



# LETTER TO BRANCHES

 @CWUNews  The Communications Union [www.cwu.org](http://www.cwu.org)

No. 261/2018

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2018

## **RM & CWU National Agreement Covering the Use of PDA Outdoor Actuals**

Dear Colleagues,

Branches and Representatives will be aware of the discussions that have been ongoing with Royal Mail regarding the use of technology in delivery for a number of years. The process started and was part of the Agenda for Growth Agreement in 2013 which contained a commitment for the use of technology and PDA data to understand all elements of the operation along with commercial opportunities for new products as a result.

Following the above in 2014 we entered into a trial of PDA - Service View information which was contained in LTB 296/14 dated 7<sup>th</sup> May 2014, however upon reviewing the trial it became clear that the Service View system/technology that Royal Mail had at that time was not fit for purpose and therefore the software to run the system was ceased.

Since then Royal Mail has invested significantly in this type of technology and we have been in discussions regarding PDA devices having the App software applied, which was renamed as PDA Outdoor Actual initiative. The system go live date began in May 2017 and was contained within LTB 251/17.

During this time, agreed trials of the data and the dashboard format this produces took place in eight offices originally in the phase 1 deployment rollout in order to refine what data can be obtained, and more importantly how the information can be used and who has access to it. There has also been an extended trial in the Merseyside and Cheshire DL area with full CWU involvement, which overall has provided some positive feedback. Having successfully completed 11 months of testing the application and the dashboards, which CWU Nationally has also been fully involved with, it has now been agreed that this is ready to progressively roll out to all delivery and collection units.

Following extensive discussions with Royal Mail for several weeks we have now ensured that we have jointly agreed the appropriate words and actions regarding this National Deployment, whilst also ensuring that the PDA Outdoor Actual Agreement builds on the commitments and is also fully consistent with the spirit and intent of the 2018 Guiding Principles Agreement.

In addition, the use of PDA Data has also been agreed as one of the methods, along with the IWT, that can be used to assess options for the planning and achievement of the first hour reduction to the current working week by October 2018 in line with 16.1.1 of the 2018 Guiding Principles Agreement, and how this is achieved in all units. The need therefore to complete National roll-out over the next month or so along with the local involvement is important if we are to be able to ensure the first hour reduction off the working week is met to the agreed timescales as there is a need to validate some months of trend data in order to target where the hour is reduced within the operation if it is from the outdoor element.

Branches and Representatives will also note that contained within the agreement, we have included a joint commitment that both parties will continue to review and jointly monitor the usage of the data going forward, along with any efficiency improvements derived in relation to assessing how this can also assist the joint commitment for further reductions and flight path to achieve the 35 hour working week by 2022, as per the national agreement or before that

date in connection with technological and operational change. We believe therefore that the use of the system and the data it produces can be a major lever to achieve further hours reductions in order to effectuate the 35 hour working week.

This roll out will also provide a valuable insight into operational route certainty and the consistency of service provision to customers, whilst also providing the opportunity for new commercial product offerings;

- Compatibility of the planned delivery time through Final Mile Optimisation technology and the integration of actual delivery time from PDA data to assist with the below.
- Estimated Delivery Window (4hrs) / Predicted Time of Delivery (what is possible).
- Inflight options for customer delivery preferences.
- Enhanced collection services.

These items listed above are already part of current development and deployment, as new products and services are developed/ progressed further they will be subject to ongoing joint discussions relating to Future Job Design and Ways of Working included in the talks for a new delivery agreement.

From a CWU member's perspective, Outdoor Data Capture can also help to jointly understand actual workloads and provide a platform to ensure that all outdoor activity can be planned more efficiently and balanced to provide a fair, manageable, achievable and sustainable workload for them. This can also include understanding whether any instances of lapsing and absorption are fair, proportionate and appropriate. These issues have constantly been the cause of unacceptable management behaviour and industrial unrest over many years and we believe that the correct usage of the data along with a supportive management approach in conjunction with the forthcoming outdoor route and revision planning tools can capacitate delivery route workloads to be balanced in the future. This is in order to ensure individuals have a fair and manageable workload and to ensure that these issues are finally tackled once and for all by providing visibility and fairness.

It is important to stress that PDA data is captured automatically on a daily basis across all outdoor routes and this will only be made available to view the day after the event on a dashboard report. **Reporting will not be in real time.** The data will be presented in summary view first, highlighting key information for the unit with the ability to drill down into route detail by exception using tabular displays.

The agreement also contains the necessary safeguards for our members in terms of that the data will not be used for capability or conduct cases against individuals:

***"This new technology is not being introduced to track individuals or to be used for individual performance management and therefore it is confirmed that the data generated will not be used for this.***

***In line with section 17 of the 2018 Guiding Principles Agreement on data usage both parties recognise that new technology will improve Royal Mail's performance and the service provided to customers. It is agreed that all individuals have a right to privacy at work and it is accepted that there is a mutual obligation of confidence and trust applied to every contract of employment and that all parties should act in a way so as not to break that relationship.***

***It is recognised that the use of technology may increase levels of individual visibility and it is agreed that this new technology is not being deployed for, or will be used as, a disciplinary tool. As such it will not enhance the ability of managers, or the evidence available, to take disciplinary action."***

Additionally data will not be displayed relating to an individual or individual's route, and data from other delivery units will not be shared or displayed outside of the relevant delivery unit.

The following are also detailed in the agreement and in our clear opinion, are vital to protect our members going forward.

- **Joint CWU/RM - DL/Div rep launch events also involving area reps.**
- **Ability to ensure compliance with meal reliefs if taken during outdoor activity.**
- **PDA Data Use / Weekly Resourcing Meetings – pragmatic approach and in line with all current National agreements including the IR framework where appropriate.**
- **Employee Engagement.**
- **CWU Representatives Access & Training.**
- **Link to New Delivery Agreement - maintenance of current structural Attendance patterns including S/A until March 2019, unless joint CWU/RM confidence to use data otherwise for revision purposes.**

Additionally both parties have agreed that the data being produced and visibility of the Outdoor Workload is a significant development for all concerned within Royal Mail and that there will naturally be a number of sensitivities as a result of its deployment. Therefore the rollout of the dashboard and its usage should be used to build confidence in data use and not ruin it in advance of the forthcoming discussions regarding the new National delivery agreement.

It is therefore jointly understood and recognised by both parties that the agreed introduction and evolution of the dashboard along with the data produced is a learning process for all. We will continue to closely monitor the deployment of PDA Outdoor Actuals through the implementation process, and National Monthly review meetings will take place between both parties in regards to both its application and how the data is being used in order to ensure that both the spirit and intent of the Agreement are being applied correctly and fairly. Please note that the dates of the events listed at Annex A in the National Agreement may be subject to change.

Any queries to the content of the above, please contact the Outdoor Department, reference 530, email address: [outdoorsecretary@cwu.org](mailto:outdoorsecretary@cwu.org).

Yours sincerely,



**Mark Baulch**  
**CWU Assistant Secretary**



PDA OA RM CWU  
NATIONAL AGREEMENT

---

CWU 150 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London, SW19 1RX  
email: [info@cwu.org](mailto:info@cwu.org) Tel: 020 8971 7200 Fax: 020 8971 7300

*General Secretary: Dave Ward*

 [@DaveWardGS](https://twitter.com/DaveWardGS)  [Dave Ward CWU](https://www.facebook.com/DaveWardCWU)