff to spend an entire platform duty, or most of it, stood in a 1m x 1m square is ludicrous, and totally unworkable. Are passengers even likely to notice it?

Distancing is much harder on platforms, and with the Tube starting to fill up again, a far more sensible approach would be to just wait. Bring back SATS when it's safe, don't rush to return it.

MITIE CRACKDOWN

Since Mitie took over the security contract from Interserve, there's been a spike in overbearing and disciplinarian management practises.

Security workers are getting organised via RMT. The union must ensure they are supported and empowered to fight back against this culture of management intimidation and bullying.

If we make it clear to Mitie bosses we won't take their treatment lying down, we can get them to back off.

KHAN RE-ELECTED: DEMAND HE ACTS

Sadiq Khan's re-election as Mayor of London is significantly preferable to the possible alternative - a Tory victory.

But while keeping Shaun Bailey, the Tory candidate, out of City Hall means fending off even worse attacks on our conditions, we can't rely on Khan.

We need to put pressure on him to demand he acts on vague half-commitments in his manifesto around in-housing services such as cleaning. We must also demand he commits to not imposing cuts to jobs, conditions, and services.



ACTION ON MENTAL HEALTH

RMT's Disabled Members Advisory Committee marked the recent "Mental Health Awareness" week with a demand for "action, not just awareness."

TfL/LU have jumped on the "wellbeing" bandwagon, offering staff free accounts with mindfulness app Headspace. But token gestures aren't enough, especially when policies such as LU's punitive sickness/attendance policy contribute to mental ill health. If LU wants to reduce workplace stress, it could start by reducing working time: we want a four-day, 32-hour week!

Turnouts in union elections

Many national union elections, such as the recent RMT GS election, see very low turnouts from members.

This is due to a combination of factors: restrictions posed by anti-union laws, and shortcomings within unions in promoting the elections and building a culture of active participation, rather than passive service provision.

This article discusses how we can change this:
bit.ly/union-turnouts

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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