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GENERAL

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Legal Helpline & CWU Accident Helpline/ Christmas & New Year Arrangements

The above services will be available up until **Monday 24th December 2007** but will close at 17.00 hours.

The Legal Helpline will then re-open on **Thursday 27th December** between the hours of 07.00 hours until 21.00 hours.

The Legal Helpline will then close on **New Years Eve** at 17.00 hours and will re-open for business as usual on **Wednesday 2nd January 2008** from 07.00 hours until 21.00 hours.

Our members will, of course, be able to leave voicemail messages for the Helpline team outside of these hours.

All enquiries regarding the above paragraph should be directed to **Tony Rupa**, Legal Services Officer.

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Union Skills I Course

The Communication Workers Union has organised a Union Skills I course. This course is accredited with the National Open College Network. This is a fully integrated course.

The course will be held from **31 March – 4 April 2008** and the closing date for nominations is **14th February 2008**.

The venue for this course is yet to be confirmed, as the re-development of Alvescot Lodge should have commenced by this date. This course could be regional or residential, depending on demand.

The Linked Education Programme is designed to encourage members to become more active in the union. It is open to all members of the CWU, but is particularly aimed at new activists.

We particularly encourage branches to nominate women, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and young members who are often under-represented on the CWU Education and Training Programme.

All members of the union who wish to have a working knowledge of the wider trade union and labour movement would benefit from attending the Linked Education Programme. The courses are called 'Linked Education' because the programme comprises three distinct but connected courses, each of one week duration.

The three parts of the course are completely self-contained, but there are real educational benefits in completing all three parts of the programme in a year or eighteen months. Union Skills courses attract special leave with pay. For Postal branches, please refer to LTB No. 096/07, issued 5th February 2007.

Those nominees who are Committee Members, Branch Representatives or Branch Officers are entitled to leave with pay.

Nominations should be made on the form for education courses, and returned to Alvescot Lodge by the closing date shown.

Application forms should be addressed 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**

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Union Skills II Course

The Communication Workers Union has organised a Union Skills II course.

The course will be held from **28 April – 2 May 2008** and the closing date for nominations is **13th March 2008**.

Only members who have attended a Union Skills I or an Induction course are eligible for nomination. Preference, will of course, be given to those students who have been refused a previous Union Skills II course, so this must be shown on the application form.

Application forms should be addressed 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**

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Health & Safety Stage II Course

A Health and Safety Stage II course has been organised. This course is accredited with the National Open College Network. This is a fully integrated course.

The course will be held from **7 – 11 April 2008** and the closing date for nominations is **21st February 2008**.

Applicants for this course will have already attended the Union's Health & Safety Stage I course.

Nominations should be made on an 'application for union courses' form and returned to Alvescot Lodge by the closing date shown.

Application forms should be addressed 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**

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Romec Union Skills II Course

The Communication Workers Union has organised a Romec Union Skills II course. This course is accredited with the National Open College Network.

The course will be held from **14 – 18 April 2008** and the closing date for nominations is **28th February 2008**.

The Linked Education Programme is designed to encourage members to become more active in the union. It is open to all Romec members of the CWU.

Application forms should be addressed 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**

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Postal Agreements & Procedures Course

The Communication Workers Union has organised a Postal Agreements & Procedures course.

The course will be held from **21 – 25 April 2008** and the closing date for nominations is **6th March 2008**.

This course is aimed at postal representatives who have completed Union Skills I or the Postal Induction course.

It aims to give more in-depth training on the main agreements that you will use in your day to day work as a CWU representative, including:

- Conduct & Attendance
- Grievance Procedures
- Managing the Surplus Framework
- Manpower Resourcing

Nominations should be made on the form

for education courses, and returned to Alvescot Lodge as soon as possible. If you nominate more than one member, indicate the order of preference if necessary and please apply for only one course at a time.

Application forms should be addressed 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**

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Equal Rights in the CWU Part 1

The Communication Workers Union has organised an Equal Rights in the CWU Part 1 course. This course is accredited with the National Open College Network. This is a fully integrated course.

The course will be held from **19 – 23 May 2008** and the closing date for nominations is **3rd April 2008**.

This course is targeted at CWU Branch Equality Officers and other branch and field representatives who deal with equality issues on a regular basis. The course objective is to equip members with a thorough grounding in diversity & equality issues at both a theoretical and practical level.

As with all CWU courses, the focus is very much on the practical and on building the individuals' confidence, skills and knowledge. Students are supported throughout by trade union tutors and will be encouraged to work at a pace and level that suits them. Many of the course activities will be carried out through working in small groups assisted by our specialist tutors.

Main Themes

- Understanding how discrimination and prejudice impact on CWU members in the workplace
- Understanding the role of equality representative
- Becoming familiar with CWU procedures and policies around equality issues
- Dealing with members' problems in a systematic way
- Understanding and utilising agreements and procedures in the workplace
- Understanding legal and contractual maternity, paternity and parental rights
- The Disability Discrimination Act and the implications for CWU members
- Developing communication and presentation skills.

Nominations should be made on the form for education courses, and returned to Alvescot Lodge by the closing date shown.

Application forms should be addressed 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**

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Union Learning Reps Stage II Course

The Communication Workers Union have organised a Union Learning Reps Stage II course.

The course will be held from **19 – 23 May 2008** and the closing date for nominations is **3rd April 2008**.

This course is aimed at Lead ULRs and Learning Centre Co-ordinators, who have already completed Union Learning Reps Stage I and have been a Union Learning Rep for over 18 months. The course will cover:

- Negotiating skills for learning
- Working with learning providers
- Planning and running a Learning Centre or project
- Learning and organising
- Learndirect and Trade Unions.

Nominations should be made on the form for education courses, and returned to Alvescot Lodge by the closing date shown.

Application forms should be addressed 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**

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

578

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.

580

TUC/EOR Equality Conference – Friday 18th January 2008

LTB No. 1014/07 sets out the requirements for attending the TUC/EOR Equality Law Conference via the Equal Opportunities Department.

Branches should note that attendance can be secured for members at a rate of £60. This is a greatly reduced rate as the same conference is offered to the business fraternity at a rate of £600 per person.

For more information please go to the TUC website at **www.tuc.org.uk** or contact **Carol Ferguson** at **cferguson@tuc.org.uk**.

Branches are encouraged to consider securing attendance for any members who express a wish to attend the conference.

For further advice please contact the Equality Department.

Any enquiries about this paragraph should be addressed to **Michèle Emerson**, Assistant Secretary.

581

CWU Black Worker's Conference 2008 – Accommodation

This is to notify branches that a preferential rate of £80 per room per night (including breakfast)

has been negotiated with the Kingston Lodge Hotel, 94 Kingston Hill, Kingston Upon Thames KT2 7NP. This is a very good saving, as the original price was nearer £150.00.

The hotel is a 2-3 minutes walk to the 57 bus stop, which is a direct route to CWU Headquarters. Further travel details and information can be found at their website: www.brook-hotels.co.uk.

If anyone would like to book or have any other queries regarding the hotel, please contact **Amit** on **020 8541 4481** or email amit.ummat@brook-hotels.co.uk.

For further advice please contact the Equality Department.

Any enquiries about this paragraph should be addressed to **Michèle Emerson**, Assistant Secretary.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

582

Royal Mail Study – Effective Trauma Management Can Reduce Staff Absence

Researchers at the University of Sheffield (Institute of Work Psychology), in collaboration with the Institute for Employment Studies and Atos Origin, have identified that effective trauma management in the workplace can reduce staff absence and lead to better health amongst employees.

The new study, which was commissioned by the British Occupational Health Research Foundation (BOHRF), found that an organisation that provides simple yet effective strategies to manage post trauma in the workplace can reduce the negative symptoms that its employees experience.

The researchers, from the Institute of Work Psychology at the University, looked at the Royal Mail Group (RMG) and identified 815 workers, over a two-year period, who had been exposed to a potentially traumatic incident and then tracked them over 13 months. The Royal Mail Group was chosen because it has a well-established trauma management programme in place and the range of jobs in the organisation means that the trauma incidents experienced are varied, from armed raids and hostage taking situations, to road traffic accidents and verbal abuse.

The Royal Mail Group (RMG) trauma management programme consists of three phases: practical support on the day of the incident in the form of crisis management; a Support Post Trauma (SPoT) protocol designed by Atos Origin to ensure managers provide appropriate practical, emotional and social support; and further ongoing support from a professional trauma counselling service provided by Atos Origin.

The researchers found that sickness absence amongst employees, following trauma, significantly correlated with the perceived organisational support employees thought they received, with those who felt supported immediately post trauma having lower absence

12 months later. The study also found that perceived support from the organisation is more important in helping employees recover from trauma than the specific form of support.

Dr Jo Rick, from the Institute of Work Psychology at the University of Sheffield, who led the research team, stated that there has been much debate for a long time about the appropriate response to psychological trauma. This is primarily due to adverse outcomes of psychological debriefing – the most popular organisational response to trauma. The lack of evidence on the best response to trauma has left employers with little or no guidance on what to do for the best. He said that the research moves beyond this deadlock and, in line with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE), and provides evidence about different approaches which work. It also identifies that the way individual employees perceive the support offered by their organisation post trauma could play an important part in their recovery and reduce sickness absence post trauma.

The Institute of Work Psychology at the University of Sheffield is dedicated to conducting applied research in work settings, in both the public and private sectors and is staffed by research scientists and support staff, as well as a large group of postgraduate students (MSc and PhD).

The Institute of Employment Studies is an independent, apolitical, international centre of research and consultancy in human resource issues.

Atos Origin is one of the biggest medical-related occupational health service providers to the UK healthcare sector, providing occupational health, primary care, capability assessment and diagnostic services to more than two million people each year for government and corporate clients. It has extensive resource of specialist doctors, healthcare practitioners and medical technicians, and has close links with academic and professional bodies.

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

583

Health and Safety Pays – HSE Research Report RR589, 2007

A positive approach to health and safety not only helps businesses attract quality employees, but also boosts sales and workforce commitment. Research by the Institute for Employment Studies and The Work Foundation for the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) looked into UK business attitudes, intentions and performance and their health and safety strategies.

A telephone survey of 3,000 UK businesses found a clear link between higher expenditure on health and safety and three key areas – a greater capacity to attract quality employees, higher employee commitment and faster sales

growth. Health and safety was generally seen as either 'important' or 'very important' by firms – although smaller companies were less likely to have a positive attitude or regard it as a key strategic area.

According to the researchers: 'Taken overall, our performance models, across a wide range of indicators, suggest that a strategic commitment to good health and safety practice does businesses no harm, and a spending commitment is strongly associated with tangible improvements in employee related aspects of the business.' Others have raised concerns about the priority given by small firms to health and safety. (HSE Research Report RR589, 2007).

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

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**.

Saturday 24 November 2007: Iran National Day of Action. With George Bush's threats against Iran mounting by the day, Stop the War is asking all of its local groups to organise Don't Attack Iran stalls and petitioning on Saturday 24 November. Stop the War has produced a special 'Don't Attack Iran' placard, designed by artist David Gentleman, for use on the day of action. See here for a picture and how to order: <http://tinyurl.com/22e2t8> If you would like to be involved contact the Stop the War national office for details of Stop the War groups in your area: Tel **020 7278 6694** or email office@stopwar.org.uk.

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

Friday 30 November 2007: Rhythms of Peace Concert. 7pm at St James's Church, Piccadilly, London. A benefit concert for Stop the War Coalition on the eve of the World Against War International conference. Andrew

Murray will introduce: Actors, Julie Christie, David Soul, Janet Suzman, Prunella Scales and Timothy West; Campaigning journalist, John Pilger; US comedian Dave Lippman; South African percussionist, Eugene Skeef; Novelists, Ahdaf Soueif and Haifa Zangana; Ex-Ambassador, Craig Murray; Mezzo soprano, Janet Shell; Pianist & composer, Keith Burstein; Cellist, Charles Watt; Musician, Dave Randall, (Slovo and Faithless); Lindsey German, Convenor of Stop the War Coalition; John Rees, Respect Party; Jeremy Corbyn MP and Kate Hudson, Chair of CND. Tickets £15 at <http://tinyurl.com/2htzjk> or phone **020 7278 6694** or by post, cheques made payable to 'Stop the War Coalition' and marked 'Rhythms of Peace'. Send to Stop the War Coalition, 27 Britannia Street, London WC1X 9JP.

Saturday 1 December 2007: Most Important Conference Since Iraq War The World Against War. Westminster Central Hall, London. 10:00am – 5:00pm. The World Against War Conference will be the most important international anti-war event since the invasion of Iraq. Speakers include: Broadcaster and comedian Mark Thomas, Tony Benn, Lindsey German from Stop the War and Craig Murray, former UK ambassador to Uzbekistan. For a full speakers list, go to <http://tinyurl.com/2d9whw> Already registered for the conference are representatives of the anti-war movements in Canada, the USA, South Korea, Poland, the Czech Republic, Greece, Venezuela and many more. With so many delegates coming from across the world, we are in urgent need of accommodation. If you can offer accommodation, please email the

Stop the War office or phone **Richard** on **0777 4936556**. This conference is open to all. Fee: National delegates £25, Local delegates £15, Individuals £10/£8. To book: <http://tinyurl.com/3cpum5> or phone **020 7278 6694** or by post, cheques made payable to 'Stop the War Coalition' and mark as 'World Against War Conference'. Send to Stop the War Coalition, 27 Britannia Street, London WC1X 9JP. If you are interested in forming part of a national CWU delegation to this conference, please contact **Stephen Bell** in the **General Secretary's Department** by **Wednesday, 28 November**.

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 2008: Eastern Regional Retired Members' Committee AGM. Will 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**.

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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**.