

17th November 2020.

Headquarters: 150 The Broadway | Wimbledon | SW19 1RX

T: 020 8971 7200 | F: 020 8971 7300 | www.cwu.org

Group: Communications Workers Union
@CWUnews

Sally Warren
Head of Royal Mail Fleet Maintenance

Carl Maden Assistant Secretary (Acting)

Email: cmaden@cwu.org | Mobile: 07725 937911

VIA EMAIL.

PTC/CM/kh/220

Dear Sally

FLEET – HR1 REDUNDANCY NOTICE / CONSULTATION

I have been made aware of a document you have distributed to your employees, CWU members, within Fleet Maintenance, attached at Appendix A

Only you will know why you sent this out at this time, I can only presume it is to create a state of fear and anxiety amongst our Fleet Members. The way you are handling this whole situation is completely unprofessional and can only be classed as confrontational. With this type of approach and behaviour, it is inevitable we will end up in conflict, which will only delay any proposed change / agreement.

It is also surprising you did not mention anything about this document at yesterday's long standing weekly telephone catch-up

As the Head of Fleet, your whole approach to this situation has been one of ineptitude. I have put the timeline below:-

22nd September 2020 – Fleet informed the CWU via Alan Tate, CWU Postal Executive Member of your proposal to reduce Fleet headcount by 50.

24th September 2020 - A meeting was held to understand the proposal. At this meeting further clarification and information was requested to understand the background to your proposals.

28th September 2020 - You requested the CWU sign up to a joint statement about the proposal. This request was rejected on the basis the information requested 4 days earlier had not been provided.

29th October 2020 - I received a telephone call from James Baker requesting a meeting to discuss. I told James I was surprised it had escalated as previous information requested had not been provided.

W/C 2nd November 2020 – Meetings / discussions took place on 4 separate days where further information was requested for us to understand your proposals, the last meeting on 6th November.

11th November 2020 - Fleet serve the Legal HR1 notice for the redundancies to the CWU, giving 30 day consultation period for a headcount reduction of 45 headcount reduction.

12th November 2020 - I wrote back to Fleet requesting further information, which has still not been provided.

Despite the above proving you cannot provide the information requested and you formally writing to the CWU informing us you were starting the Consultation process, despite not being bothered to even acknowledge the letter sent to you on 12th November 2020, you still went direct to our members and told them about your plans prior to the end of the consultation period.

It seems you think the consultation consists of you telling the CWU what you want, tell your employees, our member, what you want, wait the 30 days and then carry on with your proposal, you are sadly mistaken.

You may wish to consult on a 45 headcount reduction, however in order for a proper consultation to take place and for the CWU to counter propose, we require the information requested. Any sort of decent proposal would automatically have had the information you have used to build your proposal, however your proposal had no substance, just a couple of reasons on why you were embarking on the headcount reduction.

For your information, I have listed below what meaningful consultation should look like:-

Collective Consultation

Follow these steps.

1. You must notify the Redundancy Payments Service (RPS) before a consultation starts. The deadline depends on the number of proposed redundancies.
2. Consult with trade union representatives or elected employee representatives - or with staff directly if there are none.
3. Provide information to representatives or staff about the planned redundancies, giving representatives or staff enough time to consider them.
4. Respond to any requests for further information.
5. Give any affected staff termination notices showing the agreed leaving date.
6. Issue redundancy notices once the consultation is complete.

As we are the recognised Trade Union for Fleet Maintenance Members and you sent the HR1 to us, I presume the consultation will be with the CWU.

You have failed to follow Steps 2, 3 and 4 above and we are nowhere near steps 5 and 6.

Consultation

Consultation does not have to end in agreement, but it must be carried out with a view to reaching it, including ways of avoiding or reducing the redundancies.

You have also failed to follow the above. You went directly to your employees informing them prior to any sort of consultation, there will be redundancies.

Even if you had followed the above and we agreed there was actually a surplus, we have a national agreement which is the Managing the Surplus Framework (MtSF) Agreement.

Your actions have also breached this national agreement as any preference exercise should be agreed and carried out jointly.

Whilst I do not believe you should have put out your document until the consultation has completed, within your document you have been disingenuous. You state "*We will need to reduce our costs, this is likely to include a minimal headcount reduction. To do this we have started consultation with the CWU.*"

As you know, you have served a HR1 for a headcount reduction of 45 full time posts. This cannot be classed as minimal. If you genuinely believe the headcount is going to minimal, why did you serve the HR1 notice?

As you will know, the HR 1 only needs to be served where there is a proposal for a headcount reduction of at least 20.

I would also suggest you have not started the consultation on 11th November 2020, you have sent the HR 1 on 11th November. Since then, you have not acknowledged our letter, provided any of the further information we requested and have not sent any dates requesting meetings. This hardly sounds like consultation to me.

Your deceit and dishonesty shines through in your communication.

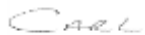
I take no pleasure in airing our differences in public. I would much rather you used the time put into your communication to work with us and follow the proper process for consultation. This could have avoided a lot of embarrassment and not put a further strain on what were not great relationships initially.

As you have not followed the correct process, I am now requesting you place your focus on providing the CWU with the information requested in my letter of 11th November 2020.

I would have preferred to have been meeting and negotiating rather than writing this letter and hope we can spend our time going forward in meaningful negotiation, which will be our only chance of reaching any sort of an agreement. Anything other than this is bound to lead to conflict.

I look forward to receiving the information we have requested and proposed dates for us to meet.

Yours sincerely,



Carl Maden.
Assistant Secretary (Acting).

c.c. James Baker Fleet Director
Alistair Wood Director, Workforce Performance and Policy (HR)
Terry Pullinger CWU Deputy General Secretary (P)
Alan Tate CWU Postal Executive Member