

# BRANCH OFFICIALS BULLETIN

COMMUNICATION  
WORKERS UNION

Weekly information from the Communication Workers Union

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## GENERAL

### 90

#### **Liaison Meetings with CWU Group MPs**

Meetings up to the Summer Recess have now been arranged with CWU supported MPs and, for your information, I list below the dates of the meetings and those nominated to attend:

#### **14 March**

Peter Donaghy, Graham Colk, Andy Kerr and 1 representative from Scotland

#### **9 May**

Steve Fishwick, Graham Colk, John Holmes and 1 representative from Wales

#### **11 July**

PFMC members to be nominated and 1 representative from the North East Region.

Billy Hayes

General Secretary

### 91

#### **Education & Training Courses – Northern Ireland**

The following Education & Training courses have been scheduled in Belfast:

#### **Health & Safety Stage I**

20 – 24 March 2006

#### **2 Day Union Skills**

12 – 13 April 2006

#### **Union Skills II**

15 – 19 May 2006

#### **Health & Safety Stage II**

5 – 9 June 2006

#### **2 Day Union Skills**

4 – 5 July 2006

Nominations should be made on an application form for Union courses and returned as soon as possible to Trish Lavelle, Head of Education & Training, CWU Education & Training Centre, Alvescot Lodge, Alvescot, Bampton, Oxon OX18 2PY. Telephone: 01993 843373; Fax: 01993 840960; email: mtodd@cwu.org

### 92

#### **Procedures for Considering Requests for Bucket Collections and Document Distribution at Annual Conference 2006**

#### **Bucket Collections**

1. All requests for bucket collections to be taken during Annual Conference shall normally be submitted in writing to the General Secretary. Such written requests should include background material/information/full details on the organisation for which the collection is to be made. The Officer to the

General Conference SOC will be advised accordingly and will then make arrangements for the Union's stewards to take such collections. The monies so collected will be counted by the Senior Deputy General Secretary's Department and a cheque made out to the appropriate body.

2. The number of bucket collections to be taken during Annual Conference will only exceptionally exceed two.

#### **Distribution of Documents at General Conference**

1. All requests for the distribution of documents on delegates' seats shall, in the first instance, be referred in writing to the General Conference SOC, together with a copy of the document(s) concerned, for consideration.

2. Any documents that have been agreed for distribution on delegates' seats at General Conference shall be delivered to the General Conference Administration office by no later than 5pm on the day prior to distribution.

3. Branches are reminded of the facility of the Conference Guide to publicise meetings and other events.

Any queries on this paragraph should be referred to Carmel McCudden, at CWU Headquarters.

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

### 93

#### **Harassment Complaints Database – Union Policy**

Branches are again reminded of the need to fill in the Harassment Complaints Database (HCD) Forms, as illustrated in LTB 450/04.

Please ensure that all reps have a copy of LTB 450/04 as it contains useful guidance as well as the form itself. Branches may also find LTB 289/04 useful which contains information on the Harassment Helpline and the Harassment Advice Network as well as the HCD. The completion of the HCD forms is part of our agreement with the Equal Opportunities Commission and is, therefore, CWU policy. (The full agreement can be found in LTB 292/04) The Equal Opportunities Commission has raised concerns with us regarding the completion rate, which we need to address, otherwise we will fall foul of the agreement. Therefore, please ensure that any complaint raised with branch reps by members that involves possible Harassment should be notified to HQ via these forms.

We appreciate that this will add to an already busy work schedule for those reps that have the responsibility for completing them, but there is no scope

for non-compliance. We must accept that this will become an accepted culture in terms of harassment reporting. The data that will come through to HQ will be vital in enabling us to analyse and identify any obvious patterns where problems exist. We extend our appreciation to all those branches already complying with the policy and look forward to the co-operation of all Branches in this matter. Any enquiries regarding this paragraph please contact Michèle Emerson at CWU HQ.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

### 94

#### **Avian Influenza or "Bird Flu" – Called H5N1**

The following is issued for the information of Branches, following contact with the TUC, HSE, HPA and other organisations. We have also contacted BT and Royal Mail. In response to a number of queries regarding Avian flu the TUC has stated that at the moment there are no known cases of human to human infection and the only risk is likely to be to workers who are in close contact with infected birds or their carcasses.

The NFU (National Farmers Union) also stressed that the flu virus was an avian disease and even though it is the human H5N1 strain that has been identified, it is primarily a disease that infects birds and humans have to be in very close contact for a great amount of time for it to be passed on. UK farmers had redoubled their bio-security measures because of what had happened in Romania and Turkey. That included measures such as keeping the areas around poultry enclosures clean and washing clothes, vehicles and boots. The TUC does not intend issuing a briefing at this stage. However, there are three sources of information for those who need further advice. These are:

- The HSE website where there is a page on avian flu with useful links [www.hse.gov.uk/biosafety/diseases/avianflu.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/biosafety/diseases/avianflu.htm)
- A briefing from the IUF [www.iufdocuments.org/www/documents/AvianInfluenzavbriefing-e.pdf](http://www.iufdocuments.org/www/documents/AvianInfluenzavbriefing-e.pdf)
- The European Health and safety Agency has a link to all the main European papers on Avian Flu [http://osha.eu.int/good\\_practice/risks/dangerous\\_substances/index\\_topic?topicpath=/good\\_practice/risks/dangerous\\_substances/bio\\_agents\\_zoonoses/](http://osha.eu.int/good_practice/risks/dangerous_substances/index_topic?topicpath=/good_practice/risks/dangerous_substances/bio_agents_zoonoses/)

Both Royal Mail and BT are keeping a low profile at present, watching developments at this stage and directing any queries to the Health Pages on their Intranet or Website. The Health Protection Agency (HPA) is the UK leading authority on Avian (Bird) Flu. A recent cluster of cases of Avian flu have been confirmed in a rural part of eastern Turkey by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the WHO and the European Union have sent a specialist team to Turkey to assist with the investigation of the cluster. The HPA have stressed that although these are the first cases of Avian flu in humans outside East and South East Asia, it is important to stress that Avian flu still remains a disease in poultry and that almost all human cases confirmed to date have had close contact with infected poultry and the human cases in Turkey follow outbreaks of the disease in poultry in Eastern Europe in recent months. The HPA state that this is not the start of a pandemic and the risk to the UK remains very low. They add that the risk to people travelling to Turkey remains low but travellers to the area are reminded to avoid close contact with poultry.

All enquiries concerning the above should be addressed to Dave Joyce National Health, Safety & Environment Officer quoting ref E1

### **95 Smoking Ban – Commons Vote – Health Bill**

On the 11th January 2006, the Government announced its plans to offer a free vote to all MPs on the extent of the Smoking Ban to be introduced in England under the new Health Bill. A partial ban will be voted on first before MPs are then offered the chance to vote for a total ban as has already been planned for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. This followed a TUC campaign for a free vote and anti-smoking campaigners welcomed the Government's decision. Health Secretary Patricia Hewitt has tabled a New Clause and Caroline Flint MP has tabled an amendment to that New Clause in order to facilitate a free vote.

The New Clause, if passed, would replace the existing exemptions and would exclude all licensed premises, regardless of whether they prepare and serve food, from a general power to make exemptions.

The Amendment tabled by Caroline Flint, seeks to amend the New Clause so that membership clubs as well as licensed premises, would be excluded from the general power to make

exemptions. This is the option that the TUC and the "Health Lobby" are supporting.

The New Clause and the Amendment will give Members the opportunity to vote for three different options:

Option 1 – No exemptions for licensed premises.

Option 2 – No exemptions for licensed premises or membership clubs.

Option 3 – Exemptions for licensed premises that do not serve food and exemptions for membership clubs.

There will remain an ability for limited exemption orders to be made for certain premises where a person has his/her home permanently or temporarily e.g. hotels, care homes and prisons and areas like places such as oil rigs where it is a hazard to smoke outside.

The vote on this is expected to take place on Tuesday the 14th February. The TUC is asking all Trade Unions to use their parliamentary links and to lobby MPs to ensure that full legal protection for all workers is achieved. All enquiries concerning the above should be addressed to Dave Joyce National Health, Safety & Environment Officer quoting ref E3.

### **96 UK Smoking Ban – Commons Vote on Health Bill**

Further to reports issued in LTB 587/05 and the above paragraph this is to update Branches on the 'Smoke-Free Elements' of the Government's Health Bill. As a result of a Commons vote on 14 February 2006, the Government's Health Bill will introduce a ban on smoking in workplaces, enclosed public places and licensed premises in England with a complete ban coming into force by the summer of 2007. This followed a TUC campaign for a 'Free Vote' on the issue. MPs rejected options to allow exemptions for licensed premises and membership clubs. There will remain only a very limited option for special exemption orders.

Workplaces and premises that ignore the ban will face a £2,500 fine and individuals caught smoking in banned areas face a fixed penalty fine of £50. The ban brings England into line with other countries who have introduced smoking bans, such as the Republic of Ireland, Sweden, Spain and New Zealand.

In the UK, Scotland will introduce a ban from next month on 26 March. Northern Ireland will follow suit next year, as will Wales.

Employers will be adopting new smoking policies to take account of the new legislation and its consequences, including issuing information to staff and signage.

All enquiries concerning the above should be addressed to Dave Joyce National Health, Safety & Environment Officer

### **97 Compensation Increases for Safety Victimisation**

The limits on payments and awards made to workers in employment rights cases, including unfair dismissal for trade union activity, safety rep activity or raising or acting on safety concerns, rose on 1 February in line with inflation. The minimum amount of basic award for breaches of relevant sections of the Employment Rights Act 1996 which result in detriment or dismissal for a worker rises from £3,800 to £4,000. Sections relevant to safety include 100(1)(a), which covers carrying out safety duties designated by the employer, section 100(1)(b) on carrying out legal functions of a safety rep, and section 100(1)(d) on the right to refuse work that presents a serious and imminent risk. Hazards magazine revealed last year that in the five years from 1999, over 1,500 workers had been sacked for raising safety concerns with their employer.

Any enquiries should be addressed to Dave Joyce, National H&SE Officer quoting reference No. EX9.

### **TELECOMS**

#### **98 OneIT: Newstart**

The Union has been advised that a further Newstart programme will operate in Quarter 4 of 2005/06 financial year. The broad numbers advised to the Union in LTB 50/06 are:

- OneIT 95

Newstart terms are unchanged from previous exercise and are:

- 1 month for each year's service, capped at 24 months
- A 10% ex gratia payment for leaving by 31 March
- "Window" to be open until end of 24 February 2006
- "Spreading Your Payments" and "Increasing Your Pension" options will be available as normal.

So far this year, OneIT have provided the opportunity for around 200 people to take early leavers terms and pursue other careers outside BT. Generally, the criterion for release has been for those people that do not want to be part of the change that is taking place.

During 2006, OneIT will continue to see further changes, with more people moving to ICT and the introduction of Professional Communities, solely focused on ensuring that OneIT have the right skills needed in the business for the future.

For one final time this year, OneIT have decided to open the early leavers scheme to enable anyone not wanting to be part of this change.

Brian Healy  
Assistant Secretary

## 99

### Telewest: Pay and Reward Last Drop Bonus

During the pay negotiation meetings last year, Telewest discussed the issue of target setting for bonus entitlement within the current Pay & Reward Scheme for Last Drop OEs within Regional Operations. They raised their concerns with reference to the current targets no longer being appropriate and inconsistent with the overall performance targets for Telewest. When the bonus scheme was introduced, it was designed according to Telewest to ensure that the majority of engineers would achieve the performance levels required to hit bonus. Guidance from their Pay & Commissions team was that a successful bonus scheme should reward performance of approximately 60% of those participating, from which it is estimated that 30% would hit bronze, 20% silver and 10% gold. This should be for a range of performance above what is normally expected from the very stretching to the not so stretching.

Following negotiations with the Union and prior to the end of 2005, currently significantly more than 60% of OEs achieve bonus and of those the majority achieve gold level. As a result of this, within Regional Operations (Last Drop), Telewest were paying almost 200% of the bonus funds. Management considered this unreasonable and unsustainable and not financially viable in the long term and can no longer sustain paying the non-contractual bonus at these levels.

As per the original guidelines of the bonus scheme, they state they are committed to spending 100% of the bonus funds. In order to establish more appropriate targets, they reviewed the scheme performance and produced the model below to summarise and highlight changes to target levels.

#### Operations Engineers (OEs)

Seven day fault rate	
Accreditation	6.00%
Bronze	5.00%

Silver	1.00%
Productivity	
Accreditation	3.20 points per hour
Bronze	4.00 points per hour
Silver	4.30 points hour

#### Area Operations Managers (AOMs)

Seven-day fault rate	
Accreditation	6.00%
Bronze	5.25%
Silver	3.00%
Productivity	(excl. OE sickness)
Accreditation	4.10 points per hour
Bronze	4.25 points per hour
Silver	4.40 points hour

They did this in conjunction with a consultation group of field engineers, which is made up of representatives from across Regional Operations and subsequently launched the new scheme as of 1 January 2006. This is subject to ongoing review and revision by the Regional Operation managers. This will be the subject of discussions early this year with the company, and the Executive would welcome specific feedback on barriers to obtaining bonus and how the scheme can be improved.

Brian Healy  
Assistant Secretary

## 100

### Project Horizon Team Vehicles

The Executive reported that discussions had been taking place on extending a 'business needs vehicle' (Astra Club) to CWU grades working to Project Horizon and on the next ordering arrangements for vehicle replacements.

Other issues arose such as private use of vehicles, in particular for those that transferred into BT Wholesale and the choice of vehicle for those that were coming to the end of their service/contract up.

Management has agreed that the Honda CRV or Shogun will be an option for members who are required to have a 4x4 wheel drive vehicle. The option for the Shogun will still be given for those who wish, for personal reasons, to go for a more expensive choice. Attached is a spreadsheet that captures the relative costs at the time. It should be noted that the Personal Use Charge is set by the Government.

Brian Healy  
Assistant Secretary

## 101

### OneIT: The Role of CWU Grades in the OneIT Business Operational Model

Nationally, the Executive Team has been giving consideration to the role of CWU grades in an organisation which is ICT centric.

Currently, there are two distinct ways

or methods of working within OneIT. The first is exclusively in-house and predominantly direct labour, but does have its marked and high levels of agency and contractors. This is the in-house support of data platforms/sites and tends to require 24 hour/7 day presence. The other activity is the support role in the major IT programmes.

This can be site independent as the design or interaction of the database can be carried out remotely or the same activity being carried out on site. The problem is that as Global Services and OneIT on the back of GS secure New Wave revenues, customers increasingly expect more presence on site and protracted attendance on site. Neither activity fits well with the established way of working for CWU members who tend to work pre-determined patterns and are single site dependent.

The Union has noted there are increasing career development and promotion issues with OneIT. It is the method to place OneIT people for 90 day period assignments. The programmes/projects do not have any set hierarchy compared to grade/level structure elsewhere in the BT Group. People are selected for their skills; the trouble however is that experience has shown that C3s have D1 skills and get called up to do D1 and even what is or was MPG2 work. Any means of opportunity for development or access to grading at a higher graded post has completely disappeared.

The CWU has not been the dominant union within what is a Connect dominated activity. Over the last decade there has been marked use of remote sourcing and substantial use of third party resource, both of an agency nature and that of fixed term contracts. Most of the remote sourcing has been of Connect represented grades but not exclusively upon CWU grades.

The Executive has identified these as issues of concern and management have agreed to detailed discussions to address these issues in March and will be reported upon in due course.

Brian Healy  
Assistant Secretary

## 102

### BT Wholesale: Network Management and Real Time Operations

The intended changes and movement of functions around the various Network management sites was reported in Branch Officials Bulletin No 5, Paragraph 86. Further information was sought on the following:

- 1) What are the resourcing implications for this transfer of activities between sites?

The management response is that the actual moves are still being scoped, and at this stage no specific resource implications are identified. As this becomes clear, these implications will be communicated to the Union.

- 2) Is there any rationale for the transfers?

Management believe that the proposed moves are to more closely align functional responsibilities across the sites to bring into line with the overall site-strategy, and to provide all areas with fallback and load-sharing (should they experience difficulties affecting the operability of a particular site), and to ensure business and service continuity. It is also planned to enhance the releasing of people to undertake 21CN based activities across the sites.

- 3) What is the nature of training to be able to equip our members with the necessary skills?

Once scoped, any training requirements will be captured as part of the final decision making, and any training necessary will be delivered to people as part of the functional realignment, and will be a driver to timescales for the moves.

The Union is likely to follow further the detail of the resourcing implications and the training requirements once known.

Brian Healy  
Assistant Secretary

### 103

#### **Telewest: Substantive Abuse Policy and its Application**

It was reported in Branch Officials Bulletin No 5, Paragraph 88 that the Substantive Abuse Policy had come to the attention of the Union nationally. Additionally, the Union has taken up how it is applied, in particular during any stage of the Disciplinary Procedure. The Company's response is as follows: "No form of disciplinary action should ever be taken without due and careful consideration to an employee's individual circumstances.

If there has been an issue over prolonged or frequent short-term sickness absence, then Telewest would expect some medical intervention at the earliest stage to diagnose a potential route cause and allow the company to provide assistance. Although it is never an easy admission for anyone to make, there has to be some level of responsibility on the individual to flag this problem at the earliest opportunity, as pulling it out of the hat when reaching the point of no

return on either the SAR or disciplinary processes can sometimes be viewed as the last throw of the dice and perhaps not given the sympathetic consideration it otherwise may have done at an earlier stage.

The intention has always been to discover whether there are underlying reasons for employees falling short on conduct or performance issues, and the company will do as much as they can to support this either through it's own support mechanisms or pointing the employee in the direction of the confidential support line to offer more 'independent' advice".

This response should be circulated as widely as possible to members in Telewest.

Brian Healy  
Assistant Secretary

### 104

#### **Telewest: Discipline Policy and Retention**

Following an incident at a local level, Head Office was asked to clarify Telewest policy on retention of informal warnings on the personnel records. It should be noted that such information does not appear, nor should it be kept at this stage on the disciplinary record. Telewest's policy is as follows.

Following the ACAS guidelines that such notes are kept as a point of reference, they would expect them to contain some commitment from the manager and employee on review periods and timescales in order to remedy the particular situation that resulted in the informal discussion being necessary. On this basis, they believe that any such notes should be removed from personnel files after a period of 6 months.

Brian Healy  
Assistant Secretary

### 105

#### **Telewest: Products 4 Our People**

Branches may not be aware of the Product/Services Discount Policy for members in Telewest.

The revised Policy from summer 2005 is attached for the information of Branches.

Brian Healy  
Assistant Secretary

### 106

#### **BT Wholesale: Integrated Network Management Attendance Patterns**

Attached, for the information of Branches, is a further internal briefing that has been released within the Network Management community.

Brian Healy  
Assistant Secretary

### 107

#### **Telewest: Conflict of Interest Policy**

Attached, for the information of Branches with members in Telewest, is their Conflict of Interest Policy – which should be noted due to the disciplinary consequences of non-compliance.

Brian Healy  
Assistant Secretary

### 108

#### **Telewest: Drive Hire Policy**

The attached Telewest Policy has come to the attention of the Union nationally and Branches may wish to add this to those policies recently advised to Branches and members.

Brian Healy  
Assistant Secretary

### 109

#### **Design, Engineering and Capacity Management – ZBB**

Following an internal conference call within the Design, Engineering and Capacity Management function, some confusion and misunderstandings have arisen over the timetable and potential access to Newstart.

Attached, for the information of Branches, is an internal briefing released to clarify the position.

Brian Healy  
Assistant Secretary

## EVENTS BULLETIN

### Monday 20 February 2006: Gas Safety – Stakeholder Forum.

The Health & Safety Executive is commissioning independent consultants to undertake a review of the domestic gas regulatory framework. An initial stakeholder forum is proposed as a first step towards involving interested parties who wish to contribute to the review. Contact: Bianca Boeyden at Bianca.Boeyden@hse.gsi.gov.uk

### Thursday 23 February 2006: Where is the 'Learning and Skills' in the Welfare to Work Green Paper?

12.00 - 2.00pm (including lunch). Venue: Campaign for Learning, 19 Buckingham Street, London, WC2N 6EF. Chair: Linda Siegle, Chief Executive, Campaign for Learning. This lunchtime policy briefing will consider the recently published green paper, A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work, which is open to consultation until 21 April 2006. Designed to fit into a busy schedule, this briefing will look at what the paper says and offer analysis from a learning and skills perspective. Mark Corney, Policy Advisor for the Campaign for Learning will brief delegates on the green paper and offer analysis, followed by inputs from invited discussants including Paul Warner, Operations Manager, Association of Learning Providers. Delegates will then have the opportunity to discuss the issues and points raised. The briefing will particularly explore the green paper's proposals in light of the understanding of the links between health, learning and work. A key aim of the briefing is to help delegates develop their own responses to the green paper's recommendations. The cost of this briefing is £75.00 plus VAT and includes a working lunch. To book a place at this briefing please click here [www.campaignforlearning.org.uk/cfl/assets/documents/Attachments/Events/Booking%20Form\(1\).doc](http://www.campaignforlearning.org.uk/cfl/assets/documents/Attachments/Events/Booking%20Form(1).doc) to download a booking form or alternatively visit [www.campaignforlearning.org.uk](http://www.campaignforlearning.org.uk) and follow links for events. If you have any questions please contact Rebecca Goodbourn on 020 7766 0018 or email: [rgoodbourn@cfllearning.org.uk](mailto:rgoodbourn@cfllearning.org.uk)

**Friday 24 February 2006: Work your Proper Hours Day.** Over five million people at work in the UK regularly do unpaid overtime, giving their employers £23 billion of free work every year. If you're one, why not take some time to reflect on how well (or badly) you're balancing your life? Consider whether

to take a proper lunchbreak, and leave on time to enjoy your own time on Friday evening. You deserve it!. This is one day in the year for your boss to appreciate your efforts, and for you to appreciate yourself. Contact: [www.workyourproperhoursday.com](http://www.workyourproperhoursday.com) for further details.

**Friday 24 February 2006: Working Against Racism – The Role of Trade Unions in Britain.** 10:00 to 04:30. Cost: Free. To be held at Congress House, Great Russell Street, London. WC1B 3LS Despite mission statements, equal opportunities policies, the law, trade union policy and a variety of initiatives over the years racism is endemic in British society and an ever-present factor in the workplace. For more information contact Wilf Sullivan TUC Race Equality Officer [wsullivan@tuc.org.uk](mailto:wsullivan@tuc.org.uk) or Sukhwant Dhaliwal Workomg Lives Research Institute [S.Dhaliwal@londonmet.ac.uk](mailto:S.Dhaliwal@londonmet.ac.uk)

**Friday 24 Feb 2006 – Sat, 25 February inclusive: European Trade Union Solidarity Conference with Cuba and Latin America.** To be held at Congress House, Great Russell Street, London (24th) – City Hall, London (25th). Cost £80 for UK delegates. Free places available for non-UK based European delegates. Delegates from across Europe will meet at the conference to share experiences of solidarity work, discuss ideas for solidarity projects on a European level and identify joint initiatives for lobbying. More information is available [www.cuba-solidarity.org.uk/conference](http://www.cuba-solidarity.org.uk/conference) or by contacting Campaigns Manager, Natasha Hickman on 020 7263 6452, email [campaigns@cuba](mailto:campaigns@cuba)

**Monday 27 February 2006: Modern Unions and Social Europe.** STUC, Glasgow This seminar will take place from 11.00 to 15.00. The following speakers are due to attend: Jack McConnell MSP, Douglas Alexander MP, Graeme Smith (STUC), Fergus Whelan (ICTU), Stefan Carlsson (SIF-Sweden), Chair: Harry Donaldson. Contact: Robert Stevens on Tel: 020 7239 1224, Fax 020 7278 8378, [info@unions21.org.uk](mailto:info@unions21.org.uk)

**Tuesday 28 February 2006: Learning for the Future Conference in the South West.** Liz Smith, Chief Executive of the New Union Academy, will speak at this event in Bridgwater. Union Learning Representatives, union officials, employers, funding bodies, providers and learning organizations, will all find this conference of interest. Contact: Andy Moss or Laura Forman

on SW TUC, Tel: 0117 947 0521, or at: Union Learning Services South West, Church House, Church Road, Filton, Bristol, BS34 7BD.

**Tuesday 28 Feb 2006 CBI/TUC/The Carbon Trust joint conference – "A sustainable energy policy for the UK".** Congress House, Great Russell Street, London, WC1. This one-day conference co-chaired by the CBI, TUC and The Carbon Trust is designed for policy makers, and decision makers from both sides of industry, in Government, NGOs and media. The conference will allow both sides of industry to set out their views on how Government should address the profound challenges that affect all of us. Keynote Speakers will include: Alan Johnson MP, Secretary of State, DTI; Brendan Barber, TUC General Secretary; Michael Roberts, Director, Business Environment, CBI; Professor Sir David King, Chief Scientific Adviser. Conference will include three themed debates on Climate Change and Energy; Prices, Markets and Investment; and Security of Supply. Contact for more information: Emma Richards on email [erichards@tuc.org.uk](mailto:erichards@tuc.org.uk) or ring 020 7467 1258.

**Tuesday 28 February 2006: Modern Unions and The Quality of Work.** Manchester This seminar will take place from 17.30 at the Mechanics Institute. Speakers will be John Hannett (USDAW) and David Coats (The Work Foundation). Contact: Robert Stevens on Tel: 020 7239 1224, Fax 020 7278 8378, [info@unions21.org.uk](mailto:info@unions21.org.uk)

**Wednesday 1 March 2006: Modern Unions as a Sword of Justice.** Birmingham This seminar will take place from 17.30 at the Birmingham & Midlands Institute. Speakers will be Chris Keates (NASUWT), Roger McKenzie (TUC) and Joe Mann (Community). Contact: Robert Stevens on Tel: 020 7239 1224, Fax 020 7278 8378, [info@unions21.org.uk](mailto:info@unions21.org.uk)

**Wednesday 1 March 2006: Retired Members Advisory Committee.** Meets at CWU HQ, Room 1 at 13.30hrs.

**Thursday 2 March 2006: Retired Members Conference.** Will be held at CWU HQ in Rooms 1,2 & 3 commencing at 11am.

**Thursday 2 March 2006: World Book Day.** Location: Worldwide. World Book Day was designated by UNESCO as a worldwide celebration of books and reading, and was marked in over 30 countries around the globe last year. The origins of the day we now celebrate in the UK and Ireland come

from Catalonia, where roses and books were given as gifts to loved ones on St. George's Day – a tradition started some 80 years ago. For more information contact [www.worldbookday.com](http://www.worldbookday.com) or call the World Book Day helpline: 01634 729810, [wbd@education.co.uk](mailto:wbd@education.co.uk) or visit [www.worldbookday.com](http://www.worldbookday.com)

**Thursday 2nd March 2006: National Family Learning Network – Families for Our Times. Venue.** The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, Westminster, London. A National Family Learning Network Conference with help from the BBC 'Child of Our Time' team, Families for Our Times will build on the highly successful conference of the previous year. The purpose of the conference is to link policy to practice and explore the role of families in achieving better outcomes for children and creating a learning society. If you would like any further information please contact Kerry Flynn on 0121 773 3133 or email [kflynn@cflearning.org.uk](mailto:kflynn@cflearning.org.uk)

**Thursday 2 March 2006: Modern Unions – Organising our Future.** London This seminar will take place at Congress House from 17.30. Speakers will be Mike Terry (Warwick), Paul Mackney (NATFHE), Chair: Sue Ferns (Prospect). Contact: Robert Stevens on Tel: 020 7239 1224, Fax 020 7278 8378, [info@unions21.org.uk](mailto:info@unions21.org.uk)

**Saturday 4 March 2006: Modern Unions and Life at Work.** Hamilton House, London This seminar at will be the culmination of Unions 21 Week. Contact: Robert Stevens on Tel: 020 7239 1224, Fax 020 7278 8378, [info@unions21.org.uk](mailto:info@unions21.org.uk)

**Tuesday 7th March 2006: CWU International Women's Day Event.** Presented by Women in The Eastern, London and South East Regions at 11am. Location: 4th floor Community Building, 324 Gray's Inn Road WC1, nearest station Kings Cross. Speakers invited from: Poppy Project – victims of trafficking, ActionAid, Women's Action for Iraq, Western Sahara Campaign. All welcome. Refreshments provided. For further details contact: Pat Clouder 07711 948964 or Linda Kietz 07711 314236

**Tuesday 7 March 2006: 'New Faces, Old Opposition: What Does it Mean for Labour?'** This debate will take place in Committee Room 9 of the House of Commons from 6 pm to 7.30 pm. Participants will include James Purnell MP, Ed Miliband MP, Deborah Mattinson of Opinion Leader Research and Professor Paul Whiteley. Registration is essential. Contact: [neil@progressives.org.uk](mailto:neil@progressives.org.uk) or telephone 0203 008 8180.

**Wednesday 8 March 2006: Noise and Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome Seminar.** This half-day seminar is due to be held at Hull KC Stadium. Specialist Inspectors from the Health & Safety Executive will outline how noise and vibration can affect your health. Employers have a legal duty to protect the hearing of their employees. Exposure to hand/arm vibration occurs in many industries. Contact: [www.hse.gov.uk/campaigns/conferences/hull](http://www.hse.gov.uk/campaigns/conferences/hull). Registration is required by 27 February 2006.

**Wednesday 8 March – Friday 10 March 2006 Keep Broadcasting Public – BBC Charter Renewal.** This conference is organised by the TUC, Federation of Entertainment Unions and the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom to discuss the White Paper on BBC Charter Renewal due to be published in February. Speakers from Government, BBC, unions and campaigners for public broadcasting including the Broadcasting Minister, James Purnell. Contact: [www.tuc.org.uk/events](http://www.tuc.org.uk/events)

**Wednesday 8 March 2006 – Friday 10 March inclusive: TUC Women's Conference.** 14:00 to 13:00 daily. To be held at Floral Hall, Winter Garden, Compton Street, Eastbourne. The annual TUC Women's Conference will be held between 8th and 10th March in Eastbourne. Unions will propose and vote on motions throughout the Conference, and these will determine the work and priorities for the TUC Women's Committee throughout the following 12 months. For more information contact Amanda Ling, EERD Departmental Secretary [aling@tuc.org.uk](mailto:aling@tuc.org.uk) Rebecca Gill, Policy Officer, Women's Equality [rgill@tuc.org.uk](mailto:rgill@tuc.org.uk)

**Thursday 9 March 2006: Rehabilitation & Return to Work.** The Health & Safety Executive's Manufacturing Sector will be hosting a 'best practice' conference on Rehabilitation and Return to Work at the North Staffordshire Institute in Stoke-on-Trent. Contact: Tracey. [oliva@hse.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:oliva@hse.gsi.gov.uk)

**Saturday 11 March 2006: Palestinian Workers Challenging the Occupation.** Palestine Solidarity Campaign. 9:30 – 5:00 p.m. Venue: Trades Union Congress House, Great Russell Street, London WC1. Speakers include: Shaher Sae'd, General Secretary, Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions (PGFTU); Willie Madisha, President, Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU); Diana Butu, Legal Adviser to the PLO; Keith Sonnet, Deputy General Secretary, UNISON;

Barry Camfield, Assistant General Secretary, Transport & General Workers Union (TGWU); Dr Karma Nabulsi, Nuffield College, Oxford University; Daoud Abdullah, Palestinian Return Centre; Ruth Winters, President of the Fire Brigades Union; Amin Fares, Mossawa, The Advocacy Center for Arab Citizens in Israel; Abla Masrujeh, Women's Officer PGFTU; Billy Hayes, General Secretary, Communication Workers Union; Jeremy Corbyn MP and many more. Some of the issues covered will be: Palestinian Workers in Israel; Refugee Rights and the right of return for Palestinians; The Wall, Checkpoints and Palestinian Workers; Britain's Responsibility towards the Palestinians. Creche places must be booked by 17 February. Delegate fee: £15 Please register with the PSC over the phone by credit card: 020 7700 6192 or please send a cheque to: Trade Union Conference Organiser, Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Box BM PSA, London WC1N 3XX [unions@palestinecampaign.org](mailto:unions@palestinecampaign.org) [www.palestinecampaign.org](http://www.palestinecampaign.org)

**Monday 13 – Tuesday 14 March 2006: Institution of Occupational Safety Conference on Health & Safety – Fit for Business.** This event combines an exhibition with specialist group presentations by guest speakers on subjects such as: Communications and media; Construction; Consultancy; Education; Environmental; Fire Risk Management; Healthcare; International; Offshore; Public Services; Railway; Retail and Distribution; Rural Industries; and Safety Sciences. For further information see: [www.ioshconference.co.uk/2006](http://www.ioshconference.co.uk/2006).

**Wednesday 15 March 2006: Worked to the Bone – Regulating the UK's long-hours culture.** The Institute of Employment Rights is organising a seminar for trade unionists, employment lawyers, personnel specialists, academics and students and those concerned with the development of public policy. This seminar will cover: the original purpose of the European Working Time Directive and the rights it provides; the impact that UK Working Time Regulations have had on Britain's long-hours culture; and how the UK's opt-out is developing in Europe and what improvements can be made to the current Regulations. The venue is the NATFHE Centre, Britannia Street, London WC1. The costs is IER subscribers and members: £45.00; Trade unions: £60.00 and Commercial: £120.00. Contact: The Institute of Employment Rights, 177 Abbeyville Road, London SW4 9RL. Contact: 020 7498 6919; fax: 020 7498 9080; email:

office@ier.org.uk

**Thursday 16 March 2006: Your Region, Your Voice.** The Northern TUC Young Members' Network is organizing this event to increase awareness about employment rights and the effective role that trade unions play in workplaces and in local communities. Three workshops will bring young people together to discuss the issues of interest and concern to them as citizens in work, education and in local communities. The venue will be Commercial Union House, 39 Pilgrim Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE1 6RQ. Contact: Beth Farhat on 0191 227 5560 or bfarhat@tuc.org.uk

**Saturday 18 March 2006: Troops home from Iraq – Don't attack Iran.** Assemble 12 noon in Parliament Square, London. Contact: 020 7278 6694. www.stopwar.org.uk

**Saturday 18 March 2006: Keep Broadcasting Public – BBC Charter Renewal.** 9.30 – 4pm. To be held at Congress House, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3LS. Cost £10 waged/ £7 concessions – including refreshments and sandwich lunch. Organised by the TUC, Federation of Entertainment Unions and the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom to discuss the White Paper on BBC Charter Renewal due to be published in February. Speakers from Government, BBC, unions and campaigners for public broadcasting. For more information contact Kathy Lowe, CPBF, 23 Orford Road, London E17 9NL 020 8521 5932 email freepress@cpbf.org.uk or visit www.cpbf.org.uk

**Tuesday 21 March 2006: 'Three Years On, The Lessons for Labour from Iraq'.** This meeting will take place in Committee Room 16 of the House of Commons between 6 pm to 7.30 pm. The panel will comprise: Rt Hon John Denham MP; Gisela Stuart MP; Gary Kent, Director of Labour Friends of Iraq; and Oliver Kamm, author of 'Anti-Totalitarianism: The Left-wing Case for a Neoconservative Foreign Policy'. Stephen Twigg will be in the chair. For information contact neil@progressives.org.uk or telephone 0203 008 8180.

**Monday 27 March – Thursday 30 March 2006: Global Innovation – Building your ICT Future, 21st Century Communications World Forum.** This event combines a conference and exhibition with organisation by the International Engineering Consortium. Contact:

www.iec.org cruffin@iec.org or Telephone 1 312 559 3301.

**Tuesday 28 – Friday 31 March 2006: Certificate in Asbestos Inspection Procedures.** This course is organised by the University of Portsmouth, with its venue at the RICS, Great George Street, London. Contact: Christine Tonkin – Tel 02392 845402 email chris.tonkin@port.ac.uk Details of other asbestos events are available on www.hse.gov.uk/campaigns/asbestos/events.htm

**Friday 31 March 2006: Hertfordshire Trade Union Learning Forum.**

The next meeting will take place in the Hertfordshire Learning Centre, Watford from 11 am to 2 pm. The forums are open to Union Learning Reps, lay and full-time union officials, employers, providers, the LSC and other organisations to attend. They provide an ideal opportunity to discuss the most appropriate and effective way to progress learning and skills issues in Hertfordshire. Contact: jgarcia@tuc.org.uk or telephone 01279 408188, or write to SERTUC Learning Services, Congress House, Great Russell Street, London, WC1B 3LS.

**Thursday 13 April 2006: Mitigating Business Risk using Digital Forensics Processes.** A one-day training seminar to: review business procedures to ensure forensic compliance and risk factors in your incident response procedures. Other subjects to be covered are the identification and handling of digital evidence and the integration of forensic practices into your policies and procedures. This event is ideal for IT managers, HR managers, Internal Audit staff, and Risk Managers. The cost is £199 + VAT. Contact: Elizabeth Howell at Evidence Talks Ltd on telephone no: 01908 646464 or email Elizabeth@evidencetalks.com

**Monday 24 April 2006: Retired Members Advisory Committee.** Meets at CWU HQ, Room 1 at 13.30 hrs.

**Friday 28th April 2006: Preston & District Workers' Memorial Day Committee are holding a series of Trade Union events and activities.** On and around Workers' Memorial Day 28th April 2006, please contact graham.king@baesystems.com for further details.

**Monday May 1 2006: May Day March and Rally for Employment Rights.** It has now been confirmed that the March and Rally for Employment

Rights will assemble at Clerkenwell Green in London N1 at 12 noon with the rally in Trafalgar Square starting at 2.30pm. The TUC's General Council is urging all unions to ensure that we achieve the biggest possible turnout on the day. This will require a major effort of mobilisation. To help unions inform members a special section of the TUC website has now been created that gives the latest news on arrangements for May 1. This can be found at www.tuc.org.uk/mayday On this special section of the TUC website you can download posters and leaflets for the march and rally. These can be customised by including your union's logo. Printed copies of the poster and leaflet are also available, some quantities can be provided free of charge while bulk orders will be provided at cost (further details from Rob Sanders in the Campaigns and Communications Department (020 7467 1217 rsanders@tuc.org.uk).

**Wednesday 10 May 2006: 1906 – 2006, From the Trade Disputes Act to a Trade Union Freedom Bill.** This conference is organised by the Institute of Employment Rights to address the question whether it is time for a Trade Union Freedom Bill? Specialist will outline their research, share their analysis of events and highlight how their findings can shape trade union calls for a new Trade Union Freedom Bill. A discussion will take place on the latest draft of the proposed Bill on how trade unions and their members can once again enjoy the freedom they need to ensure fairness at work. Cost: IER subscribers and members: £75; Trade unions: £90; Commercial £220.00. Contact: IER, 177 Abbeville Road, London SW4 9RL. Tel: 020 7498 6919 Fax: 020 7498 9080 or email office@ier.org.uk

*If you have anything for the events bulletin page please send your contribution to Marcia Murray, CWU, Communication Department, 150 The Broadway, Wimbledon, SW19 1RX, Tel: 020 8971 7497, Email: mmurray@cwu.org Details must arrive nine days before publication and must include a contact phone number, brief summary of the event, email and website address. Listings are free, but inclusion is not guaranteed.*