

GENERAL

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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 representatives 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 representatives 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 representatives 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 Head Office, 150 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London SW19 1RX.

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Mandatory Equality & Diversity Training

Branch secretaries are requested to ensure that any person in their branch who has CWU rep responsibilities and has not yet completed their mandatory Equality & Diversity training are enrolled in the courses that are planned throughout the regions in the forthcoming months.

All reps must do the training – this includes divisional reps, area reps, unit reps and branch officers.

For clarification on dates please contact your regional secretary. The training has been running now for over three years and there are still a substantial number of reps who have not completed the training.

Your co-operation in this matter is greatly appreciated.
Equal Opportunities Department.

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Hands-Free Phones Still a Danger to Driving – Latest Research Published

New research reports claims that drivers who use hands-free mobile phones may be taking risks that can equal those of drink driving.

Drivers talking on hands-free mobile phones are just as dangerous as those holding phones, a Government study has found and those using earpieces or speakers still have slow reaction times and are likely to miss hazards and signs, according to the research. The message is “Hands-free is just as dangerous as hands-on”.

Most of the UK’s 33 million registered drivers now have a mobile phone and many of them use it while driving – either legally using a hands-free kit, or illegally by holding the phone in their hand. Using a hand-held phone while driving is punishable by a £60 fine and three penalty points.

Research studies indicate that around 24% of UK drivers occasionally use the phone while driving. However, while most drivers are aware that hand-held phones pose a risk, many are unaware that the level of risk is very similar when using a hands-free phone.

Research conducted at the University of Sydney’s Injury Prevention and Trauma Care Division indicates that people who use their mobile phones while driving are four times more likely to crash – and this includes people using hands-free devices.

In the UK, research conducted at the Transport Research Laboratory said drivers think hands-free kits were safe but the TRL has found that drivers talking on hand-held and hands-free mobile phones have on average 30% slower reaction times than those who have been drinking, and 50% slower times than sober drivers. The TRL said it’s dangerous because a telephone conversation (or texting) distracts from the mental concentration needed to drive safely. Drivers are putting themselves and other road users in danger.

Research has shown that driver’s reaction times are up to 50% slower that normal when driving and using a mobile phone. It also shows that reaction times are 30% worse than when driving under the influence of alcohol. Other research suggests that if drivers using a mobile phone while driving are four times more likely to have a crash. The TRL said that employers should tell staff not to use any phone while driving for work and the Government must place a much greater emphasis on warning drivers that use of a hands-free device can be as dangerous as drinking.

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

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BT Operate: Radio Towers

The BT Operate Executive team has been advised that currently, BT is exploring the possibility of selling the rights to market spare space on its Radio towers.

Over the past few weeks and for another couple hence, a potential customer will be undertaking some due diligence activity on several of the towers; the potential customer will be carrying out a number of site visits and climbing the towers as part of their due diligence procedures.

As part of BT’s standard safety and security procedures they and their contractors need to be escorted and given entry by the BT riggers in the field force in BT Operate. Local managers were requested to brief their teams and local union branches about the purpose of the exercise ahead of these visits.

I was notified by HR that one of the visitors has told a site supervisor that “BT is selling the towers off”.

I can confirm that this is categorically not the case and at best is extremely insensitive on the part of the visitor. For completeness I have listed the sites scheduled for visits:

- Ashbury
- Forder Battery
- Arncliffe Wood
- Drumfearn
- Gallanach Beg
- Gairloch
- Thrumster
- Odrig
- Wideford
- Stronsay
- Scousburgh

As soon as we know more about whether the due diligence will amount to a deal, branches will be advised accordingly.

Brian Healy
Assistant Secretary

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BT Operate: Fulfilment Core Infrastructure Job Descriptions

Management reviewed the above function which produced job descriptions that not only contain activities not acceptable for CWU represented grades but furthermore the job descriptions did not provide clarity and a clear span break between a C3 and D1.

Attached for the information of branches is a copy of the nationally agreed set of job descriptions.

Brian Healy
Assistant Secretary

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BT Operate: Business Support Programme – Integrated Controls for Field Engineering

The outcomes of the Business Support Programme and the creation of a revised Resource Management Technician role led to an amended job description, after taking into account representation made by the union

nationally.

Attached is a copy of the nationally agreed job description.

Brian Healy
Assistant Secretary

POSTAL

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Royal Mail Area Representatives and Substitutes – Elections

Branches will be aware that in line with the arrangements published in 2004 the National Organising Secretary is required to publish a standard timetable for all Area Representatives elections (The timetable applies to positions that cover more than one branch area, i.e. those Area Representatives elections, which are currently organised by the Regional Secretary). Accordingly the timetable for the 2008 Area Representatives elections is as follows:

Nominations Open:

Friday 2nd November 2007

Nominations Close:

14.00 Friday 23rd November 2007

In line with the above I have asked Regional Secretaries to co-ordinate these elections and to contact branches and advise them of the arrangements for the elections within their respective areas.

Branches are reminded that candidates must have received the nomination of their own branch and if ballots are required we will advise the respective branches of the timetable for despatch and receipt of ballot papers.

Branches are also reminded that any ballots will be conducted on an individual member basis of those members eligible to vote and that the costs incurred for the ballots would have to be met from branch funds. The Regional Secretary will discuss the detail of this with the branches.

Please note that elections for Area Representatives that fall wholly within one branch boundary are the responsibility of the branch, however if required, assistance can be sought from the Regional Secretary.

Any enquiries regarding this paragraph should be directed to **John East**, National Organising Secretary

EVENTS BULLETIN

October 2007 – June 2008: The London Socialist Film Co-op. There will be a number of films showing the second Sunday of every month. Film(s) includes La Última Cena/The Last Supper all showing Sunday 14 October 2007. Tomás Gutiérrez Alea is best known for his Memories of Underdevelopment. The Last Supper is unfairly neglected, made during the height of 'the cold war', showing a Cuba that was unknown and a history that was of little interest to audiences of that time.

Discussion led by Michael Chanan, Professor of Film and Video at Roehampton University, London, Jacqui McKenzie, Caribbean Labour Solidarity, Dionne Walker and many more. For all enquiries and the full programme contact **020 7278 5764**.

Thursday 1 November 2007: World Vegan Day.

Eating meat, dairy and eggs threatens our planet. You use much less land and water if you eat crops directly. Animals use most of the protein they eat to live, not 'grow' meat. So eating meat adds to water shortages, forest clearing, soil damage, use of oil-based pesticides – and climate change. Check out www.worldveganday.org.uk for more information, and go vegan at least for one day. The whole of November is Vegan Month.

Saturday 3 – Sunday 4 November 2007:

Sandblast Festival. TUC and affiliates are backing the celebrating the culture of the people of Western Sahara at Rich Mix, 35-47 Bethnal Green Road, London E1 6LA. Alison Shepherd from the General Council will be representing the TUC at the special event on 2 November 2007. The TUC has long supported the Saharawis' struggle for independence and welcomed the current UN efforts to find a just and durable solution.

For more information contact **Bandula Kothalawala**, European Union and International Relations Dept, TUC, Congress House, Great Russell St London WC1B 3LS, Tel **020 7467 1257**; Mobile **07778050813** or you may also visit www.sandblast-arts.org

Friday 5 November 2007: Stand up for Journalism.

Lobby of the Society of Editors Conference. Meet at 12.30pm outside the offices of the Manchester Evening News on Hardman Street, off Deansgate. Lobby at 1pm – Radisson Hotel, on the site of the old Free Trade Hall. Rally at 1.30pm in the Friends Meeting House on Mount Street. Speakers include NUJ General Secretary, Jeremy Dear; NUJ President Michelle Stanistreet, Karen Reissman and others. For more information contact www.standupforjournalism.org.uk

Friday 16th November 2007: CWU Disability & Special Needs Conference Social Event.

All those attending the conference are invited to a social event, which will be held at the The Prince of Wales Hotel, Lord Street, Southport PR8 1JS. Further information can be obtained from the **Equal Opportunities Department** or dgittens@cwu.org

Saturday 17th November 2007: CWU Disability & Special Needs Conference.

The conference will be held in the The Prince of Wales Hotel, Lord Street, Southport PR8 1JS. Further information can be obtained from the **Equal Opportunities Department** or dgittens@cwu.org

Saturday 17 November 2007: The Next Steps For The Left. 10am – 4.30pm. To be held at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL. As the Labour Party leadership increasingly closes down and centralises control of political debate within the party, new social movements are forming to address the key issues facing the world. This conference will focus on how the left within the Labour Party and trade unions can build a bridge between these new forces and our movement, both within this country and internationally. Speakers include Tony Benn, Katy Clark MP John McDonnell MP and more. For more information contact visit the **Labour Representation Committee** at www.l-r-c.org.uk

Tuesday 20 November 2007 – Wednesday 21 November inclusive: CWU Union Learning Representatives National Workshop.

This will be the fourth national event for union learning representatives in the Communication Workers Union. There will be opportunities: To meet with other CWU union learning representatives, to attend specialist workshops, to hear from guest speakers, to learn about the latest CWU learning developments and to celebrate your achievements. To book your place please contact **Laura Wright** on **020 8971 7416** or **Michelle Simpson** on **020 8971 7340** or email learn@cwu.org with your contact details.

Wednesday 28 November 2007: End Israeli Occupation – Peace for All. Lobby of Parliament 2 – 6 pm Westminster London. For more information contact **020 7832 1310** wattg@caabu.org or **020 7700 6192** info@palestinecampaign.org

Monday 3rd December 2007: Eastern Regional Retired Members' Committee Meeting. To be held in Community, Swinton House, 324 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8DD at 11am. For more information contact **Nobby Clark**, Region Retired Members' Secretary on **07713 155575**.

Wednesday 5 December 2007: Update on Equality Law – Are we Catching Up?

While we have travelled a long way in terms of equalities legislation recent reads. The complexity of discrimination legislation still make it very difficult to tackle the deep issues of inequality in the workplace. The conference will be of interest to trade unionists, employment lawyers, academics and students. Cost IER subscribers and members £75, Trade Unions £90 and Commercial £220. For more information contact the **IER** on **0151 702 6925** or email office@ier.org.uk

Tuesday 11 December 2007: Plain English Day. Organised by the Plain English Campaign, promoting the use of clear language in government departments, local councils and

business. For more information contact the **Plain English Campaign**, PO Box 3, New Mills, High Peak SK22 4QP. Phone: **01663 744409** Fax: **01663 747038** Email: **info@plainenglish.co.uk**

Monday 7th January 2007: Eastern Regional Retired Members' Committee AGM. Will be held in Community, Swinton House, 324 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X at 11am. For more information contact **Nobby Clark**, Region Retired Members' Secretary on **07713 155575**.



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.

The Link – branches and retired members are reminded that items for the December issue of The Link should be sent to The Editor – The Link, SDGS Department, 150 The Broadway, Wimbledon SW19 1RX by **noon Monday 3rd December 2007**.