



RMT Members onboard Foreland shipping vessel Eddystone

INTRODUCTORY NOTE FROM YOUR NATIONAL SECRETARY

Welcome to an update aimed specifically at our members employed across the various companies in the deep sea sector. From time to time I hear criticism that RMT appear more interested in other sectors within maritime than the deep sea sector. Whilst I disagree I recognise that we need to address this perception by improving communication and engagement with members around your concerns. I have been onboard a number of vessels within the deep sea sector and as your elected National Secretary I believe in the union visiting our members, discussing the key issues and being able to get a feel for your workplace issues. The past 18 months has proved problematic for obvious reasons but I have been onboard vessels, I am determined to visit as many vessels as possible and would encourage members to get in contact seeking visits on-board your vessel when you are in a

UK port along with your respective lead officers where possible. I would like to place on record my sincere thanks to all our deep sea members, and whilst a huge emphasis has been placed on key workers and the role of the seafarer that will soon be forgotten when it comes to negotiating with the bosses, but the one thing that the pandemic demonstrated was how we can effectively grasp modern technology to improve how we communicate with our members and improve how organised we are on every vessel within the deep sea sector.

*Regards,
Darren Procter*



YOU ARE THE UNION

We are all familiar with the slogan "You are the Union", however why do we have so few members employed within the deep sea sector involved in union activity, whether this be attending branch meetings, involved in seafarer specific working groups such as mental health or lifeboats or becoming involved within conferences to raise issues such as young members, women, LGBT+, Health and Safety or BAME conferences?

What can we as a union do to encourage more members to become involved to raise your concerns and issues within the machinery of the union? What can we improve as a union to have more of the concerns and issues of importance to you and the other deep sea sector members raised within the union?

Get in contact and give us your views.

PAY INCREASES FOR 2020/21

A table identifying confirmed pay increases of some deep sea sector companies for 2020/21 is attached for comparison for our members within the deep sea sector. It should also be noted that some pay negotiations are pending for 2021 hence some being for 2020 and some being 2021.

PNTL	2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2% pay uplift to the relevant pay scales will take effect from 1 April 2020• The one-off payment of £2,500 (subject to PAYE deductions.)
RFA	2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A one year pay award representing an overall payment of 2.5% on all pay band points effective from the 1 July 2020. This will consist of a 2% uplift to consolidated pay and a further single non-consolidated payment equating to 0.5% of pay for each employee.
James Fisher	2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A 1% increase to the pension payment and a 1.8% increase to pay. The increase is effective from 1 April; this will move the anniversary date on the CBA to 1 April which will align their other contracts.
(UKRI BAS)	2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A basic salary increase of 2% of actual salary with the exception of those who have reached the maxima of their pay scale will receive a non-consolidated, non-pensionable, one-off payment of 2%. For any others where an increase to their basic salary will bring them to their new pay range maxima, any increase due beyond this will be paid as a non-consolidated, non-pensionable, one-off payment.
Foreland Shipping	2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1-year pay deal consisting of a 1.45% increase from 1st January 2021 through to 31st December 2021 inclusive.

GET ACTIVE... GET INVOLVED

On every vessel there are individuals who are vocal, always have an opinion but often do not get involved in the union, whether this be supporting reps with constructive arguments, getting involved in specific issues such as safety, mental health, equality issues or young members issues. As a union our strength comes from being as organised as possible within the workplace and the more members we have active in the union, the more we can achieve. If every member could contribute a little, whether this is becoming a shipboard rep, assisting your elected reps, attending branch meetings or supporting various maritime campaign aims, every little bit of activity helps and we need more members to become actively involved within the RMT.

To discuss how you can become more involved, more supportive and more active contact your workplace reps, Branch officials, Regional organiser, Assistant National Secretary or the National Secretary.

SMOKING BAN AT THE RFA

A smoking ban has recently been introduced at the RFA on-board all vessels as a consequence of an initiative by the MOD to promote a smoke free working environment. Whilst any shoreside employee can pop outside, or go home at the end of the working day, it has not been recognised despite the efforts of your representatives that the vessel is also a seafarers' home for months at a time. Whilst this subject matter is more sensitive to some as we understand that around 25% of employees within the RFA smoke we understand the wider concern around this subject matter from all members. This issue was recently placed in front of your unions NEC and a number of action points have resulted from the meeting between the lead officer Mark Carden, National secretary Darren Procter, members of the NEC and the RFA Convenor Ian Parkin. We will keep you advised of developments on this matter.

LIFEBOAT WORKING PARTY

One of the issues that has been raised previously by our members is Lifeboats and the amount of fatalities following accidents involving the launching of lifeboats for exercise purposes. Following an initiative from Belfast Shipping branch which progressed through the machinery of the union we have set up a Lifeboat working party. We recently had a meeting with the MCA regarding this sensitive issue following a survey of our members to discuss the key points and it would be great to have more members involved in this working group to discuss concerns, share information and have input to developing policy on this matter.

For more information get in contact with our health and safety officer Jonathan Havard j.havard@rmt.org.uk

MENTAL HEALTH

The issue of Mental Health on ships has been compounded further by the pandemic and with our deep sea members being away for months on end, some with such poor wifi connections this is an area that we have recently initiated a campaign to establish best practice. Some employers have developed educational courses, support networks and are having a proactive approach to Mental health, whilst others are doing the bare minimal. How well do you think your employer is approaching Mental Health?

For more information on the campaign or materials for your vessel get in contact with j.havard@rmt.org.uk

YOUR MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

You are not alone... there is help at hand.

RMT

RMT is working closely with employers and health charities to better understand, improve support and promote mental wellbeing in your workplace

YOUR CONTACT DETAILS

All too often seafarers move home, change mobile numbers, change email addresses, change employers and even change jobs but forget to inform the RMT. This results in RMT having incorrect information and members often not receiving specific updates on matters that are important to you. If you do not receive RMT News – we do not have your correct home address, if you don't receive texts – we do not have your correct mobile number and if you do not receive emails we do not have your correct email address. If we can urge all members to check the details we hold on file for you and update accordingly to allow us to be more effective in our communication to you.

WHAT CAN WE DO BETTER?

For those members who ever attended a training course at the National Education Centre you will have heard the late general secretary Bob Crow saying something along the lines of "Don't tell us what we are doing well, tell us where we need to improve". If you believe we are failing in certain areas then get in contact and let's discuss how we make the necessary improvements.

PENSION AWARENESS

Pensions, or deferred pay, is an issue that is often seen as a complicated subject matter, it is often something that seafarers in general don't pay attention to until you are you're in your forties, by which time it's too late. The union offers all members the opportunity to undertake a pension training course. We have recently published a maritime specific pension update as part of a maritime pension campaign that can be accessed via website or from our pension officer Paul Norris via email at p.norris@rmt.org.uk or on 0207 529 8806.

Your union is campaigning to raise awareness around pensions and if this is an area you would like to become more involved in then get in contact and we will provide you with the relevant details.

Are you saving for your retirement?

Are your loved ones protected in the event of your death?

For more information on the RMT Maritime Pensions Campaign visit www.rmt.org.uk/about/pensions



If you require pension help please contact RMT Pensions Officer, Paul Norris at pnorris@rmt.org.uk or tel 020 7529 8806

SHIPBOARD COMMUNICATION

We were recently alerted by our members at Foreland about the poor wifi onboard. With all the development surrounding modern technology and trials of autonomous vessels you would think that a seafarer could connect with family, check bank accounts and even chat with friends on social media. It would be good to receive feedback from our members on your recent experiences of wifi onboard and connectivity whilst onboard. **Let us know your views!**

WHAT IS A BRANCH?

We would estimate that in excess of 80% of RMT members within the maritime sector (and probably the union) have never attended a branch meeting. The shipping branch that you belong to is the hub of activity that is tasked with organising members within a geographical region where you can seek information and raise issues, initiatives that you think the union should take up and find out about the wider issues of the maritime sector or the union. If you are unsure what branch you are in, or you require details of branch meetings etc to attend then please get in contact with the helpline on 08003763706 or info@rmt.org.uk.

The role of the branch as determined by the RMT rule book is as follows:

"The primary role and objective of each branch shall be the recruitment, retention and organisation of transport workers within its delegated sphere of influence. To achieve this objective, each branch shall create and work to implement a branch plan which will be submitted to the Regional Council."

100% CAMPAIGN

In every department, on every vessel, in every deep sea company we should have a strategy that sets out a desire to have 100% RMT membership. This shouldn't require a poster or a campaign, this should be what every RMT member does on a daily basis in order to improve how organised we are. This is something that every RMT member can take ownership in as we have a collective responsibility to maximise membership and develop workplace organising and we need to understand if an individual chooses not to be a member of RMT why that is, have they been asked? Have they had an issue that resulted in them coming out of the union, if so how can we address that? What do we have to do to make your vessel/company more organised and closer to that 100% membership density than it is today.

BENEFITS OF RMT

One of the biggest concerns I have found when I have visited various vessels is that members do not necessarily know the benefits of being in the RMT, whilst these are often publicised within **RMT News** the feedback that I have received when visiting members is that this is an area we could improve in communicating to the workplace. If you search on the internet **RMT Member benefits** this will take you to the website that identifies all benefits and allow you to download the appropriate form if required.

These benefits include but are not limited to:

- **Accident benefit**
- **Death grant**
- **Orphan benefit**
- **Retirement benefit**
- **Permanent downgrading or demotion benefit**
- **Free will service**
- **Legal services for you and your family**
- **Credit Union**
- **Education course**

If you require details on any particular benefit contact your shipboard rep, branch or lead officer for more details.

RMT NOTICEBOARDS

In an effort to keep our members as advised as possible about all maritime campaigns and activities we need to ensure that the material on display on your vessel is up to date and relevant and not decade old material. If you would like up to date posters, campaign specific material then get in contact and we will ensure you receive up-to date material.



Daren Ireland (left), Lead Officer at PNTL, with PNTL members

KEY CONTACTS FOR DEEP SEA MEMBERS

Ian Parkin – (RFA Convenor) – 07532 682300

Mark Carden – Assistant National Secretary – 07733 335355

Daren Ireland – Lead officer at PNTL – 07817 037019

Darren Procter – National Secretary – 07949 246219



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