

RMT - UNITY IS STRENGTH

CARMARTHEN BRANCH NEWSLETTER

ISSUE4 27TH MARCH 2009

MARCH'S BRANCH MEETING

The last branch meeting in Haverfordwest was a big success and one of the best attended meetings for at least 10 years. 21 members were present with 14 from Network Rail.

The main aim of the meeting was to elect a desperately needed Health & Safety rep for Whitland and Haverfordwest Network Rail depots. This was achieved with Bro Chris Parlor being elected on the night. Paid release will now be sought for Chris so he can attend a Health & Safety course in Swansea as soon as possible.

Other issues discussed were leave carried over due to sickness and the way in which this can be taken, an issue with taking works vehicles home when you are on call, and the lack of

computer equipment at the depots which is impacting on the access to safety briefs.

Branch meetings are there to discuss your concerns and can give you direct access to your reps, answers may not be forthcoming on the night but questions will be taken away and feedback given to the members concerned.

Building a strong Branch will directly benefit every member. As we fill vacant reps positions and those reps undertake training, they grow in confidence and are able to deal with sometimes hostile management situations. Where decisions have gone unchallenged in the past through lack of training, knowledge, and experience we can start to claw back

some of the agreements and conditions lost or swept aside. Management will quickly learn that it is far better to work with us than against us! This is what a strong well organised Branch can do for you.

It was decided on the night by the members present that a quarterly meeting of the Branch will be held west of Carmarthen. The next likely venue will be Whitland in June (date and meeting venue to be confirmed).

Another benefit to Branch meetings is the social aspect, sometimes opposite shifts and differing work locations mean that it is difficult to catch up with the people you work with. A Branch meeting is an ideal place for this.

TRAINCREW CHARTER - GUARDS UNDER ATTACK

Across the rail network the essential safety and operational role of the guard is being undermined in various ways, and at this critical time it is important to assure guards that the RMT will do everything at its disposal to resist these challenges.

It is not for emotional or nostalgic reasons that the RMT make the case for a guard in charge. The full safety and operational role of the guard remains as necessary today as it has always been. Also strength should be drawn from the fact that every time passen-

gers are asked the question, their definitive response is 'we want guards on trains'. Shortly all guards should receive a copy of the RMT's Traincrew Charter through the post. All guards need to get behind this because profits and cost cutting are now all rail firms priorities.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

- **The next Branch Meeting will be held on: Thursday 23rd April 2009 at the GWRSA Club, Carmarthen at 19.15hrs.**
- *Minutes for March's Branch Meeting are available by email on request from the Branch Secretary.*
- *Agendas for future meetings will now be sent out by email to those members who have supplied their email addresses.*

BRANCH MEMBER BREAKDOWN

ARRIVA TRAINS WALES	55
NETWORK RAIL	38
NETWORK RAIL (CARILLION)	38
AT SEAT CATERING	9
DB SCHENKER	2
FASTLINE (JARVIS RAIL)	1
ICG	1
CARILLION (GTRM)	1
FIRST GREAT WESTERN	1
SERCO RAIL	1

Does your Branch have your best interests a heart?

Which Branch? - Nearest to your home or nearest to where you work? It is **your** choice.

A situation occurred recently where a member of another Branch who works as train crew at Carmarthen approached Carmarthen Branch and asked to transfer in. The reason for this was that he had seen the improvements within his depot and in the union locally, he was impressed with the newsletter and the fact that his local and company council representatives attended Branch meetings and gave reports on grade/depot issues.

As it is the individual's choice which Branch they belong to the paperwork was filled in and sent to the other Branch. Carmarthen Branch then received word that this member of train crew was staying in his original Branch because the Secretary (who he had no contact with for the last two years) contacted him to say where he lived meant he should stay in that Branch.

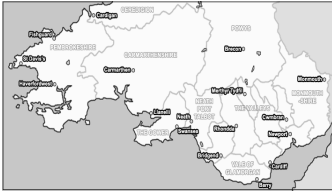
Why? It is every Secretary's duty that if one of their members wants to transfer to another Branch that is local to their workplace, that contains the majority of their grade and also their representatives that it is seen to as a matter of urgency. Clearly in this case the Branch Secretary did not put the member's interests first. Again why? And what has 'where you live' got anything to do with it?

Carmarthen Branch has many members that work and live in different locations that contain closer Branches and through contact it is made clear that if at any time they want to transfer to another Branch for **whatever** reason they are free to do so (and two have done so). We are more than happy for them to remain as Carmarthen Branch members and value their input, but to deny or talk someone out of transferring for reasons that clearly disadvantage the member is an injustice that must stop.

It is not just one grade at a depot that benefits from being

in the same Branch, it is beneficial for all. Decisions can have an adverse affect on other grades especially if they are undergoing regrading. If the two grades are not in the same Branch what platform do they have to hear each others plans and input into them? Branch meetings allow this to take place instead of the rumours and finger pointing that has been happening recently at Carmarthen Station. Companies seek to divide and conquer; we should not be doing it to ourselves for them.

We are facing difficult times, a recession and the resulting cost cutting and job losses are cause for great concern. This is a time where workers need to be organised and Branches need to be as strong as possible to face the tough times ahead, a splintered workforce is a divided one where pointless rivalry can flourish. Our energy would be much better spent standing up to profiteering companies than competing over members.



Protecting empires is counter-productive and doesn't serve us the members best interests.

Bro Chris Parlor has been elected as Health & Safety Representative for Network Rail's Haverfordwest and Whitland Depots.

Branch Women's Officer?

It was discussed at February's Branch meeting that we elect a Women's Branch Officer to co-ordinate and ensure women's interests are equally served by this Branch.

The railway industry and indeed many Branch meetings are male dominated. There are 11 women Branch members out of 150 and you

only have to read the conference report opposite to see that some very important issues are never heard at a Branch meeting. We would like to place this matter on the agenda for April's Branch meeting, so we would like to invite as many of the female members of the Branch to attend as possible.

Cleaners, Traincrew, booking office staff and 'on train' catering stewards are the varied roles of our female members and there must be issues that need addressing. It may be awkward to approach a male representative with a problem so a Women's Officer would be an ideal point of contact.



'It may be Awkward to approach a male representative with a problem'.

Branch & Reps Contact Details

Following a request from the last Branch meeting we were asked to publish contact details for the Branch Officers and company reps.

Branch Secretary

Mark Snook 07920493203
carmarthen@rmt.co.uk

Assistant Secretary

Jim Mills 07766802627
jimmyamills@hotmail.com

Assistant Chairperson

Ken Duxberry 07980176436
ken.duxberry@btconnect.com

Network Rail Branch Reps

Welders LDC

Kevin Chivers
kjkchivers@tiscali.co.uk

Haverfordwest/ Whitland Depot's LDC

Garry Rees 07901512037
gary.rees62@tiscali.co.uk

Haverfordwest/ Whitland Depot's Health & Safety

Chris Parlor
chrisparlor@btinternet.com

Arriva/At Seat Branch Reps

Arriva LDC

Mark Snook & Ken Duxberry

Arriva Company Council

Jim Mills

Arriva Health & Safety

Sonia Jones 07894045873
Matthew Rees 07751620895

At Seat C Council/H&S

David Starr 07722296962
swales81664@hotmail.com



Up to date information is emailed out to all members who supply their email address.

RMT Women's Conference Report By Cynthia Davies

This years conference was held on the 6th and 7th of March in Newcastle. It was one of the biggest attended women's conferences to date. 30 women attended this year, there were 12 new delegates I myself was one of them.

There were 9 resolutions put to the vote of which two would go through to the National A.G.M.

1. RMT know your rights guide - new and expectant mothers.
2. Women and war.
3. Women and the economic crisis.
4. Women in Israel and Gaza.
5. RMT women's newsletter.
6. Teenage pregnancy.
7. Flexible working.
8. Women and the economic crisis-redundancies.
9. Human trafficking.

The two to go through to the AGM are human trafficking and flexible working; both with a unanimous vote.

There were two workshops, women's health and safety and

women and the financial crisis. I attended health and safety this was the most popular workshop, 23 women attended and 7 went to the other.

We had a speaker from abortion rights. Who pointed out that although Northern Ireland is part of U.K. if women need to have an abortion they have to come to Britain and go private, which can cost a few thousand pounds. Having to find the money can be very difficult especially now with the job market the way it is.

There are a number of reasons why a woman may need an abortion for e.g. rape, incest so why should they have the added pressure of finding the money in a short time space. After 22 weeks you can't have an abortion [except for extreme circumstances] and some times the only way to get the money is through loan sharks which puts added pressure on

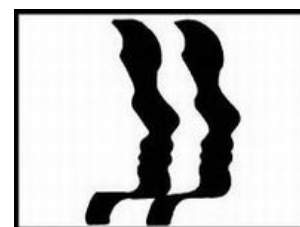
a family with a low wage.

The next conference is to be held in Sheffield. The chairperson will be Mandy Evans from First Great Western based at Swansea.

I found this conference to be very informative and well organised, and meeting so many active women in the RMT has made me realise that women are getting more involved in the union and our rights.

The only real down side I found was that we don't have many women attending from Wales. 3 women attended from Wales this year myself from Arriva, another delegate from Valley lines and one from First Great Western. But that is an improvement on last year when only one attended. It would be nice to have a few more members attend from Carmarthen Branch and from other Branches across Wales.

So far this year the Branch has committed delegates to four separate conferences.



Cynthia Davies was only one of three Women from Wales to attend the conference.

**BRANCH SECRETARY
CONTACT DETAILS**

Mark Snook
4 Dandorlan Road
Burry Port
Carmarthenshire
SA16 0RA

Phone: 07920493203

Email:
carmarthen@rmt.org.uk

**RMT ON THE
WEB:
WWW.RMT.ORG.UK**

**BRANCH
CORRESPONDENCE**

If there is any item of the Branch correspondence you would like to read or obtain a copy of, please either come to the next Branch meeting or contact the Branch Secretary who will arrange for you to receive it by email or post. (RMT members only)

**BRANCH MEETING
MINUTES**

You can now obtain the March 19th Branch Meeting minutes by email. If you would like to receive a copy of these please email a request to the Branch Secretary and they will be sent out to you. (Carmarthen Branch members only)

UNION RULE BOOK

You can obtain a copy of the Union Rule book which governs how the Union operates and how the Branch is managed by going online to: www.rmt.org.uk

Date	Branch Correspondence Summary
19/2/09	RMT Traincrew Charter
25/2/09	Unity Trust – Confirmation of details change
25/2/09	FGW – Trolley Risk Assessment
25/2/09	RMT New Branch Secretaries Training Course 30/3 – 1/4 *
25/2/09	Election Result – L Fisher Elected CC Rep Arriva Station Staff
26/2/09	Application for Reduced Rate Contribution Refund 2008/2009
26/2/09	Election of Delegate to Wales TUC Women's Conference *
1/3/09	Request by President of Catering Grades Conference *
3/3/09	Receipt of Area Council Nomination Form – K Chivers
3/3/09	March For Jobs, Justice and Climate 28 th March 2009
3/3/09	RMT Parliamentary Group Report, 3 December 2008 – March 2009
4/3/09	Confirmation of delegates to National Secretary's Conference *
5/3/09	RMT to support 'No2EU Yes To Democracy' 4 th June 2009
7/3/09	RMT Officers/Reps Training Course 24 th April 2009
6/3/09	Invitation to Re-Affiliate to the United Campaign
11/3/09	RMT National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Conference
11/3/09	Leavers and Joiners Report February 2009
11/3/09	The Decisions Of The Council Of Executives - February 2009
12/3/09	Manning Levels – Agreed Traincrew Establishments
12/3/09	TUC Congress Awards 2009
12/3/09	Redundancies – East Midlands Trains
12/3/09	Proposed Closure of BT Police Regional Control Rooms
16/3/09	Resignation of CGL Thomas as Branch Chairperson.

**HARMONISATION OF INFRASTRUCTURE TERMS & CONDITIONS
NETWORK RAIL**

Further to previous correspondence on the above, I can advise you that a further meeting of the Joint Working Party has taken place this week at which Network Rail tabled documents for Supervisory, Technical and Administrative grades which the company described as its final position. However, with regards to supervisors, this is subject to the outcome of the Job Evaluation process.

With regards to the Infrastructure Maintainer grades, no final document was presented as the company indicated that further work was needed on job descriptions and the Job Evaluation process had not been completed. Your negotiators voiced serious concerns with this being yet another delay in reaching a final position.

Network Rail suggested further meetings on both the job descriptions on Job Evaluation and proposed a JWP on 8 April at which management say they hope to be in position to confirm the conclusion of the Job Evaluation work and therefore to table a final IM document. Your union will make it clear to Network Rail that this meeting is the last opportunity to produce a final document for all grades affected by the negotiations.

Following the meeting with the company on 8 April, the matter will be placed before the Executive Committee and I will write to you again with the details of any decision taken.

Yours sincerely

Bob Crow