

CWU SPECIAL REPORT:

ROYAL MAIL'S FINAL SOLUTION TO DESTROY YOUR TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Royal Mail have reconfirmed that they wish, within the next few months, to:

- Introduce Team Working and Team leaders into all workplaces.
- Remove seniority as the method of duty selection.

Your Union is totally opposed to Royal Mail's plans and the Union's Conferences have consistently and universally rejected these Royal Mail policies.

Indeed, in 1996 when Royal Mail management tried to impose Team Leaders and Team Working this was the subject of opposition from the union resulting in an industrial action ballot. In fact, this Union balloted the members for Industrial Action twice within a few months and achieved a massive Yes vote for strike action in opposition to Team Working and Royal Mail's plans for the employee agenda.

The resolution to that dispute was a Joint Working Party which explored new ways of working including Team Working. This Joint Working Party consisting of senior managers and Postal Executive members visited companies in both this Country and the United States to look at new ways of working. This Joint Working Party recommended that Team Working and Team Leaders would not work in Royal Mail offices.

However, ten years on Royal Mail have now decided to introduce Team Working in all offices from next year. They intend to increase supervision in the workplace by introducing working Team Leaders.

The actual job description of the Team Leader is currently being advertised on the Royal Mail internet. The job description confirms the Union's worst fears and the reason why we are so opposed

to the concept of Team Working and Team Leaders. Some argue that teams already exist whether it is drivers, delivery sector workers, LSM workers or lobby staff. However, the fundamental fact is that Royal Mail wants to make all staff work cheaper, faster and harder for less reward as a result of introducing their version of Team Working.

The plans Royal Mail have for Team Working and Team Leaders are:

- Teams will be between 12 and 16 staff.
- The Team Leader will decide what duty you do on a daily basis.
- Team Leaders will be paid about £21,000 per year and will be mainly from the current operational grade staff!
- The Team Leader will introduce all change without negotiations with the Union. Their aim is to make the Union redundant in the workplace.
- Removing reserves and making the rest of the team cover absence for no cost, i.e. absorption.
- Teams to be flexible to specifically get rid of seniority, individual duty schedules and scheduled starts and finishing times.
- Teams to continually absorb extra work and reduce costs described as continuous improvement and problem solving.
- Isolate teams from Union protection and involvement in the future.
- The Team Leader will decide when you can have your annual leave.

- The Team Leader will resource the team on the basis of cost effectiveness and on the basis of minimum traffic data.
- The Team Leader will decide on the number of full time duties and part time duties with the team.
- Levels of overtime and scheduled attendance and its allocation will be decided by the Team Leader.
- The Team Leader will ensure all team members operate within individual performance standards which are based on 100% BSI, i.e. flat out.
- The aim will be to remove all National, Area and Local agreements as the Team Leader will decide.
- Individuals will have to be flexible and develop multi-skilling as they may be moved to another team or another unit as work dictates.
- Each team member will have an appraisal with the Team Leader and regular one 2 ones with to the Team Leader who can then assess their individual performance.
- The Team Leader will carry out both attendance and conduct interviews and issue penalties within teams.
- The Team leader will have a role in recruitment and development within the team.
- The Team Leader will be based on 60% managerial and 40% operational workloads.
- The Team Leader will increase the number of managers within your office and, therefore, will be mainly from the OPG grade.

Royal Mail claim that Team Working and Team Leaders will enable them to change at pace which will help in beating the competition.

The Union has demonstrated over a number of years that we are willing to embrace and shape change provided it is negotiated with the Union. The CWU has assisted Royal Mail in achieving record quality levels and sustainable profits as well as deliver substantial benefits with the members.

However, as the current DGSP, Dave Ward, rightly said in a document at the time of the

Employee Agenda dispute “We do have an in principle objection to team work. We make no apologies for objecting to Team Working because Royal Mail’s reasons for wanting it are not in our members best interests.”

The fact is Royal Mail’s Team Working agenda is now over 20 years old. Many leading world economists accept that Team Working does not deliver or sustain competitiveness; instead it causes unnecessary division between work areas and makes teams forget about the wider company. In short, it demoralises and alienates the workforce.

The American Postal Service abandoned Team Working in the late 90s as workers disliked it so much it ended up reducing productivity.

In addition, Royal Mail have for some time had an agenda to remove seniority as the method for duty selection. They are attempting to use the new age discrimination legislation as a reason to remove seniority. The truth is that seniority is not outlawed as a result of this legislation. Indeed, the CWU Division legal advice states that seniority can continue as it rewards loyalty to the company.

Royal Mail has written to the Union detailing what they wish to replace seniority with. For your information we have reproduced the letter’s contents:

“We said at our last meeting that we would consult you on the options for the process and criteria in making selection decision for Operational grade duties and roles, which will replace seniority.

I intend to make a recommendation to the business that people are selected for duties/roles on the following basis where seniority currently applies.”

STAGE 1: Vacant duty advertised to the relevant population (i.e. the office concerned) setting out the basic criteria such as training or skills (e.g. driving license required). People will then be invited to apply for the duty or role.

STAGE 2: Those meeting the criteria for the duty or role will be sifted on the basis of their performance in terms of

- Clear attendance (i.e. no current warnings).
- Clear conduct record.
- No substantiated customer complaints in the past 12 months.
- No incidents of lateness for duty in past 12 months.

There are three options we have considered for the final selection stage as follows:

Option 1 – ‘Random Selection’

STAGE 3: *If more people still meet the criteria than there are vacancies available the manager will select the names randomly (e.g. by placing in a hat and the first name drawn is selected).*

Option 2 – ‘Best Fit’

STAGE 3: *If more people still meet the criteria than there are vacancies available the manager will select, at their discretion, on the basis of “best fit” and/or the development needs of the individual.*

Option 2 – ‘Full Assessment’

STAGE 3: *Each and every duty or role will have a full person specification. If more people still meet the criteria than there are vacancies available the manager will select by undertaking a full assessment of each person’s capability against the person specification.*

I am minded to recommend option 1 “best fit” since, in my view, it offers the optimum performance in terms of the following opportunities and risks.”

You will not be surprised that Royal Mail’s preferred solution is that managers choose your job. This is against the fact that results consistently show that the highest score in ‘Have Your Say’ interviews is that managers do not treat staff fairly.

Seniority has existed in the Post Office for over 150 years. It does not discriminate against anyone on the basis of colour, sex, creed, or indeed age as the date you joined and the length of your service determines the duty you do. Moreover, it rewards loyalty to the company. Royal Mail’s plans to abolish it and replace it with the manager choosing will, in our opinion, cause unprecedented claims of prejudice and direct discrimination.

Seniority is not about picking easy jobs, as the Union believes in a fair and manageable workload. Instead it is the fairest and most transparent way of selecting duties.

Conclusion

The Union must make sure that we oppose both of these Royal Mail plans quickly and decisively. In our view there is no hiding place on this issue. You are either opposed to Team Working/Team Leaders and the removal of seniority, or you don’t believe in a Union in the workplace and our member’s right to have a say on their local Terms and Conditions.

The Union must be prepared to fight these Royal Mail plans with an industrial action ballot of the membership.

All Branches in London are totally opposed to both Team Working/Team Leaders and the removal of seniority and will apply pressure on both our National Officers and elected National Executive members to either force Royal Mail to back down on their plans or to launch an industrial action ballot of the membership to resist Royal Mail’s plans.

In the meantime, we will be asking all members to sign a petition to show your resistance to Royal Mail’s plans to introduce Team Leaders, Team Working and remove seniority.

Remember, Royal Mail’s plans have nothing to do with making Royal Mail a great place to work. Instead, it is about control. Their plans are designed to make you work harder, faster and cheaper for less reward. Introducing Team Leaders will make Royal Mail work places the most supervised in Britain. Moreover, they remove the Union’s right to negotiate on your behalf in the work place. Instead, the Team leader will be the only one who decides what changes take place.

There is absolutely no doubt that all members’ Terms and Conditions will be severely eroded if Royal Mail’s plans are introduced.

Quite simply, all members are faced with a stark but far reaching choice. You either stand up oppose and, if necessary, fight Royal Mail’s plans to introduce Team Leaders and Team Working by abolishing seniority.

Or

By your inactivity and silence Royal Mail impose changes which will allow them to remove your Terms and Conditions layer by layer in the full knowledge that the membership will not fight and oppose their plans.

UNITE TO FIGHT

A circular by the London Regional Committee

South East London
Postal & Counter Branch

East London
Postal Branch

Mount Pleasant
International Branch

London South West
Branch

London 7 Branch

West London
Postal Branch

London West End
Branch

North/North West
London Branch

London Parcels and Stations
AMAL

London NWC and C Branch

Croydon & Sutton AMAL

Harrow & District

Kingston Area

Northern Home Counties Postal

Romford AMAL

South & East Thames AMAL

South West Middlesex

Watford No 1

COMING TO
A WORKPLACE
NEAR YOU

ROYAL MAILS

FINAL SOLUTION

THE RETURN OF TEAM LEADERS AND TEAM WORKING

OUR MISSION:

TO INCREASE ROYAL MAILS PROFITS AND REDUCE COSTS

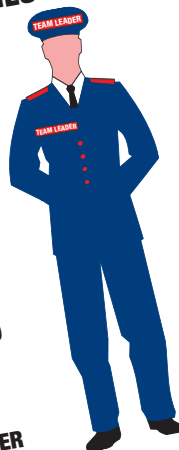
WE HAVE
THE POWER TO SACK YOU

WE WILL
REMOVE SENIORITY

WE WILL
MAKE YOU MORE FLEXIBLE

WE WILL
CHOOSE WHAT JOB YOU DO

WE INTEND
TO MAKE YOU WORK
HARDER-FASTER- CHEAPER



WE WILL
DEAL WITH YOUR CONDUCT
AND ATTENDANCE

WE WILL
INTRODUCE MORE
PART-TIMERS

WE WILL
GET TEAMS TO COMPETE
AGAINST EACH OTHER

WE WILL
REMOVE THE CWU
FROM THE WORKPLACE

**SOUNDS LIKE A GREAT PLACE TO
WORK WE THINK NOT!
UNITE TO FIGHT**

