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## **Branch / Shop Stewards Meetings**

**25<sup>th</sup> March, 8<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of April 2011**  
**Summary**

Meetings were opened by Branch Chair / Secretary all were welcomed.

### **Inspection of Cards**

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

### **Apologies for Absences**

Apologies for absences for today's meeting were received from William Mitchell, Neil Hamilton, Stanley McIntosh, Ronnie Head, Andy Johnston, Barry Brooks, Alex Whyte, David Mitchell, Stuart Hunter, Ged Dickson, Corina Davie, Bob Farquhar, William Forbes, Gerald Lynch, Jackie Etchels, Karl Schjolberg, Ray Duffy, Derek Duffy, David McRae, Christopher Wheatley, John Browne, Angus Liddell, Isabella Troup,

Some Shop Stewards who did not attend any of these meetings did not inform the Branch of their pending absence which continues to be a disappointment. It was noted that Neil McLaren had sent his apologies from the previous round of meeting but this had been omitted from the records.

### **Minutes from Previous Meetings**

Minutes from the last round of Branch / Shop Stewards meetings 8<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> January 2011 have been distributed to all members and placed on the news page of our website. Summary of meeting 25<sup>th</sup> of March had been distributed after that meeting.

### **Branch Report**

Brother Mundie (Branch Secretary) confirmed that the Branch remains in good order and Branch numbers continues to increase. Due to changes in their particular circumstances two of our Shop Stewards have resigned their positions and the Branch would like to thank Ceith Crocket (ESS) and Robert Nibloe (Aramark) for their support over the years and wish them every success in their new careers.

### **Regional Industrial Sector Committee Report**

Brother Fraser confirmed that the austerity cuts being imposed by the Con-Dem coalition continue to have an adverse affect on our members and the population in general, hitting the most vulnerable in society the worst of all. The manufacturing sector including our industrial sector CPPT&G (Chemical, Pharmaceutical, Production, Textile and Glass) is having to endure further job cuts and attempts to erode existing terms and conditions.

### **Officers Report – John Taylor RIO**

Brother Taylor confirmed there is continued good work by Shop Stewards trying to achieve 100% Union membership within their work place.

### **Offshore Paid Leave**

On 7<sup>th</sup> March 2011 Unite confirmed that they will continue our fight to deliver 28 days paid annual leave for all offshore workers, firstly at the Supreme Court and then if necessary to the European Court of Justice. This information was e-mailed to all members who have provided a current e-mail address and has also been placed on our website.

It remains Unite the Unions advise to all members to continue to submit the pre-written paid leave application form (previously posted to all members and which can still be downloaded from the link on the news page of our website). As a result of our members following Unite's consistent advise we, Unite Offshore Catering Branch currently have around a thousand claims, which is more than all other Unions put together.

### **Wage Negotiations 2011/12**

Shop Stewards and members are being asked to start prioritising what aspirations they have for the start of this year's 2011/12 wage negotiations.

### **Volcanic Delays**

On 21<sup>st</sup> March 2011 the Employment Tribunal in Aberdeen ruled that the extra work our members carried out was **not** as a result of any type of weather bound situations. An overtime rate was therefore properly payable for the hours concerned and it follows that the complaint under Part 2 of the Employment Rights Act 1996 ("ERA") was well founded. Our legal team will contact our members directly who took Unite the Unions advise and submitted a claim to the employment tribunal for the overtime payments we believed they were entitled to.

### **Rep's Training**

Following very positive feed back from activists attending Unite the Union training courses the Offshore Catering Branch have a concern about any move towards using TUC based training only. Having recognised the historical and current importance of Unite Education in organising and politicising our activists, we call upon Unite to make every effort to:

- Protect and strengthen the independence of our Union's Education Programme.
- Ensure that any qualifications offered via the Union are of genuine relevance to our activists and members in the Scottish Region.
- Ensure that these be Scottish qualifications wherever possible, at the appropriate SCQF Level, accredited by SQA or our partner provider.

### **Executive Council Elections 2011**

The ballot for the Unite Executive Council commenced 25<sup>th</sup> March and closes 15<sup>th</sup> April 2011 we have been informed that both **Mark Lyon & John Storey** have been elected unopposed to our Industrial Sector Seats: Chemical, Pharmaceutical, Production, Textile and Glass (CPP&T). Mark and John have passed on their thanks to the all Branches for their nominations and have committed to continue to represent our members to the very best of their ability. The Offshore Branch had sent out communication urging all members to use their vote in support of our Branch's remaining nominees: Regional Seats- **Dave Brockett & Marie Vannet**, Equalities Seats- Woman - **Jane Stewart** and BAEM (Black and ethnic minority) - **Mohammad Taj**.

### **Web Page**

We are currently undertaking a revamp of our Branch web page and hopefully this should be up and running before to much longer. Any member who has electronic pictures or photos they would not mind sharing on the site can e-mail them to Vic Fraser at [vcfraser@aol.ocm](mailto:vcfraser@aol.ocm) who will discuss with the member before it is posted.

### **New Terms and Conditions**

If any COTA graded employee has not yet received a new contract they will shortly. These terms and conditions are issued so as to incorporate the minimum standards contained within the new COTA agreement and in no way will they reduce your current entitlement. However we would ask all members to read these carefully before signing them, in particular we urge you to pay attention to the date the contract starts and also the continuous employment date.

If this date is incorrect then you should raise this with your employer in writing as a matter of urgency as a mistake in this section may be difficult to correct at a later date. It could also reduce any redundancy / medical retirement payment due to you, your sick pay being incorrect and may even prove to be the difference between you keeping your employment or losing your job.

We have received several concerns on this matter from ex Transocean caterers who have already been issued with a new ESS contract due to the fact that some have had the date of the transfer from Transocean wrongly inserted instead of the original commencement date. If you are an ex Transocean caterer who has received a new contract please recheck the date in question and follow the advise above if the date is incorrect.

The concerns Unite had historically with previous terms and conditions issued by some COTA employers without due consultation have now been resolved. Should you have any ongoing concerns with your new terms and conditions please contact the Aberdeen office above for advice.

During our meeting questions were raised as to whether members who receive new terms and conditions were also aware that enhanced conditions from previous COTA employers were to be honoured.

These conditions included:

#### Members transferred from Sodexo to ESS

- Enhanced Life cover of 4 times annual salary for accidental death from the time of leaving their home to returning back home at the end of their trip.
- The issuing of a first written warning instead of the final written which some employers have for missing your check in.
- Company sick pay is now the same for both employers.

#### Members transferred from Aramark to Entier

- Payment of 3 days compassionate leave.
- The issuing of a first written warning instead of the final written which some employees have for missing a check in, if the member previously transferred from Sodexo to Aramark.
- Enhanced Company Sick Pay as per previous contract.

### **Ex Transocean / GSF Caterers**

Consultation on the harmonization of contracts is still ongoing with members who transferred from Transocean to ESS and who remain on the Transocean contract of employment. ESS has confirmed that the new terms and conditions including the wage uplift will be back dated to 1<sup>st</sup> September 2010. We are confident that this matter will be concluded before the next Branch meeting.

## **ESS Safety Reps Forum**

Brothers Ian Mundie and Nicky Elphinstone have been asked to give a presentation at the upcoming ESS safety reps forum 4.5.11 and we await a report on how this was received.

Brother Elphinstone also asked that the Branch could remind members of the web site for the Workforce Involvement Group (WIG) which all in attendance agreed with and can be found at [www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/meetings/iacs/oiac/wig.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/meetings/iacs/oiac/wig.htm) brother Elphinstone's recent visit to the Tiffany platform as part of WIG can also be viewed at [www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/meetings/iacs/oiac/wig/010411/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/meetings/iacs/oiac/wig/010411/index.htm)

## **AOB**

### **Members Contact Details.**

Following the last phone ballot we identified over 30 members whose contact details were out of date this included postal addresses, surnames, and even employers. We can not emphasize enough how important it is that our members ensure you keep us up to date with any changes to your contact details by simply contacting the address above.

We are in the process of ensuring all Offshore Catering workers are enrolled in the correct Branch so if any Unite the union offshore caterer, whether from the ex TGWU / Amicus section have **not** been receiving any information directly from the Offshore Catering Branch please contact the district office with your details so that we can transfer you into the correct Branch. Only by properly organising our Branch can we deliver the service you as a Unite member deserve. To improve the speed of communication we would urge any member who has not already done so to provide a current e-mail address that way any information posted out can also be e-mailed to them.

### **Enhanced Rota's**

Further to letters sent to the relevant Shop Stewards on Total and BP units it is Unites intention to meet with ESS and Aramark respectively to discuss the crowing resentment from our members working on these units about their continued sole exclusion from the enhanced rota on these units enjoyed by others.

### **Offshore Catering Branch / Shop Stewards Meetings**

Dates to be confirmed.

Should any Shop Steward feel they are prevented from attending Branch meetings due to the cost associated they should write the branch explaining their situation so the Branch can consider what assistance can be provided.

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](http://www.tgwuoffshore.org.uk)

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

Meeting closed.