

# RMT NEWS

## FIGHT BACK ON STATIONS

After nearly four full years of Fit for the Future, it's time to fight back against the consequences of understaffing on stations.

Widespread lone working, unfilled vacancies and uncovered duties, punishing shift patterns, and spikes in antisocial behaviour and workplace violence against station staff are making working life intolerable for many station workers. To stand any chance of fixing the problems, we have to attack their root cause: an inadequate staffing level. That's why RMT London Transport Region is renewing our campaign for properly staffed stations, and building towards a likely industrial dispute with London Underground on the issue.

Over the past two years, we've seen a number of local disputes – on Bakerloo South, District Centre, Heathrow, and District East – over issues related to short staffing. Whilst these have resulted in some concessions, such as agreements by LU to cover all duties, the company has, at best, found temporary fixes rather than agreeing to increase the staffing level.

On District East, where RMT members voted by 94% to take industrial action over lone working, our employer has thrown TfL revenue enforcement staff – who aren't trained or licensed to work on LU stations – at the problem, not so much putting a plaster on the wound as rubbing salt in it. Those workers, who are members of Unite, have since voted by an overwhelming majority to strike over their own workplace issues.

LU cites the £90 million it loses every year in lost fares (almost certainly a conservative estimate) as one of the reasons it can't afford to hire more staff, but has run its own revenue department with 40% of positions vacant for over a decade. Now, rumours abound that it plans further cuts, by replacing RCI positions with a newly created revenue grade, paid the same rate as a CSA1 and with no chance of a permanent job at the full RCI pay rate. LU admit that more fare evasion leads to more assaults and their solution is to get rid of RCIs!

RMT says: enough is enough. It's time to fight back. To build towards a dispute, we need to talk to our workmates about the issues and help develop each other's confidence to fight back. If a dispute over station staffing has to be run in parallel with an ongoing dispute and likely ballot over pay/conditions, so be it.

## THE STATS

- 78% - increase in assaults on Revenue Control Inspectors in the past year alone
- 94% - percentage of members on District East who voted for industrial action against lone working
- 96% - percentage of WAASB reports generated because of ticketless travel
- 40% - percentage of RCI positions in the revenue department kept vacant
- 500 - approximate number of jobs slashed from stations as part of Fit for the Future (LU's initial plan to was to cut nearly 1,000: RMT industrial action forced concessions)

# STATIONS & REVENUE BULLETIN

## OUR DEMANDS

- An end to lone working
- A substantial, combine-wide increase in station staffing levels, including on Night Tube
- Fill all RCI vacancies on existing terms and conditions
- A 32-hour week to reduce fatigue and improve work/life balance
- Equalise the CSA grade: train all CSA2s to CSA1 standard and upgrade all CSA2 positions to CSA1

## CAN LU AFFORD IT?

LU claims the removal of its subsidy means it has no money to increase the staffing level. But let's look at some of the money it has wasted:

- £16 million: spent on the "Rostering and Coverage Tool", a farcical waste of time and money that ended up in the bin
- £90 million: the company's own figure for lost revenue, which it refuses to address, and is probably a conservative estimate
- £85 million: amount paid to engineering firm Bombardier in 2016 to buy them out of their contract for the SSL signalling upgrade after they messed up the works. The project is now nearly £900 million over budget.

Yes, the funding situation for TfL/LU is difficult since the Tories' abolished the central government subsidy (without a whisper of protest from our Labour mayor). But LU still makes an "operating surplus" of tens of millions of pounds, much of which is siphoned off by TfL to plug budget deficits of private bus companies! If bus travel was taken back into public ownership, this would also create additional funding.

We should not accept our bosses' pleas of poverty. They found the money to give themselves pay rises of up to 74% in the past few years. Our bosses do not have to work punishing shifts; they do not have to go weeks without spending proper time with their families because they have to get up at 03:00 for an 04:30 start time; they do not have to face weeks of disrupted sleep patterns due to working nights, or deal with the threat of assault at work. They work office hours, in comfortable office buildings, and are paid extremely handsomely for it. And these same bosses want to tell us they "can't afford" to implement measures that are essential for the wellbeing of their staff?

LU senior managers would be well advised to remember who actually makes the railway run. If senior managers didn't turn up for work, it's unlikely London's travelling public would notice. But if we don't turn up for work, stations don't open and trains don't run. Workers run the railway, and we should make no apology for demanding improvements.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Distribute this leaflet in your workplace and on staff WhatsApp groups
- Talk to your workmates about these issues and discuss the possibility of a dispute
- Get involved in your union: attend your local branch meetings
- Support RMT's national "Staff Our Stations" campaign: [www.rmt.org.uk/campaigns/rail/sos-staff-our-stations](http://www.rmt.org.uk/campaigns/rail/sos-staff-our-stations)