

# STATIONS AND REVENUE COUNCIL FUNCTIONAL COUNCIL (SFC) RMT REPS REPORT – 2019



For the purposes of the London Underground “machinery of negotiation”, the structures via which collective bargaining is conducted on LU, LU organises all work into “functions”. Within each, a “functional council” meets to conduct negotiations on behalf of the workers in that function. This is also sometimes referred to as “level two” of the machinery, with level one being the local committees attended by workplace IR reps.

All operational station and revenue grades (CSA, CSS, CSM, and RCI) are part of the stations and revenue control function, and are represented on the functional council by six RMT representatives and four TSSA representatives.

Your RMT representatives on SFC for 2019 were:

- Eamonn Lynch (Jubilee South branch, 2017-2019 term)
- Neil Cochrane (Hammersmith & City branch, 2017-2019 term)
- Paul Schindler (Morden & Oval branch, 2018-2020 term; Staff Side Secretary)
- Daniel Randall (Bakerloo branch, 2018-2020 term)
- Glen Hart (Morden & Oval branch, 2019-2021 term)
- Jared Wood (Neasden branch, 2019-2021 term)

This report gives a summary of some of the key issues over which your SFC reps have negotiated with the company this year, the workplace campaigns we have supported, and other aspects of our work. We have produced this report in the interests of ensuring that we are accountable to the members and branches that elected us.

## **Uncovered duties and understaffing**

At the end of 2018 and the beginning of 2019, two cover groups – Bakerloo South and District Centre – went into dispute over the issue of uncovered duties and understaffing. On Bakerloo South, a strike ballot took place, returning an 88% majority for action on a 66% turnout. Strikes were named for 26 December and 14 January. On District Centre, a strike ballot in early March returned a 95% majority for action, but unfortunately only achieved a 43% turnout.

The Bakerloo South dispute led to a settlement in early 2019 whereby management agreed that “every effort must be made to cover all duties within the resources available”, and that a comprehensive BNS/staffing review would be conducted on the area. Following the District Centre dispute and various Level One referrals, the scope of this settlement was widened to include the following areas where management agreed to conduct BNS/staffing reviews:

- District Centre
- District Junction
- Metropolitan North
- Northern Edgware
- Northern West End
- Northern South

These reviews are at various stages of completion. Frustratingly, the Bakerloo South and District Centre reviews, which were the first to be completed, have still not formally concluded. However, at the time of writing, it appears that the Bakerloo South review will create two additional jobs. Although this is an insufficient outcome, with RMT continuing to push for further increases, it does show that a sustained local campaign can result in winning staffing increases and new positions.

Throughout the year, local managers have attempted to deliberately leave duties uncovered in order to save on overtime budgets. Wherever this practise has been challenged, by local reps working in conjunction with us, it has soon been stopped. If this occurs on your area, write to your AM and Head of Customer Services, citing the agreement “every effort must be made to cover all duties within the resources available”, and CC to SFC reps.

### **Lone working/workplace violence**

Throughout the year we have worked with local reps over a variety of issues concerning workplace violence, many caused by lone working. In May and June, we worked with both the local IR and Health and Safety reps on the Heathrow Group to build a campaign against lone working during Night Tube at Heathrow Terminal 5. The local RMT branch, Piccadilly and District West, passed a resolution declaring a dispute and planning a ballot of both station staff and Night Tube train operators. This was enough to force concessions from the company, with an agreement now in place to eliminate lone working at Terminal 5.

In August, we also worked with local IR and H&S reps, and the East Ham branch, to build a dispute against lone working on the District East cover group. Members were balloted and returned a 68% majority for action, which was subsequently called in the form of an instruction to work from a place of safety and not attend any incidents alone.

We intend to expand campaigning on the issues underlying both of these disputes via a network-wide “Justice for Station Staff” dispute in 2020.

### **Accounting errors/POM irregularities**

This year, we have been involved with a number of individual cases where members have faced dismissal for alleged ticket office accounting errors and POM irregularities. In April, one of these cases – that of Harvinder Billing, CSA on the Heathrow Area – developed into a dispute and industrial action ballot, although the ballot was later suspended after Bro. Billing secured alternative employment elsewhere.

SFC reps continued to press these issues via the Revenue Forum, a subgroup of the Functional Council. In particular we have pressed for:

- The right to have a witness present during any/all accounting processes
- The right to request additional training
- A proper system of ticket office training, rather than the patchy ad hoc system that presently exists

We have made some moderate progress in this regard, with LU agreeing to reinstate a system of line-based, designated ticket office coaches.

**“Career Conversations”**

Throughout 2019, SFC reps have been challenging management’s plan to introduce a requirement for CSMs to conduct “career conversations” with other staff, and then rate/grade them (red, amber, or green) on the basis of their responses.

We opposed this proposal as an unnecessary imposition on CSMs, and an entirely unfair and unreasonable way of categorising other staff. Via challenges mounted in negotiation, we have succeeded in having the introduction of this proposal paused entirely.

**Electronic staff files**

Following management’s announcement that they intended to convert all documents held in staff files into digital format, SFC reps raised a number of concerns about the confidentiality of the electronic files. We are continuing to negotiate with the company over this, and are pushing for the following:

- An automatic warning box requiring reconfirmation of credentials
- Only AMs to have overall access to medical data, which they can then share with CSMs on a need-to-know basis

**“Code 36”**

After sustained objections and challenges from RMT, the “Code 36” scorecard category, which AMs used as a pretext to force staff to confront passengers presenting at an exit gate with a Code 36, and attempt to shepherd them through the station to a POM, was withdrawn. We were informed at an SFC Revenue subgroup that the exit threshold for Oyster Cards was being lowered, meaning passengers would be able to exit, going into negative balance.

**The attack on the RCI grade**

In November, LU formally announced plans to create a two-tier revenue workforce by creating a new “Revenue Control Officer” (RCO) grade, paid at current CSA1 pay rates. RMT has entirely opposed this plan and, along with our TSSA counterparts, presented the following statement to LU at the 19 November meeting of the SFC:

*Staff side’s position remains that LU must immediately fill all existing RCI vacancies, on existing RCI terms and conditions, populating the RCI establishment up to the current level of 237.*

*We oppose this proposal and see it as an attempt to replace RCI with RCOs, a reduction in the rate for the job of circa £20,000. We have no confidence that this would not lead to the phasing out and eventual abolition of the RCI grade altogether. This proposal is a provocative and wholly inadequate response to our members’ concerns about workplace violence. It does nothing to address the issues around lone working and safe working practises. It also does nothing to increase the rate of fraud detection. To meaningfully address the £90 million lost in uncollected revenue, LU must fill RCI jobs.*

*Staff side also maintains its position that anyone working on LU stations should be directly employed by LU, and work only on LU. Consultation on the proposal that 150 CPOS staff work on LU stations must also therefore be conducted via this council, rather than the pan-TfL Workplace Violence Forum.*

*Both unions will now be referring this to our head offices.*

We are now preparing for an industrial action ballot of our RCI members.

**Rep liaison**

Throughout 2019, your SFC reps have attempted to improve communication and contact with Level One reps. This included organising a day-long rep liaison event on 17 October, which gave Level One reps an opportunity to directly hold SFC reps to account, to discuss strategies, and to conduct some refresher training on some of the basics of the rep role.

We intend to continue to run events of this type throughout 2020.

**Working with other grades**

As representatives of an all-grades, industrial union, RMT SFC reps have supported campaigning activity involving other grades. In particular we have been prominently involved in the “Justice for Cleaners” campaign, with RMT SFC reps regularly attending the Cleaning Grades Committee and supporting the cleaner activists in campaigning and organising activity.

**LU pay/conditions**

In February 2019, RMT began negotiations with LU about pay and conditions for directly-employed staff, ahead of the expiry of our previous deal in April 2019. Two RMT SFC reps have been present at all negotiation meetings with LU, both internally and at Acas, throughout the year. We have circulated function-specific material on various aspects of the RMT pay claim and have worked with local reps to build up members’ mood and confidence for an industrial campaign to win a decent settlement on pay and conditions. This will be a key focus for early 2020.

**Communication, campaigning, and propaganda**

Below are thumbnail samples of some the newsletters and bulletins your SFC reps have produced throughout 2019. Links to access the documents online are given as footnotes.

*SFC News, February 2019<sup>1</sup>*

*SFC pay update, February 2019<sup>2</sup>*



*SFC News, Shorter Working Week Special, May 2019*



*SFC News, June 2019<sup>3</sup>*



*SFC News, November 2019<sup>4</sup>*



<sup>1</sup> [https://www.rmtlondoncalling.org.uk/files/sfc\\_february\\_19.pdf](https://www.rmtlondoncalling.org.uk/files/sfc_february_19.pdf)  
<sup>2</sup> [https://www.rmtlondoncalling.org.uk/files/pay\\_2019\\_003.pdf](https://www.rmtlondoncalling.org.uk/files/pay_2019_003.pdf)  
<sup>3</sup> [https://www.rmtlondoncalling.org.uk/files/sfc\\_february\\_19\\_2\\_0.pdf](https://www.rmtlondoncalling.org.uk/files/sfc_february_19_2_0.pdf)  
<sup>4</sup> [https://www.rmtlondoncalling.org.uk/files/sfc\\_news\\_november\\_19.pdf](https://www.rmtlondoncalling.org.uk/files/sfc_news_november_19.pdf)

**Looking forward to 2020**

As station workers on London Underground, we have key fights ahead of us in 2020. We are currently preparing an all-grades ballot for industrial action to win a decent settlement on pay/conditions. SFC reps are currently liaising with local reps and membership secretaries to audit membership lists and ensure they are accurate and ballot ready.

A ballot of our RCI members for action to oppose the introduction of the RCO grade will also begin in early 2020. Furthermore, following discussions at a mass reps' meeting on 7 November, SFC reps also began preparing for a network-wide stations dispute, taking up a number of industrial issues, mainly relating to issues arising from short/understaffing. The November meeting of the RMT London Transport Regional Council meeting passed the following resolution:

*We note the resolution passed by the LTRC [in October] calling for a combine wide ballot of station grades over London Underground's failure to properly address the issue of workplace violence. We also note the call from RCI members for a ballot of revenue grades in response to London Underground's plan to replace RCIs with a lower paid new grade, RCO.*

*London Underground has provocatively presented this plan as a "response" to the issue of workplace violence. The response offers nothing to station grades suffering from threats and violence at work, often when lone working. It is a just a thinly veiled attempt to cut the pay of the RCI role. The RCO proposal is an insult to station grades as well as current RCIs.*

*We further note that the Trains Functional Council is discussing trade union demands to improve Boxing Day payments to train operators. We support demand, but It is a huge injustice that station staff are expected to work on Boxing Day with no additional compensation at all.*

*RMT must fight for fair treatment of all members, we reject a two-tier workforce which has RCOs doing the work of RCIs or CSA2s doing the work of CSA1s on lower salaries.*

*We believe these injustices must be met head on by RMT. We ask the NEC to consult with other branches in the London Transport region with a view to balloting all station grades members for strike action and action short of strike action to further the following demands:*

***Justice for Station Staff******Give us a safe workplace***

- *End lone working*
- *Fill all vacant RCI vacancies*
- *Audit all stations to ensure there are safe levels of staffing, places of safety that are fit for purpose, rosters that do not create unacceptable levels of fatigue.*

***No 2nd class workforce***

- *No introduction of RCO on • 20K less than current RCIs.*
- *All CSAs to be made CSA1.*
- *Pay station grades the same additional payments for working Boxing Day as those paid to train operators.*

Building this dispute towards a ballot for industrial action will also be a key part of our work in the coming year.

The dates for next year's Functional Council meetings, and the deadline for referrals from Level One committees, are below. We encourage all reps to use the machinery as actively as possible. Any rep who wants additional support navigating this process, or advice on how to formulate a referral, should speak to an SFC rep.

<b>FUNCTIONAL COUNCIL MEETING DATE</b>	<b>DEADLINE FOR REFERRALS FROM LEVEL ONE</b>
Tuesday 28 April	Tuesday 14 April
Friday 19 June	Friday 5 June
Friday 18 September	Friday 4 September
Friday 27 November	Friday 13 November

If you are a Level One rep, please ensure you have notified your SFC reps of the dates of your prelim, Level One meeting, and feedback days for the coming year so we can best support you. Please also share your Level One minutes with your SFC reps.

Your SFC reps for 2020 will be:

- Paul Schindler (Morden & Oval branch, 2018-2020 term; Staff Side Secretary) - 07730 032665
- Daniel Randall (Bakerloo branch, 2018-2020 term) – 07961 040618
- Glen Hart (Morden & Oval branch, 2019-2021 term) – 07809 471289
- Mac McKenna (Morden & Oval branch, 2020-2022 term) – 07801 071363
- Norman Thomson (Finsbury Park branch, 2020-2022 term) – 07853 288184

At the time of writing this report, the branch allocation for each SFC rep had not been agreed. Once this is agreed, all Level One reps will be notified which SFC rep is responsible for supporting the reps in their branch area.

Following the election of Jared Wood to the London Transport Region seat on the RMT National Executive Committee for the 2020-2022 term, a casual vacancy has been created for an RMT SFC rep, which will be filled following a nomination and election period, due to take place at RMT branch meetings in January-February 2020. Eamonn Lynch (07578 769943) will continue to cover until the election is concluded.

SFC reps are based on the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor at Griffith House, 280 Old Marylebone Road, NW1 5RJ, but frequently work from other locations, so are best contacted via email or phone. All SFC reps' email addresses can be found in the TfL directory.