Outdoor Department
Monthly E-Bulletin
For CWU members working in Royal Mail Deliveries, Collections, SPDOs and ROMEC Cleaners

Issue 42 May 2016

Outdoor Secretary’s Introduction

In or out of Europe – whichever way the UK votes and the CWU hopes its stay in, the best way to start protecting our jobs is to do the job properly! All too often the department receives information relating to managers putting pressure on people to take extra work and far too often that is because people are cutting corners, placing pressure on themselves and their colleagues. The message is the same from us; do the job properly - the way it was designed.

Local managers are under pressure from above to cut costs and at the same time maintain the USO (Universal Service Obligation) and as a consequence offices are understaffed meaning that managers are often going out on delivery, in order to meet this incompatible criterion. This results in them pushing you to take more work and then turning a blind eye to people cutting corners so they don’t have to go out on delivery. We need to start addressing this in all delivery offices by ensuring the staffing levels meet the workload requirements and people do the job properly, and where agreement can’t be reached over the staffing levels then using the IR Framework.

The department won’t tire of saying this! It really is in our hands to ensure that we protect jobs. The alternative is the race to the bottom which is clearly not what we want so let’s mean what we say and do something about it. We need to encourage each other to do the job properly, and at the same time encourage our colleagues that are not currently members of the CWU to join the union and work with our reps and branches to protect jobs before it too late.

Bob Gibson
Bob Gibson
CWU Assistant Secretary
Delivery Issues / General Update

National Deployment/Roll-Out of the Telephone Accident Reporting Process

Members will be aware of the recent trial that was carried out in line with the advice provided to Branches in LTB 714/15 issued on 9th November 2015. Following the trial a meeting was held with Royal Mail on Monday 21st March 2016 regarding the results and findings of the trial, where it was agreed that the Telephone Accident Reporting process should now be deployed and rolled out nationally. This was confirmed at the statutory Postal Executive meeting held on Tuesday 5th April 2016.

The CWU have made it clear from the outset of our discussions that, the safety and wellbeing of our drivers is of paramount importance in this process, and Royal Mail readily accepts this. Both parties recognise that when a driver is involved in a Road Traffic Accident (RTA) they may inevitably find themselves suffering from a considerable amount of shock and stress, and it is for this reason we have ensured that it must be the driver who has sole responsibility for deciding whether to make the telephone call to LEX Auto lease. It is also down to the Driver to decide whether the call is made at the scene of the accident; at a place they feel it safe to do so or back at their parent office. The purpose of this new process is to provide all the relevant information to LEX as soon as possible so that they can pass the information on to Royal Mail solicitors, STRATA, for immediate action. The other important aspect of this process is that it should ensure that Driver’s report the accident within the designated 24 hour period following an accident, which should also support the ERICA process. We are aware that within the RTA process there are 63% of RTA’s not reported within the 24 hour period, and we firmly believe that this new process will improve the reporting process.

It is important to note that, ‘This new process does not amend the current RTA Procedure, nor does it replace the ERICA reporting process. No matter what, the ERICA process must still be followed and completed by the manager and the driver within the 24 hour period following a road traffic accident’.

The trial was carried out in three directorates; West, East and North covering c.250 delivery offices. Between November 2015 and February 2016, there was 436 accidents reported; 129 of these accidents were reported using both the telephone and ERICA, approximately 28% using this process. In 4 weeks between February to March, there was a further 110 accidents, where 45 of these were reported using the telephone and the ERICA, which is approximately 40%. This evidence indicates that whilst there was a slow pick-up in the early stages of the trial for one reason or another, the use of the telephone increased as the trial progressed. Whilst we recognise the potential saving benefits to Royal Mail, we also recognise the benefit it adds not only to the whole reporting process, but also to the protection of Drivers.

It has been reported that there have been occasions when our members have been threatened with the conduct code, not only for not reporting the accident within the 24 hour time line, but also because they either haven’t fully or accurately reported what they believe to have actually happened at the scene of the accident, and then finding themselves being accused of deliberately distorting the facts. The new process enables Drivers to not only provide the accident information from the scene of the accident, but when they get back to their office they can change their original answer on the ERICA form if they believe their initial answer was not totally accurate. This can be done without prejudice and free from recrimination.

It is also apparent through reports from some of our CWU H&S Representatives that they are encountering difficulties regarding the ERICA reporting process and follow-up accident investigations. As mentioned earlier, we see this reporting process as an enhancement to the ERICA process which should be helpful for our H&S representatives. Furthermore, it is made clear in the joint statement that the new process also gives protection to Drivers if they decide to use the telephone to report an accident to LEX, inasmuch as, Drivers not being held responsible for any delay to the delivery of...
the mail or operational failure as a consequence of making the phone call. Overall, and with no negative response from the field following consultation with CWU representatives, we believe this new process can now be rolled out nationally with encouragement to our drivers to use the process.

The roll out commenced w/c 18th April and the supporting communications included in a WTLL session that took place w/c 11th April 2016

PROPOSED CLOSURES OF DELIVERY OFFICES

The following policy motion was carried at the CWU Policy Forum held in London 22nd/23rd March 2016:

That this Policy Forum recognises the link between office DO closures and Royal Mails strategy for the future of deliveries; including OMP. Therefore it is agreed that in line with recommendation 3 that no cooperation be given to the current spate of DO mergers/Closures until such time as an agreement is reached on the future of deliveries and any subsequent new pipeline/work plan except where there is an accepted Health and Safety issue and or local agreement when there are benefits to the members affected i.e. new offices.

This needs to be read in conjunction with recommendation 3 which states the following:

Recommendation 3: That no agreement is given to OMP/Single Wave until a new pipeline/workplan is agreed which embraces the spirit and intent of the above report and ensures that the delivery of letters and packets together can commence from e.g. 7am and which ensures that all deliveries are performed properly in line with our Agreements e.g. start times, equipment, tools and meal breaks.

In essence this means that unless there is an H&S issue and a move needs to take place for that reason(s) or there are benefits for our members such as a new and improved office and working environment then co-operation should be withdrawn and Royal Mail informed of the policy. It should be noted however that it was made clear during the debate that this policy does not apply to SPDO’s.

National Joint Statement - Blue Pouch for Collections on Delivery Deployment

Further to LTB 39/16 and the trial of the Blue Pouch in 11 Delivery Offices to enable consideration of the practicality of the pouch and to assist in deciding whether the Blue Pouch should be extended for full National deployment.

The Key considerations of the trial were as follows:

1. The introduction of a Blue pouch for collectors to consolidate all collection mail collected whilst on delivery.
2. All equipment required to perform collections on delivery to be consolidated into the pouch. (keys, Route card, Route header)
3. To provide visibility in the unit that all Collections on delivery post boxes are covered on a daily basis.

As a result of the original trial it was agreed to expand the trial to Units still to deploy COLOD revisions (circa 100 units). 74 of those Units have now deployed COLOD revisions and the period 11 results show:

- 80% have beaten the Access loss target,
- have improved or have 0% loss
- 7% have not deployed the process as agreed
- 9% have not yet been visited to demonstrate compliance to the process
- 4% have loss in other areas such as 1c in 2c

There has been positive feedback from frontline staff and local CWU representatives regarding the use of blue pouches for Collection on delivery.

Consequently we have agreed with Royal Mail, endorsed by the Postal Executive on the 5th April 2016 that the Blue Pouch can be rolled out nationally in line with the attached Joint Statement which means that the ‘Blue Pouch’ will become a standard piece of equipment that can now be used in all units still to deploy COLOD revisions. In addition to this and as part of Business As Usual (BAU) the Blue Pouch can also be deployed via regional management teams.
on a unit priority basis, which will be agreed locally.

In line with the trial all OPG’s will receive the necessary training required to adopt the use of blue pouches.

**New Postal Digital Assistant Mk2 (PDA) – National Joint Statement**

Further to PE Doc 42/16 agreed by the PEC on 1st March which enabled a PILOT of the new PDA across a number of offices which were selected as being representative of the delivery and collection operation such as City/Urban, Rural (including SPDO’s) High engagement score and High Impact Delivery Offices.

As a result of user feedback a number of minor system errors have been corrected, as well as some simplifications to current processes which means that we jointly accept that the PDA is ready for National roll out and replacement of the existing devices.

As a consequence National deployment was planned to commence on the 25th April with a plan to complete by the end of October 2016.

The deployment plan has been produced following feedback from the field and is grouped by Delivery Director which is attached and is also broken down into the relevant DSM catchment areas.

A revised set of training materials and workplace coach briefs have been produced for Delivery indoor and outdoor, and Collection Users. The current version is 2.1 and as activity progresses and the reviews take place these may be subject to further changes as feedback is gained from all users and future version controls will be agreed and shared with the CWU Nationally.

Training for all frontline OPG’s on the new PDA will be undertaken by Workplace Coaches utilising the units WTLL session prior to the respective unit commencing. This will include full demonstrations on the new device and ongoing support for users, including the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP’s).

We have agreed that during National Deployment there will be regular review meetings at National Level to understand whether there are any changes to the technical process, software applications and training materials to assist with and support the full use of PDAs and ensure that deployment is undertaken as easily as possible.

In addition, both parties will continue to discuss and share the relevant information linked to further enhancements of the software which will be subject to phase 2 applications once full deployment has been completed.

**Fuel Management System Terms of Reference on User Acceptance Testing at Worksop DO**

This document relates to the method with which Royal Mail Fleet uses fuel that is accessed in a variety of ways from bulk fuel tanks located at operational sites as well as the use of fuel cards at filling stations and local fuel depots across the UK. More than 70% of fuel is drawn from over 230 bulk fuel sites that have outdated equipment installed which is no longer fit for purpose.

The price paid by Royal Mail for bulk fuel is significantly cheaper, so in order to support their requirements and ensure the HGV fleet has access to filling station forecourts, RM Fleet are upgrading their hardware across all bulk fuel sites together with a new Fuel Management System which provides better transparency of fuel used and data capture which will help improve reporting procedures.

It is intended to replace the old Timeplan units with the new Apollo units as provided by Triscan which will consist of replacement fuel island control units issuing new vehicle ID key fobs and deployment of an industry standard tool to report on bulk fuel usage.

The User Acceptance Test (UAT) will commence at Worksop DO in May 2016 whereby all data captured will be shared with the CWU and jointly reviewed prior to any decision regarding deployment beyond the UAT at Worksop DO. Such a review will assist and determine if the system is fit for purpose.

Following a successful trial at Worksop it is intended to deploy the same system into another 3 sites, Derby MPU, Ashbourne DO and YDC in advance of national deployment.
Drivers will continue to fuel in the usual way by holding the key fob to the unit, key in the current mileage from the odometer reading and start to fuel. The fuel used and data capture recorded will not be used to indicate differences between offices or drivers and will not be used as a disciplinary tool. Other than agreed Coaching, this process will not enhance the ability of managers to use the evidence available to take disciplinary action. The CWU Area safety Reps will be fully involved in the testing process and how the data flows from the unit to the central database and into the Central Fuel Team. The ASR will also be fully involved to ensure a SSOW is in place during installation as well as during the issue of fuel. A national SAC1 and WESCAC document has been produced and has been shared with the CWU Health and Safety Department. Additionally the supplier has provided a detailed Risk Assessment and Method Statement for all installations. In advance of installation all H&S documentation will be shared with the unit manager, PiC and local CWU H&S representative. The installation at sites is planned to take between 4 to 6 hours so both Royal Mail and the CWU are committed to working together at Unit level to ensure safety remains paramount throughout the installation. Upon completion of successful testing it is anticipated to commence national roll-out from July 2016 through to the start of November 2016. Both Royal Mail and the CWU will continue to monitor and review progress on this initiative to understand where changes are required or improvements available.

Romec

Following confirmation that Royal Mail acquired ENGIE’s stake in Romec on 31st March, the below joint statement outlining the agreed way forward in Romec has been produced and is being circulated to Romec members today.

In addition, it has been agreed that the current barriers on transfer between Romec and Royal Mail will be removed. From 1st April 2016 any employee of Romec taking up a role within RMG will retain continuity of service (and the same will apply for any Royal Mail employee transferring into Romec). This will mean that Romec members of the Royal Mail Pension Plan (RMPP) will be able to remain members of the scheme following transfer.

JOINT STATEMENT ON THE FUTURE BY ROYAL MAIL, ROMEc, UNITE & CWU

Following the ratification by Unite and CWU members in Romec of the Agreement on the Future Provision of Facilities Management Services to Royal Mail, we are pleased to say that on 31 March 2016 Royal Mail Group acquired the 49 per cent of facilities manager Romec Limited (Romec) that it does not already own from ENGIE (formerly Cofely Workplace Limited). This follows a strategic review into the future of the joint venture (JV). Under the terms of the transaction, Romec is now a fully owned company within Royal Mail Group. This will allow the complex governance arrangements of Romec to be simplified, provide for a better fit with Royal Mail’s own priorities and opportunities to look afresh at how certain activities are conducted in order to ensure that they are as efficient as possible. The transaction means that the provisions of the agreement will now come into effect.

The joint working group that has been meeting since early 2015 to discuss the future ownership of Romec will continue in being with a new remit to oversee the implementation of the agreement. The same principles of cooperation and engagement that led to a successful outcome to the earlier talks will apply. It will be called the Forward Together Group and will continue to have the advice and support of Peter Thompson as an external member. We will provide updates of outputs from the group from time to time. Normal arrangements for consultation and negotiation within Romec over day to day matters will continue as usual.

One of the priorities for the Forward Together Group is to look at the issues and areas of Romec identified in the agreement for further review, and these reviews are commencing. They cover the non-core areas of Romec, step change improvements in engineering efficiency and also new approaches to industrial and employee relations. The intention of the reviews is to shape the development of Romec in a way that takes full account of input from the...
unions about the future before decisions are made that impact on Romec employees. As always, there will be some changes going forward, but the priority will be to ensure that these are managed in a way that takes full account of input from trades union partners and which manages the people impact of change as fairly as possible. In the meantime the day to day management of Romec under Keith Gawthorn as MD remains unchanged.

The support of everyone in Romec over the difficult period of uncertainty about the future of the company is well understood and appreciated. This is now a new chapter in Romec’s history and we jointly intend to help shape it together, with your continued support.

21 April 2016

Collections Update

Due to correspondence received in the Department recently regarding the issue of Collection Revisions under the guise of a programme called Improving Collection Efficiency (ICE) which was giving cause for concern we have now raised the matter with Royal Mail at national level.

It was made absolutely clear to Royal Mail that what is being report by Collections Managers/Planners to some of our local and area representatives has not been agreed with the CWU at national level and was in fact completely untrue. This involved a number of units which had been scoped/put forward for follow up revisions in the financial year 2016/17 and included the use of the Postbox Mail Monitoring Device (PMMD) in a way which was also not agreed. In fact it was not in line with the National Agreed TOR.

After a very frank exchange, Royal Mail have accepted that the proposed sites were not agreed with the CWU at national level and that the CWU will now have the right to have input into the proposed units and that the PMMD would also only deployed in line with the national TOR and after discussions with the CWU locally to determine which Post boxes it would be used for.

Also the proposed 39 units for a follow up revision as part of ICE, which will be done in line with all National Agreements.

Further discussions are due with Royal Mail in the coming weeks and further updates will be circulated as they become available.
DO YOUR JOB PROPERLY
Don’t bury your head in the sand!

IT’S YOUR FUTURE

‘Do you realise that by coming in early, not taking your meal relief or using the wrong delivery equipment you are allowing the management to increase your workload through lapsing or absorption? Think about what you’re doing and the impact it’s having on us all.’

SUPPORT YOUR UNION TO SUPPORT YOU
This month’s frequently asked questions?

Q. Can I use my car to go to my first point of delivery and then get my van share partner to drop me off afterwards?

A. NO

If your office has gone through a methods revision then Private Cars should have been withdrawn altogether and there are no longer any circumstances whereby our members can use them.

Q. When will our new PDAs be issued?

A. we recently published a Letter to Branches that gave a rollout plan Ask you’re local Rep or your Branch for a copy or to have sight of it – if you have trouble doing that, please email outdoorsecretary@cwu.org
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