



NATIONAL UNION OF RAIL, MARITIME & TRANSPORT WORKERS

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REPORT AND DECISIONS

OF THE

**SEVENTY THIRD NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF
SIGNALLING GRADES**

Held on

16th & 17th September 2006

In the

Lesser Albert Hall
Dumbarton Road
Stirling

Secretary:

Mr Julian Tansell
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73rd National Conference of Signalling Grades

Held in the Lesser Albert Hall, Dumbarton Road, Stirling, Scotland on 16th & 17th
September 2006

Conference commenced at 14.00 hrs prompt on Saturday 16th and concluded at 17.30 hrs,
resumed at 10.00 hrs prompt the following day and concluded at 16.15 hrs.

In Attendance

General Secretary - Brother Robert Crow
General Grades Committee Member - Brother Peter Pinkney
Recruitment, Retention & Credit Union - Brother Donald Graham

Officers

President	Brother Jimmy Corbett (Newcastle Rail & Catering Branch)
Vice President	Brother Ian Graham (Broadlands Branch)
Secretary	Brother Julian Tansell (Worcester No1 Branch)

Executive Committee

Scottish Region	Brother Dave King (Stirling No1 Branch)
London Midland Region	Brother Alan Aitkenhead (North Staffs Branch)
Eastern/Anglia Region	Brother Alan Rogerson (Newcastle Rail & Catering Branch)
Southern Region	Brother Kelvin Eastham (Three Bridges Branch)
Western Region	Brother Ian Waggott (Worcester No1 Branch)
London Underground	Seat Vacant

53 delegates attended from the following branches:

Bedlington, Bridgend, Llantrisant & District, Bristol Rail, Broadlands, Colchester & District, Deptford, Doncaster, Dundee, Fort William, Great Northern, Hastings, Hexham Rail, Holyhead No1, Ipswich, Keith, Leominster, Miles Platting, Newcastle Rail & Catering, North Clyde, North Staffs, Perth No 1, Peterborough, Plymouth No 1, Reading, Scarborough, South West Midlands, Stirling No 1, Swansea No 1, Swindon Rail, Teesside, Three Bridges, Walsall, Waltham Cross & District, Worcester No 1, York & District.

AGENDA

1. Opening of Conference.
2. Civic welcome by the Provost of Stirling.
3. Conference President.
4. Election of Tellers.
5. Election of Harassment Officer.
6. Minutes of Conference 2005 to be confirmed.
7. Balance sheet and auditors report.
8. Honorariums.
9. Conference Executive Committee report.
10. Conference Secretaries report.
11. Election of Scrutineers.
12. Address by General Secretary - Brother R Crow.
13. Address by General Grades Committee member - Brother P Pinkney.
14. Address by Brother Donald Graham on Recruitment & Retention.
15. Address by Brother Donald Graham on the Credit Union.
16. Resolutions.
17. Election of Officers.
18. Resolutions to be submitted to the AGM 2007.
19. Closing of Conference.

Election of Officers 2006/2007

Officer	Nominee	Branch	Result
President	Ian Graham	Broadlands	Elected Unopposed
Vice President	Ian Allen	North Staffs	Elected Unopposed
Secretary	Julian Tansell	Worcester No 1	Elected Unopposed
Executive Committee Members			
Scottish Region	Dave King	Stirling No 1	Elected Unopposed
London/Midland	Alan Aitkenhead	North Staffs	Elected Unopposed
Eastern/Anglia	Peter Pinkney	Teesside	Elected Unopposed
Western Region	Ian Waggott	Worcester No 1	Elected Unopposed
Southern Region	Kelvin Eastham	Three Bridges	Elected Unopposed
Auditors			
Auditor 1	Gavin Fry	Worcester No 1	Elected Unopposed
Auditor 2	John Young	Worcester No 1	Elected Unopposed
Venue For 2007 Conference			
York		York & District	Elected Unopposed



PRESENTATION FUND

NATIONAL UNION OF RAIL, MARITIME & TRANSPORT WORKERS

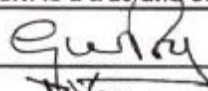
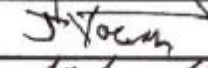
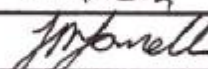
BALANCE SHEET OF THE SIGNALLING GRADES CONFERENCE FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31/12/05

INCOME			EXPENDITURE		
	£	P		£	P
1. Balance Brought Forward	472	82	1. Postage		
2. Grant from Head Office			2. Printing & Stationery		
3. Bank Interest			3. Rent of Meeting Room		
4. Other Income (Details)			4. Bank Commission		
Raffle Income (Raffle held on Saturday & Sunday)	252	00	5. Other Expenses (Details)		
			Flowers & Retirement Gift	103	35
			Reception Committee	50	00
			Loran Field	21	50
			Expenditure Total	174	85
			H/O Investment 31/12/2005		
			In Bank	549	97
			On Hand		
Total	724	82	Total	724	82
Bank Reconciliation Statement					
Balance as per Bank Statement 31/12/2005			We the undersigned, hereby certify that we have examined the whole of the books, including the cash books, receipt book, bank statements, and all receipts and documents in connection with the above account, and we are satisfied that the return is a true and correct statement		
Total	549	97	<i>J Young</i>	Auditor	
			<i>C. Wright</i>	Auditor	
			<i>M. Smith</i>	Secretary	
			Date: 15 th January 2006		



NATIONAL UNION OF RAIL, MARITIME & TRANSPORT WORKERS

BALANCE SHEET OF THE SIGNALLING GRADES CONFERENCE FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31/12/05

INCOME			EXPENDITURE		
	£	P		£	P
1. Balance Brought Forward	980	58	1. Postage		
2. Grant from Head Office	430	00	2. Printing & Stationery		
3. Bank Interest			3. Rent of Meeting Room		
4. Other Income (Details)			4. Bank Commission		
			5. Other Expenses (Details)		
			Executive Committee Expenses	175	00
			Reception Committee Grant	50	00
			Conference Expenses	62	27
			Expenditure Total	287	27
			H/O Investment 31/12/2005		
			In Bank	1123	31
			On Hand		
Total	1410	58	Total	1410	58
Bank Reconciliation Statement					
Balance as per Bank Statement 31/12/2005			We the undersigned, hereby certify that we have examined the whole of the books, including the cash books, receipt book, bank statements, and all receipts and documents in connection with the above account, and we are satisfied that the return is a true and correct statement		
Total	1123	31		Auditor	
				Auditor	
				Secretary	
			Date: 15 th January 2006		

Opening of Conference

The President opened the Conference, welcomed delegates to Stirling and introduced the Provost of Stirling, Councillor Colin O'Brien to say a few words.

Provost's Address

Councillor Colin O'Brien welcomed all delegates to Stirling for the first time and hoped that an enjoyable weekend would be had by all. He also said that he would see us all later at the Civic Reception where we could ask him some questions if we wanted to.

Conference President

The President welcomed all delegates to the Conference and said it was good to see some new faces as well as the old ones. The President advised delegates that the Conference would be going out live on the web-cast and that the General Secretary would be here at 16.00 to address Conference.

Election of Tellers

Agreed to elect Brother Williams of Hexham Rail branch and Brother Kenworthy of Scarborough branch to act as tellers for the duration of the Conference.

Election of Harassment Officer

Agreed to elect Brother John McDougall of Perth No1 to act as the Harassment Officer for the duration of the Conference.

Minutes of Conference 2005

Agreed to accept the minutes of last year's conference as a true record of the proceedings.

Balance Sheet & Auditors Report.

A report on the balance sheet and financial affairs of the Conference was given by Brother Fry which was seconded formally by Brother Swift and accepted by the Conference.

Honorariums

It was recommended to the Conference that these would remain unchanged for the forthcoming year, which was accepted by the Conference.

Election of Scrutineers

It was recommended to the Conference to elect the Reception Committee as the Scrutineers for the duration of the Conference.



National Conference of Signalling Grades

Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting Held in the Salsa Alba Lounge, The Albion Bar, Barnton Street, Stirling on Friday 15th September 2006 at 15.00 Hours

Present: Brothers Tansell, Corbett, Rogerson, Pinkney, Aitkenhead, Eastham, Graham, Waggott & King.

Apologies: No Apologies as all Executive Committee members were in attendance.

1. **Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising**-The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true record with no matters arising.
2. **Reception Committee report** - Dave King gave a report of the events planned over the weekend. The Friday evening function would be in the Function Room, Arches Bar, Upper Craig's, Stirling. The Saturday evening would be in The Municipal Buildings, Corn Exchange, Stirling and the Sunday evening would be at the Terraces Hotel, 4 Melville Place, Stirling. All functions would be starting between 7.00pm & 7.30pm.
3. **Liaison Committee report** - A report on the liaison committee meeting which took place on 30th November 2005 at Unity House was given by the Conference Secretary and this was recommended to the Conference for endorsement.
4. **Head Office and general correspondence** - Correspondence had been received from Unity House concerning Conference funding which was read out and noted by the committee.
5. **Balance sheet and auditors report** - The balance sheet was presented to the committee and it was pointed out that the wrong balance sheet was enclosed in the agenda. The Conference Secretary would produce the Balance sheet and present it at conference and would recommend it to Conference for endorsement.
6. **Honoraria and expenses** - It was recommended that these would remain unchanged for the forthcoming year. It was recommended that the Auditors would receive £20.00, the Executive Committee members to receive £40.00 and the Conference Secretary to receive £100.00 starting from the next conference.

- 7. Conference addresses** - It was recommended that Brother Pinkney, General Grades Committee Member would address Conference on Saturday afternoon, the General Secretary Brother Bob Crow on Saturday afternoon and Brother Donald Graham on recruitment & retention and also the credit union on Sunday morning.
- 8. Order of agenda for Conference** - Resolutions 13 and 17 would be debated first and the other resolutions as booked. Resolutions 9 & 10 have been withdrawn by the branch concerned.
- 9. Conference Executive report** - It was agreed that the Conference Secretary would write up a report to submit to Conference to reflect the proceedings of this meeting.
- 10. Vote of thanks** - It was recommended that a vote of thanks be given by Brother Eastham to the reception committee at the Sunday evening function and a vote of thanks to the civic authorities of Stirling would be given by Brother Corbett after the close of conference on Sunday.
- 11. Grant to the reception committee** - It was recommended that a grant of £150.00 be given to the reception committee. (£75.00 from conference funds and £75.00 from the conference presentation fund)
- 12. Presentations** - There would be three presentations this year to be made at the Sunday evening function. They would be to Brother Dali Jabbar of Ipswich Branch, David Williams of Hexham Rail and Brother Jimmy Corbett of Newcastle Rail & Catering Branch. A bouquet of flowers would be presented to the Provost's wife at the Saturday evening Civic Reception.
- 13. Bouquets** - It was agreed that a bouquet of flowers be presented to the Provost's wife at the Saturday evening civic reception.
- 14. Any other business-**
 - Brother Dave King, Stirling No1 Branch and EC member gave his apologies for not being able to attend the Sunday afternoon session and also the Sunday evening function due to a prior commitment.
 - The conference Secretary recommended that new engraved badges be made for conference next year and this would be included in his report at conference.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 16.40 Hours.



National Signalling Grades Conference Stirling 16th & 17th September 2006

Secretary's Report

Dear Brothers/Sisters,

I would like to start off my report this year by saying a big thank you to all of those who helped me at last year's conference, especially Sister Jenny Burns of the South West Midlands Branch, Elizabeth and Steven Felstead and also to my fellow branch members who attend conference who helped me out last year in one way or another.

As most of you will be aware, Brother Jimmy Corbett's term of Conference President comes to an end this coming Sunday night and I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for his work as Conference President over the past 3 years and wish the incoming President the best of luck for the next 3 years.

In my report at last year's conference I said that we had to make sure that the 35 hour week was implemented and that we received a no strings one year pay deal. I was always under the impression that the 35 hour week was part of the 2001 JWP agreement and would not be part of any pay deal. In the May 06 Green Light Newsletter for Signalling staff Brother Crow said "Discussions have taken place with the company at which the union's representatives made it clear that we were looking for a substantially improved offer, in the form of a one year deal". It also said that the RMT opposes the company plans to link the introduction of the 35 hour week to this year's pay deal.

In a memo to branches dated 3rd May 2006 it said that there was an overwhelming rejection of anything but a one year deal and the immediate introduction of a 35 hour week. In another memo dated 19th July it stated your GGC is of the view that this is the best deal that can be negotiated within this current pay round. A rejection of the offer will result in new strike days being called and there is no way of knowing how many days of industrial action it would take to force a new offer. Since you, the members, will be the ones who will lose money by striking, the GGC strongly urges you to vote yes to accept the offer. We were told at the start of the pay talks to strike for a better deal then all of a sudden we are told not to strike because we will lose money! If we had gone on strike we may have got a one year deal, instead we can just dream of having a bonus of £352.728 (John Armitt) or £314.490 (Ian Coucher). What's done is done and no matter what we say or do can change that.

At last year's conference Brother Crow advised conference that each delegate attending conference would receive £30.00, with a maximum of 6 delegates per branch to help with expenses etc, which was a good idea and I hope that this will continue in 2007. Having this payment has helped our branch send yet another delegate to conference who would have found it hard to afford otherwise.

At the time of writing my report 36 delegates had expressed an interest to attend conference, however, I am expecting this number to be slightly more when conference starts as there are some delegates who haven't confirmed their attendance. This is a slight improvement on last year's attendance, but it is still quite low compared to previous conferences, considering there are over 5,000 signallers in the country. It is however nice to see some of the regular faces at conference, but even better that we have some new delegates attending this year.

I have wondered why the interest in attending conference has dropped over the last few years, and judging by the telephone calls that I have received over the past couple of months it is my opinion, and I must stress that it is just my opinion, that some Signallers haven't been receiving the details about where the conference is being held by their branches. It is my intention, therefore, to formulate a mailing list so that I can supply this information to as wide an audience as possible. If you would like to join the mailing list you can register your details on the form which Steven Felstead has by the main door.

It is also my intention to produce engraved badges for next year's conference as the ones that we have currently got are a bit out of date. If this is agreed by conference then I will arrange for new badges to be made at a very low price (£3.50 per badge)

Well I think that I have gone enough for my report this year, and all that is left to do is to wish you all a good debating conference.

Yours

Julian Tansell

Conference Secretary

Address by the General Secretary - Brother Bob Crow

Brother Crow thanked the Conference for the invitation to address the Conference and said that having the Conference shown live on the web-cast was a huge step forward as it opened the Conference up to Signallers who could not attend to show them how business is done. He also said that the R.M.T would hopefully show all Conferences on the web-cast within the next 2 years. Brother Crow went on to say that the pensions commission is now set up with the first meeting taking place on the 23rd September. Brother Crow also went on to discuss matters about the recent pay deal award and that the R.M.T education centre would be opening its doors on the 9th October for tutors. The centre will have 19 rooms, computers, a bar and a crèche. The education centre will teach representatives how to speak in public, know the rules inside out and to get more members involved with the union. Brother Crow was thanked for his address with applause and answered questions from delegates on the recent pay deal, PT & R conditions, retention of members, Gerry Adams addressing the AGM and various other subjects. Brother Crow then presented the Conference President Brother Jimmy Corbett with his 40 year badge and medallion.

Address by General Grades Committee Member - Brother Peter Pinkney

Brother Pinkney started his address with Cognisco. He said that this would replace the current SCAP days and stated that only 1 branch had written a letter to head office complaining about Cognisco. He also said that the results of the test should not be used as a disciplinary tool and this has been confirmed by Network Rail head office. He went on to say that you can refuse to do it in your Signal Box and should only be asked questions about what rules you cover and you can take as long as you like to finish it, within reason. Brother Pinkney went on to say that the GGC do have meetings with Network Rail but as Conference can appreciate it does take time to get issues resolved. The next meeting would be taking place on the 12th October and he would report back at the liaison committee meeting in November. On a final note Brother Pinkney said that the current pay deal was the best that they could get and that Network Rail was ready for a fight. Brother Pinkney was thanked for address with applause and answered questions on the recent pay deal, Cognisco, the 35 hour working week, the level of membership within the R.M.T and various other subjects.

Address by Brother Donald Graham on Recruitment & Retention

Brother Graham started his address by saying that membership has increased by 20,000 in the last 5 years and one of the main factors of this was due to the organising weeks that the union is now holding. He said that these weeks have been very successful in getting new members signed up. In Scotland alone 100 new members were signed up in just 1 week thanks to representatives attending the induction courses.

Address by Brother Donald Graham on the Credit Union

Brother Graham stated that the credit union was a very useful thing to have for R.M.T members and it is run by R.M.T members for R.M.T members. All decisions are made by the credit union at the annual AGM and it is different from high street banks as there are no hidden extras to worry about. Brother Graham was thanked for address on recruitment & retention and also for his address on the credit union.

Resolutions

P.D.T.A. - Rest Day & Sunday Working

1. Submitted by Manchester Victoria Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

“That this conference calls upon the National Council to seek a meeting with Network Rail to raise the issue concerning Rest Day and Sunday working regarding P.D.T.A. The current arrangement being that these are not paid on said days”

“Operational Errors” Procedure

2. Submitted by Three Bridges Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

The National Signalling Grades Conference request the “General Grades Committee” to deal with Network Rail on “operational errors” procedure to be reviewed as the present system appears to be open to abuse, harassment & bullying in the workplace.

Rostering of Annual Leave

3. Submitted by Broadlands Branch. (Lost 13 for 40 against)

This conference believes that “due to changes in the law” all members covered by this conference with dependents of school age should be guaranteed a minimum of one week “rostered” summer holiday each year during the school holiday period.

We therefore call on our National Negotiators to seek an agreement with the company to secure a national minimum standard, which should ultimately be incorporated into our agreed conditions of service book.

Taking of Annual Leave

4. Submitted by Worcester No1 Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

Over the past couple of months there have been rumours that Signallers will have a maximum of 30 days annual a year and that you cannot carry over any days to the next year. In our area we have a set amount of how many Signallers can be on annual leave at any one time, thus some requests for annual leave may be refused.

We therefore call upon our National Negotiators to seek an agreement with our employers so that we can carry our some annual leave days, which should then be incorporated into our conditions of service book.

Annual Leave Entitlement – Relief Staff

5. Submitted by South West Midlands Branch. (See amendments to resolutions)

There have been several occasions over the past 12 months or so when relief staff has applied for an annual or compensatory leave day, which was granted, only then to find on the day before they are on a night turn, which in effect ruins the annual or compensatory leave day off. This generally means that just so the relief staff don't get caught they end up applying for 2 days off so as not to be coming off a night turn when they would be starting an annual or compensatory leave day that they actually had a purpose for.

The present agreement states that "if at all possible, relief staff should not be rostered on nights if they are on annual or compensatory leave the day after". The problem with this is that it is in no way certain that you wouldn't be put on a night turn the day previously.

The Signallers agreement to be re-written to show "under no circumstances should a Relief Signaller be rostered nights prior to either "annual leave, compensatory leave" their Rest Day".

Annual Leave Entitlement

6. Submitted by Three Bridges Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

This conference requests the "General Grades Committee" to remove the "pro-rata" on annual leave arrangements-consider the fact that this does not apply to all grades in Network Rail who work shifts but receive the full entitlement like, Operations Controllers, Electrical Controllers and Causation staff.

Flexibility Premium

7. Submitted by Keith Branch. (See amendments to resolutions)

That a flat rate of flexibility premium is determined and the same paid to all Relief Signallers regardless of grade. Flexibility premium is meant to be recompense for random shift working in various locations and to assist with fuel costs and should not be linked to a Signallers grade. E.G An Aberdeen Relief Signaller (grade 5) works at various locations, only one of which is a grade 5 Signal Box, the remainder are made up of grade 2 and grade 3 Signal Boxes. However, the grade 5 Signaller will receive a couple of thousand pounds extra flexibility premium than his grade 2 or grade 3 colleagues.

8. Submitted by South West Midland Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

At the next available pay deal anniversary, Relief Signalling staff should get an increase in their flexibility premiums. This is due to the vast increase in the cost of fuel over the past year or so and also because there has been no review of flexibility premiums for over 10 years, since the present system was started. An example of the increase in fuel costs

over the last year or so for a grade 6 Relief Signaller shows an average increase of around £40.00 per month.

Although the amount in actual monies received from flexibility premiums goes up slightly with any gain in pay rises, the massive increase in fuel costs far outstrip these small increases.

A rough calculation based on a grade 6 Relief Signaller who is currently on a flexibility premium of 18% shows that an average increase in flexibility premiums of around 2% would close the present gap.

If the present escalation in fuel costs continues, it will mean that for Relief Signallers the cost of travelling to the various locations may not be covered by the amount of flexibility premiums which they get and the relief positions will have a lot less appeal, and thus it may become difficult for relief vacancies to be filled.

So basically the proposal is for all flexibility premiums for Relief Signallers to rise by around 2%, with no increase to the distance covered by these positions. Obviously exact figures should be examined more closely and on a far wider scale than just the Relief Signallers on one line. This would give a far more detailed insight into the problem.

Rates of Pay and Conditions of Service

9. Submitted by Stirling No1 Branch. (Withdrawn by branch)

This conference re-affirms existing policy namely:

To seek a substantial no-strings one year rise in rates of pay for grades covered by this conference. Any deviation from this to be agreed by a referendum ballot of the membership.

Overtime Premiums

10. Submitted by Stirling No1 Branch. (Withdrawn by branch)

This conference re-affirms previous request and existing policy for an increase to allowances for any overtime incurred.

200% for Sunday Working. 150% for all other work out with the agreed working week.

Spare Turns of Duty - Relief Signallers

11. Submitted by Worcester No1 Branch. (See amendments of resolutions)

That this conference calls upon the General Secretary to negotiate with Network Rail the maximum length of hours that a Relief Signaller may be booked spare, previously known as "Booked Off Not Required, BONR". The current agreement is that a Relief Signaller can be booked spare for as many hours as management want them spare for, but only pay them for 6 hours. This could be classed as being on-call as Relief Signallers have got to

be contactable for the hours they are booked spare. If for some reason management cannot contact the spare Relief Signaller then they are threatened with the disciplinary procedure, or in some cases, do not pay the Signaller for that day.

The solution to this being the spare turn to be rostered early turn, late turn or night turn of duty so that the Relief Signaller is only expected to be contactable during these hours and of course available for work for this turn. (any changes to the roster to be subject to the standard 48 hour rule) Payment is to be paid in full for the rostered turn whether worked or not and of course this should become part of our normal conditions of service.

Brass Contributions

12. Submitted by Broadlands Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

This conference believes that in light of Network Rails self proclaimed successful year and the payment of inflated bonuses to the company's directors, that there is now scope for the company to restore the "Matching Brass" contributions for members covered by this conference.

We therefore call upon our General Grades Committee to seek an early meeting with the company with a view to restoring that which was taken away.

Rates of Pay Comparability Study

13. Submitted by Stirling No1 Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

As Network Rail continually put additional responsibility onto our members covered by this conference we request that the union carry out a comparability study with the occupation closet to ours in terms of grade separation of traffic, namely Air Traffic Controllers and seek to bring our basic rates of pay up to a fairer level to reflect the responsibility held by the Signalling grade.

Introduction of Attendance Allowance

14. Submitted by Broadlands Branch. (Lost 3 for 50 against)

This conference believes that there is scope to improve the rates of pay in relation to members covered by this conference by the introduction of an attendance allowance.

We therefore call upon our General Grades Committee to seek an agreement with Network Rail whereby our members would receive a financial incentive based on their level of their attendance or availability.

Breaches of PT and R Arrangements

15. Submitted by North Staffs Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

This conference explicitly recommends that future breaches of PT & R conditions by Network Rail be met with a ballot for industrial action, firstly within the area concerned and

if necessary a full ballot for industrial action to be carried out of all members germane to this conference.

SCAP Process

16. Submitted by Broadlands Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

This conference is of the opinion that the "SCAP" process has become over bureaucratic, time consuming and stressful as well as being a distraction to the members covered by this conference, during their turn of duty in a safety critical position.

We therefore call upon our General Grades Committee to approach our employers at the earliest opportunity with a view to removing the "SCAP" process from the workplace.

Training of Signalling Staff

17. Submitted by Stirling No1 Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

Given the current attitude of Network Rail Management to find fault with everything we do or say, this conference requests the following:

- Proper off the job training on correct communications procedures for all Signalling staff (Not part of the current safety briefing package).
- All staff who interacts with Signalling staff trained to the same standard.
- In box training to be conducted by a nominated trainer whom then becomes the sole trainer for the trainee throughout their period of training. This can be easily achieved in some locations but in multi-panel Signal Boxes which comply with the terms of the SRI and change from less busy to very busy panels, then the trainer will be released from their turn on the roster for the duration of the training period to comply with the training schedule.
- Attempt to obtain a training allowance for any members carrying out in box training.

Travel Facilities – Network Rail

18. Submitted by Keith Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

This conference calls upon the General Grades Committee to pursue a claim for free rail travel passes for Signallers that joined the railway post 1996.

Job Evaluation - Non-Collaborative Axle Counters

19. Submitted by North Staffs Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

This conference is concerned at the lack of progress being made with resolutions adopted by this conference, with particular regard to the setting up of a joint working party to look into all aspects of using "Non-Collaborative Axle Counters" as a method of train detection. Resolutions on this subject have been tabled at least twice, with no reports of progress being made.

Briefing Days

20. Submitted by Broadlands Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

This conference believes that the "Briefing Days" are being abused by the company and are no longer being used for the purpose that they were originally intended. The emphasis is now focussed on the "SCAP" process and not on the updating of our members, in relation to their safety critical duties.

We therefore call on our National Negotiating team to meet with our employers, with a view to obtaining an agreement that these valuable days are restored for their original use for the benefit of all members covered by this conference.

Network Rail Managers Addressing Conference

21. Submitted by North Staffs Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

This conference is concerned that at last years Grade Conference that a Network Rail Manager was invited to address this conference without any consultation with the delegates who represent the members of this conference.

Conference therefore demands that if a Network Rail Manager wishes to address this conference in future there must be a formal request sent to the Secretary of this conference 12 months in advance for the delegates of this conference to debate, and agree before any manager is given permission to attend the following year.

Working Conditions

22. Submitted by Broadlands Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

This conference believes that all members covered by this conference should be provided with complimentary tea & coffee making materials by the company in line with that which is provided for their own management grades.

We therefore request that this issue be addressed within the agenda of a suitable meeting with the company in order to obtain a national standard.

Signalling Grades Conditions of Service Book

23. Submitted by Worcester No1 Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

That this conference calls upon the General secretary to arrange as soon as possible for the Signalling Grades Conditions of Service Book to be re-written to reflect all the changes to it that have taken place since it was last updated in 1997. For local union representatives this is our bible and without this being updated every time there is a change to it the reps are unable to advise their members covered by this conference correctly.

Medication

24. Submitted by Broadlands Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

The members covered by this conference remain very confused with regard to the taking of medication and the ability to work a safety critical post having taken the same.

There remains concern amongst our members that there is no National Audit Trail in relation to being given "Clearance" to work in a safety critical post.

We therefore call on our General Grades Committee to further clarify with our employers exactly what is and what is not permissible and also to secure a system whereby a reference is given to our member and the same reference is recorded in the Train register/Occurrence Book at the point of signing on duty. Furthermore we call on our National Executive Committee to orchestrate a publicity campaign highlighting the company policy and the need to advise the company of all medication taken, whereby it then becomes the company's problem.

Air Conditioning at Signalling Locations

25. Submitted by Worcester No1 Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

The summer months are getting hotter and this makes the Signal Boxes hotter. When asked for a small air conditioning unit (Price £90.00) our management say that there is no money available and to open the windows instead!

We therefore call upon our National Negotiators to pursue a claim with our employers so that every signalling location has some form of air conditioning.

Promotion of Fitness by Network Rail

26. Submitted by Broadlands Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

This conference believes that we should unite with Network Rail in promoting a healthy lifestyle for all members covered by this conference.

To this end we call upon our General Grades Committee to approach our employers with a view to obtaining an agreement whereby our union would promote the importance of general fitness and encourage our members to make use of local health club facilities in return for the company offering financial concessions to cover part of the cost.

Meal Breaks

27. Submitted by Worcester No1 Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

Some panels or IECCs still get a meal break, yet the Signallers in the manual Signal Boxes that are busy have got to eat and work at the same time, which in this day and age is appalling. Train drivers can have a PN break or even a cab environment break, even lorry drivers have to stop now and then.

We therefore call upon our National Negotiators to pursue a claim with our employers of a 30 minute meal break in the morning and a 30 minute meal break in the evening with no loss of wages to the Signaller. This should then be written into our conditions of service book.

Introduction of Cognisco Assessment Method

28. Submitted by South West Midlands Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

Our branch must disagree with "Cognisco" as this has not been looked into properly, and we can see many pitfalls with it. With this type of assessment and the results going to H.Q and also the Local operations Managers, the results of the assessment with not give specific information on which questions were answered correctly or incorrectly. Also the Data Protection Act may come into this. Since last years emergency resolution on this there does not seem to have been any feedback. A colleague has spoken to Data Protection Act Commissioner who advised him that he was baffled at Network Rails approach on the assessment and said that their proposals will breach legislation if full accurate data on assessments is not recorded and available upon request within 40 days.

We therefore instruct the General Secretary to look into this in much more detail with Network Rail before agreeing for this new method of assessment to come into force.

The Rule Book

29. Submitted by Broadlands Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

This conference believes that the design of the current set of Rule Books is not appropriate for the purpose required.

We therefore call on our National Negotiators to raise our concerns with the company, with a view to returning the same to the former loose leaf format rather than a set of modules, which cannot be updated in a professional manner.

Signallers Selection & Assessment Policy

30. Submitted by North Staffs Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

"That this conference requests an urgent meeting to take place between the RMT lead Negotiators and Network Rail to discuss the removal of clause 7 (reserves) from the Network Rail Signallers Selection & Assessment Policy. This clause we believe is in breach of Network Rail Equal Opportunities Policy and is clearly discriminatory and also severely damages current PT&R conditions as in many cases staff are being denied promotion."

EMERGENCY RESOLUTION 1

Constitution of Conference - Paragraph 3

Submitted by-Broadlands Branch. (Lost 7 for 46 against)

This Conference, in the light of our most recent pay award and the change of the anniversary date for future pay awards, are of the opinion that the dates of this Conference should be brought forward to reflect the said change.

EMERGENCY RESOLUTION 2

Unsociable Hours

Submitted by-South West Midlands Branch. (Carried Unanimously)

Network Rail are proposing to cut out night shifts nationwide at certain locations, they want to introduce unsociable shift hours i.e. 05.30-15.00 & 15.00-23.30. Obviously these hours will affect the welfare of our members. Our branch recommends that the hours between 22.00 & 06.00 are **officially identified** as a night shift having the correct night allowances, and staff is kept to cover nightshift duties. This will sustain the welfare of staff and reduce redundancies.

I urge the Conferences full support on this resolution.

Amendment of Resolutions

Resolution 5 (Carried Unanimously)

Resolution submitted by South West Midlands Branch.

Amendment submitted by Three Bridges Branch.

Delete third paragraph and insert:

The Signallers agreement to be re-written to show "under no circumstances should a Relief Signaller be rostered nights prior to either "annual leave, compensatory leave" or their Rest Day".

Resolution to now read:

There have been several occasions over the past 12 months or so when relief staff has applied for an annual or compensatory leave day, which was granted, only then to find on the day before they are on a night turn, which in effect ruins the annual or compensatory leave day off. This generally means that just so the relief staff don't get caught they end up applying for 2 days off so as not to be coming off a night turn when they would be starting an annual or compensatory leave day that they actually had a purpose for.

The present agreement states that “if at all possible, relief staff should not be rostered on nights if they are on annual or compensatory leave the day after”. The problem with this is that it is in no way certain that you wouldn’t be put on a night turn the day previously.

The Signallers agreement to be re-written to show “under no circumstances should a Relief Signaller be rostered nights prior to either “annual leave, compensatory leave” their Rest Day”.

Resolution 7 (Withdrawn by branch after debate)

Resolution submitted by Keith Branch.

Amendment submitted by Broadlands Branch.

On the first line after “and” insert:

“at no financial loss to any member covered by this conference and that

On the first line after “same” insert:

“be”

Resolution to now read:

“That a flat rate of flexibility premium is determined and at no financial loss to any member covered by this conference and that the same be paid to all Relief Signallers regardless of grade. Flexibility premium is meant to be recompense for random shift working in various locations and to assist with fuel costs and should not be linked to a Signallers grade. E.G An Aberdeen Relief Signaller (grade 5) works at various locations, only one of which is a grade 5 Signal Box, the remainder are made up of grade 2 and grade 3 Signal Boxes. However, the grade 5 Signaller will receive a couple of thousand pounds extra flexibility premium than his grade 2 or grade 3 colleagues.”

Resolution 11 (Carried Unanimously)

Resolution submitted by Worcester No1 Branch.

Amendment submitted by Three Bridges Branch.

Delete second paragraph and insert:

The solution to this being the spare turn to be rostered early turn, late turn or night turn of duty so that the Relief Signaller is only expected to be contactable during these hours and of course available for work for this turn. (any changes to the roster to be subject to the standard 48 hour rule) Payment is to be paid in full for the rostered turn whether worked or not and of course this should become part of our normal conditions of service.

Resolution to now read:

“That this conference calls upon the General Secretary to negotiate with Network Rail the maximum length of hours that a Relief Signaller may be booked spare, previously known as “Booked Off Not Required, BONR”. The current agreement is that a Relief Signaller can be booked spare for as many hours as management want them spare for, but only pay them for 6 hours. This could be classed as being on-call as Relief Signallers have got to be contactable for the hours they are booked spare. If for some reason management cannot contact the spare Relief Signaller then they are threatened with the disciplinary procedure, or in some cases, do not pay the Signaller for that day.

The solution to this being the spare turn to be rostered early turn, late turn or night turn of duty so that the Relief Signaller is only expected to be contactable during these hours and of course available for work for this turn. (any changes to the roster to be subject to the standard 48 hour rule) Payment is to be paid in full for the rostered turn whether worked or not and of course this should become part of our normal conditions of service.”

Submission of Resolutions To The AGM 2007.

After debate it was agreed that no resolutions be submitted to the AGM 2007.

Vote of Thanks

A vote of thanks would be made to the Provost of Stirling and a bouquet of flowers presented to the Provost's wife at the Civic Reception at the Municipal Buildings, Corn Exchange on Saturday evening and a vote of thanks to the reception committee would be made by Brother Eastham at the Sunday evening presentation.

Closing of Conference

Brother Corbett closed the Conference and wished all delegate a safe journey home and hoped to see delegates next year in York in September 2007.

CONSTITUTION

1. NAME

Conference shall be known as the National Conference of Signalling Grades.

2. OBJECTS

The objects of the National Conference of Signalling Grades shall be to endeavor to secure complete and efficient organization within the grades of Signal (wo) men, Relief Signal (wo) men and Crossing Keeper. And to assist in maintaining and improving the working conditions affecting the grades covered by this conference. To act in an advisory capacity to the Head Office of the union, and constitutional bodies connected with the union.

3. MEETINGS

The conference shall be held annually, and shall be moveable, the venue to be decided by conference. The conference shall meet on the third Sunday in September each year, and the Saturday preceding such. The Saturday session shall commence at 14.00hrs and shall conclude no later than 18.00hrs. The business of such session shall include civic and fraternal welcomes. The Conference Executive Committee report, Secretary's report, Balance Sheet and Auditors report, minutes of previous conference and any other appropriate business that conference may deem essential. All matters for the Agenda, nominations for officers and Executive Committee shall reach the secretary by 30th June each year and the Agenda shall be issued SIX weeks prior to conference. Nominations must be supported by the nominee's own branch. Conference activities shall be confined

To matters germane to the signalling, relief and crossing keeper grades and conform to National Policy as laid down by decision of the Annual General Meeting or the Council of Executives. The General Secretary shall occasionally be invited to attend conference.

4. REPRESENTATION

Representation from each affiliated branch and regional council must be from the Signalling and crossing keeper grades and equivalent London Underground Grades.

5. AFFILIATION

The affiliation fees shall be £2.00 inclusive of delegate's fee per branch and regional council per annum which are paid by head office.

6. OFFICERS

Conference shall elect a President, Vice President, Secretary, two Auditors and an Executive Committee of six members, the electoral area for Executive Committee shall be based of AGM representation areas as follows:

Executive Committee Area	Elected from AGM area
1. Scotland	1, 2, 3
2. Eastern	6, 7,9,10,11,22,23
3. North West /North Wales /Midlands	4, 5,8,12,13,14,20
4. Western	16, 17, 21
5. Southern	18,19,24,25
6. London Underground	26

All officers and Executive Committee members must be duly elected delegates from affiliated branches and regional councils, and shall hold office for 12 months providing they remain in the grades covered by the conference and be eligible for re election. The Executive Committee shall nominate one of its members to act as minute taker for each conference, who shall receive an emolument for his/her services. The election of the

Officers and Executive Committee members shall be the first business to be dealt with at the Sunday afternoon session. Voting for the Officers and Executive Committee shall be by ballot, and where there are more than two nominations for the post of either secretary or president, the principle of exhaustive vote to be applied. In the event of a tied vote the ballot shall be re run. In the event of a further tied vote, the decision shall be by the spin of a coin. Scrutineers shall be elected from the reception committee. Elected officers to receive such remuneration as determined by the conference. A liaison committee of not more than six members shall be formed and this shall comprise of the President, Secretary and four member of the executive.

7. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The executive committee shall meet whenever deemed necessary by the president and secretary after consultation. The expenses of the officers and executive committee shall be met from the funds of the conference, such expenses shall only include privilege ticket railway fares, lost time, and out of pocket expenses, at a rate agreed by the conference.

No payment to be made for lost time that is not considered as part of the working week.

8. BANKING

Conference shall open an account with the union's bankers in the name of the RMT National Conference of Signalling Grades which shall be operated by: Conference President and Secretary.

The secretary, shall within five days of receipt of funds, pay these in to the conference account and shall not retain in his hands more than £10 for current expenditure. A true and accurate account of receipts and expenditure for the twelve months ended previous 31st December, shall, by a date to be determined, be rendered to every affiliated branch and regional council and to the General Secretary.

9. PREPARATION OF CONFERENCE AGENDA

The executive committee shall meet on the day prior to conference and arrange the order of agenda, which shall include any item of conference policy which has not been progressed and other matters for the guidance of the President.

10. AMENDMENT OF RULES

The forgoing rules shall not be amended or rescinded without the consent of the majority of the representatives voting at a National conference of Signalling Grades. All proposed alterations to rules to be sent to the secretary by 30th June each year. Amendments may be submitted annually.

STANDING ORDERS

1. The President shall take the chair and formally open the business of the meeting. Should he be absent, the Vice President shall conduct the business. In the event of both being absent, then the executive committee shall elect a chairperson (pro tem) from amongst themselves.
2. Each delegate shall rise and address the chair, and be limited to five minutes on each subject. A delegate shall not speak except in reference to a resolution or amendment or speak twice on one subject unless he or she is the mover of the original resolution and shall have the right of reply.

The President and Secretary are expected in this order. Asking or answering a question by permission of the chair shall not be deemed a speech.

3. In the event of a proposition to "proceed to next business" being moved and seconded, it shall, after the proposer and seconder of an original proposition have been heard, be put to the vote, and, if agreed to, all other propositions on the subject under discussion shall be considered as disposed of. Once a subject has been discussed and voted on, it shall not again be introduced in to the meeting.
4. No proposal or amendment shall be discussed unless it is seconded and no second amendment or rider shall be voted on until the first amendment is disposed of. Motions standing in the name of an affiliated branch shall be deemed to have been moved in the absence of the delegate, and motions in the name of the Executive Committee shall be deemed to stand moved.
5. The ruling of the chair in all matters shall be strictly obeyed. No delegate shall leave the meeting unless he first asks and obtains the permission of the chair.
The secretary shall be secretary to all committees appointed by the conference.
6. The chair shall have the right to exercise his right to vote as a delegate, and in addition, he shall have the right to a casting vote.
7. An agenda of the business shall be supplied to each delegate; this agenda shall be strictly adhered to unless a proposition to suspend standing orders be made, and carried by a majority of two – thirds of the delegates present and voting.
8. All notices of amendment to resolutions contained in the agenda must be submitted through the branch secretary to the secretary of conference at least one week prior to the date of conference. No resolution which could have been placed on the agenda by branches in accordance with the constitution shall be admissible.
9. After the executive committee has given its report and decisions on the agenda, delegates may give notice to the President against any such decision, and if an appeal is carried by two – thirds of the delegates present, the item in question must be included on the agenda.
10. These standing orders shall not be amended or rescinded without the consent of the majority of the representatives present and voting at the National Conference.
All proposed alterations to be sent to the conference secretary by 30th June each year. Amendments may be submitted annually.