



Offshore Catering Branch / Shop Stewards Meeting

Unite Transport House 42-44 King Street Aberdeen 9.9.10

Minutes

Branch Secretary Ian Mundie opened the meeting and welcomed those in attendance.

Inspection of Cards

All cards of those present were checked and found to be in compliance.

Apologies for Absences

An apology was received from RIO John Taylor who had to attend an other appointment. It was noted that there had been no apologies received from Shop Stewards so far. It was agreed that an e-mail was to be sent to all Shop Stewards reminding them of the requirement to inform the branch that they would not be in attendance at one of the three Branch meetings 8.9.10, 24.9.10 and 1.10.10.

Minutes from Previous Meeting

Due to annual leave and the short time since the two extra ordinary Shop Stewards meetings (29.7.10 and 12.8.10), minutes had not yet been distributed. It was agreed that a summary of the previous meeting be distributed as part of today's meeting minutes.

Branch Report

Brother Mundie confirmed that the Branch remains in good order.

He also thanked all those who attended the annual golf outing which took place this year at Alyth Golf Club, Perthshire. Congratulations were passed on to this year's winner Fred Potter who also helped secure very competitive rates for the event.

Regional Industrial Sector Committee Report

Brother Fraser confirmed that the CPP&T Sector committee were meeting today and as he was unable to attend he would provide a report at a later date.

Area Activist Committee

Next meeting 17.9.10

Officers Report – John Taylor RIO

Officer Taylor provided a short written report on Strategy for Growth / 100% Campaign as he was attending another meeting today.

Wage negotiations 2010/11

We are aware the COTA MD's have met and that the COTA HR team is to meet shortly once this has happened, COTA will then inform the unions of whether they are in a position to re-enter negotiations. If this is the case then further Joint Shop Stewards meetings will be convened prior to negotiations recommencing. If COTA are not prepared to re-negotiate then steps will be taken to ballot for industrial action, full detail of which will be communicated to all members.

Volcanic delays

Dates have now been set by the Employment Tribunal Service for a case management discussion on this matter with provisional dates set for the hearings.

Nomination for position of General Secretary of Unite

Our Branch's nomination of Len McCluskey as candidate for General Secretary of Unite has now been accepted by the electoral reform society. All members are urged to use their vote in support of Len.

Paid leave questionnaire for holiday year 1.9.09 to 31.8.10

It is that time of the year again when members of the Offshore Catering Branch of Unite are being asked to complete and return the annual questionnaire confirming that within the previous holiday year (1.9.09 to 31.8.10) they had applied to their employer for 5.6 weeks paid leave to be taken at a time they would otherwise have been offshore and that their employer had refused to grant this request.

Once the completed questionnaire is returned to the Aberdeen office, an Employment Tribunal claim will be submitted on behalf of that member. Given questions which were raised during the recent wage ballot members are reminded to check with the Aberdeen office one week after sending in your questionnaire to ensure we have received it. Unite will not be held responsible for any member who has not followed your branch's instruction on this matter and who as a result has not had an employment Tribunal claim submitted.

Paid leave application form 1.9.10 to 31.8.11

Due to the fact that the last pay offer was rejected, including the proposals to end the paid leave claims, we will be sending* every Offshore Catering Branch member a paid leave application form as we have done in every year since the introduction of the Working Time Regulations Offshore in 2003, *(where we have a UK postal address or current e-mail address).

AOB

ESS

Pending Redundancies

We have been informed that due to contracts coming to an end there are likely to be a number of redundancies on the Aortic IV, Labrador, Safe Caledonia and the Safe Bristolia. Consultation is continuing with some employees having been offered alternative employment but others being served notice of redundancy.

ESS Changes from a 4 weekly to monthly pay cycle

Consultation continues on this with the latest meeting taking place on 20.8.10, which resulted in an updated Q&A sheet having been distributed by ESS on 31.8.10. ESS members are urged to contact ESS at the earliest opportunity should they have any continuing concerns while at the same time making our Union aware of these concerns. ESS have also re-instated their e-mail help line for general queries such as wages etc it is offshorehelpline@compass-group.co.uk

COTA

TUPE Transfers

There are a number of units who have or will shortly be transferring catering services from one COTA employer to any other and our members who pay their Union subscriptions by pay roll deductions are reminded to take the necessary steps to ensure your Union subscription continues to be paid.

These Units include:

CNR Tiffany from ESS to Aramark.

Petrojarl Foinavon and Petrojarl Banff from Aramark and ESS respectively to Sodexo.

Whether you pay by pay roll or direct debit members who transfer should also inform the Aberdeen office of their change of employer to ensure your records are kept up to date.

Offshore Catering Branch / Shop Stewards Meetings

The next Branch / Shop Stewards meetings will take place at the Unite office 42-44 King Street, Aberdeen, AB24 5TJ on:

Friday the 24th September

Friday the 1st October

All commencing at 10am sharp.

As discussed at previous Branch meetings, should any Shop Steward or Member be able to ensure sufficient numbers, the Unite Offshore Catering Branch will consider holding extra Branch meetings in other geographical locations of the UK. Please be aware that numbers must justify the expense of the Branch Officials attending these meetings.

In the meantime for the latest information affecting Offshore Members please keep checking the news page on Offshore Branch website at www.tgwuoffshore.org.uk

Thanks were given to all Members for their continued support in fighting for our employment rights.

Meeting 9.9.10 closed

Summary of points discussed at Offshore Catering Branch meetings 29.7.10 and 12.8.10

It was confirmed that the summary of the meetings on 4th June 2010 had been received by those in attendance.

Latest Correspondence

Those present confirmed receipt of recent correspondence in regard to the 2010/11 negotiations including the notification that we are awaiting COTA's response to the membership overwhelmingly rejecting by 71% to 29%. This information and other up-dates have been e-mailed to Shop Stewards and Members who have provided e-mail addresses and it has also been placed on the News page of our Branch website for ease of access. If any member wishes to be added to the Branch's e-mailing list could they please provide a current e-mail address to the Aberdeen office.

Branch Report

Brother Mundie (Branch Secretary) confirmed that the Branch remains in good order, but once again urged all offshore catering members to ensure their full details e.g. address, worksite, job title and e-mail etc are up to date.

Regional Industrial Sector Committee Report

Brother Fraser gave a report on the last meeting.

Area Activist Committee

Angus Simpson gave a report from the meeting on 18.6.10 as both Ian Mundie and Isabella Troup were offshore and unable to attend.

Officers Report – John Taylor RIO

Strategy for Growth / 100% Campaign

We have now updated members contact details following the last two phone ballots and the latest mail shot to members where they have returned the questionnaire to the Aberdeen office. All members are encouraged to ensure they have informed the union of any changes.

With the possibility of a ballot for industrial action looming the importance of this information can not be overstated.

Wage negotiations 2010/11

There were some frank discussions about the rejected offer and the recommendation for acceptance received from the negotiating committee. Many of the points raised had already been responded to during the consultation process prior to the ballot being carried out, but included, why was such an offer put to the members why did the negotiating committee recommend acceptance, why was paid leave included in the offer and not treated separately, why was paid leave not left to the courts to decide on and why was it only those who had submitted Employment Tribunal claims who were being offered a settlement etc.

There was a concern that even with all the information that was being sent to employees some members did not fully understand the offer. There was also some concern about the quality of the sound on the online presentation.

It was emphasised that any Shop Stewards participating in Branch meetings and Joint Shop Stewards meetings had a duty to communicate their members concerns and aspirations but equally that they needed to then honestly communicate back to the members the discussion that had taken place during the meetings. It is **not** acceptable for Shop Stewards to voice an opinion at meetings which may affect any type of recommendation and then to go back to the membership, distancing themselves from the discussions just to get a quiet life.

This was particularly evident given that at the end of each Joint Shop Stewards meetings to discuss the paid leave proposal every one of the 4 RMT and 24 Unite Shop Steward in attendance confirmed that if their main concerns were addressed they believed that this would be a proposal that should be put to the members for consideration. Given the consensus of the Shop Stewards, it is concerning that some Shop Stewards who were in attendance at those JSS meetings are now questioning why paid leave was discussed and not left to the courts to decide on.

Volcanic delays

The Offshore Catering Branch of Unite are currently supporting our members who have taken our advice and submitted an Employment Tribunal claim against their employer for not paying them at overtime rate for the extra hours / day they worked offshore due to the volcanic ash delays.

Nomination for position of General Secretary of Unite

At previous branch meetings those in attendance voted overwhelmingly to support a nomination of Len McCluskey; however it was then brought to the attention of the Branch Secretary those nominations could only be accepted from meetings taking place during July and August. Due to this the Branch notified all members in writing (15.7.10) that a further Branch meeting was necessary to discuss our nomination.

During the extra ordinary Offshore Catering Branch meetings (29.7.10 and 12.8.10) those in attendance unanimously nominate Len McCluskey as our candidate for the position of General Secretary of Unite the union.

A delegation of Offshore Shop Stewards attended a meeting at the Aberdeen Trade Union club on 18th July 2010 where they heard Len McCluskey share his views on a number of topics including his view on the prospect of huge public sector cuts, inter union relationships and how our Union must remain a lay led union, where members determine policies and strategies while always adhering to the Union rules and the democratic process our Union has been so proud of. He also encouraged Branches to become more involved in political debates and local community issues.

Shift Rotations

Following our members rejection of the recent pay offer including an increase of paid leave for many of the members we have received enquiries about why those on enhanced rotations may have prevented other members from getting more, or in some cases, at least some contractual entitlement to paid leave at a time they would otherwise have been offshore.

We have explained to those members that every vote cast was treated the same way irrespective of what rotation the voter was on and that the majority vote will always be respected in this Union.

Since the offer was rejected we have also been contacted by members working on Total and BP units enquiring about parity with other core contractors on their units who receive a greater amount of paid leave.