



DFDS UPDATE

Feb 2022

YOUR ISSUES, YOUR VOICE!



Pic by Roel Hemkes

As a trade union it must be recognised that we can and need to make improvements in how we organise at DFDS. We need to encourage members to become more active in contacting us with your concerns, ideas and initiatives. We all need to recognise that an organised workplace with high union membership density will deliver greater results for employees. If employees have an issue in the workplace, a query over a workplace issue or generally seeking information then get in contact with us using the contact details in this newsletter. We need to seek regular meetings with your employer to address the concerns of **RMT MEMBERS** and make the improvements that you feel necessary within your workplace. We cannot make improvements if we are not told about them and we can not make improvements if we don't raise them with your employer. Communication between members

and RMT is vital if you want to see changes in your workplace.

Lets Get organised!



Regards,

Darren Procter

National Secretary

PAY?

The anniversary of your pay is January 1st and we will soon need to submit a claim on behalf of RMT members with regards to improvements in which you would like to see within the workplace, I will be seeking to organise more visits to vessels and organise meetings for members in our Dover office specifically for DFDS members to attend so that we can formulate your aspirations which we can then discuss with your employer.

I would also like to point out our submission is not solely about pay but conditions of service also. It would be appreciated if you can discuss this on your respective vessel and get in contact with myself or local branch officers with any feedback.

APPRENTICES

DFDS has for a number of years now been investing in the future of Seafarers with an apprenticeship programme and I have been in dialogue with DFDS regarding RMT's Apprenticeship strategy and how we can develop discussion within the Industry regarding the training of Apprentices. DFDS are very receptive to this and we will continue to work closely on this matter with your employer given the age demographics of UK seafarers and a general under investment by industry to train ratings over a number of years.

PERMANENT CONTRACTS

Most Ferry companies are desperately trying to attract new employees into the sector for a variety of reasons and your employer is no different. As a union we want to see our members permanently employed and understand from discussions onboard vessels there are a number of individuals currently on a probationary contracts.

This is something we will raise with your employer to establish numbers of temporary contracts and campaign for permanent jobs at your employer.

WHAT IS A BRANCH MEETING?

The majority of RMT members currently employed by DFDS will have been placed in Dover shipping branch for RMT organisational purposes, but what is the purpose of a branch and what does it do?

Within the RMT, there are currently 17 Maritime branches, these act as your "club" and are organised geographically. The primary role and objective of each branch is 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 outlining how we can become more organised, more effective and improve our members terms and conditions within your workplace.

Branches meet on a regular basis, usually every month and this is your opportunity to have workplace matters raised, listen to reports from various employers within the local area as well as getting being updated on key industrial issues and RMT Maritime campaigns.

Members can become more involved in the union and we offer educational courses on many subject matters in addition to the fundamental reps training courses.

For more information about branch meeting dates, courses or how to become involved contact your branch secretary on the details in this newsletter.

DON'T MOAN, PICK UP THE PHONE

No workplace matter has ever been resolved by continuously moaning about it, no matter how minor the issue, if the issue is not raised with management, whether shipboard or shoreside it will not be resolved. If an RMT member has an issue onboard, or there is a collective issue onboard then get in contact with your union to raise the issue and tell those not currently in the union who have issues to join the RMT.

SHIPBOARD VISITS

I would like to thank all the crew who took the time to speak with myself and Dave Marshall from our organising unit on a recent visit onboard the Dover Seaways and Delft Seaways.

It was good to meet longstanding members of the union and discuss your concerns and we was equally encouraged by the dialogue with new members and those who said they would join once time permitted. Visiting vessels is something that we recognise is important to members, having that face to face dialogue and being able to ask questions, elaborate on specific details and give a greater context to issues and experiences within the maritime sector.

We will be looking to undertake more visits in the coming weeks and hope for the same level (or better) of response from members. It is acknowledged that RMT hasn't visited the vessels as regularly as we would like and there will be a clear focus to address this so members see us on a regular basis.



PENSIONS AND PLANNING YOUR RETIREMENT

For those individuals heading towards the twilight years and thinking of retirement it is important that we as a union seek to develop discussions with employers and jointly support those individuals looking to retire. This is important because we want to ensure that those individuals are making the best choices for retirement and that after a lifetime of working that individual is mentally prepared for a life away from your respective vessel. It is also important as we need to seek to identify opportunities for the younger generation by filling the positions of those individuals who are retiring. Your union will be seeking to facilitate a pre-retirement course in Dover to assist any individual looking at retirement over the next few years. If this is something that you are interested then please get in contact.



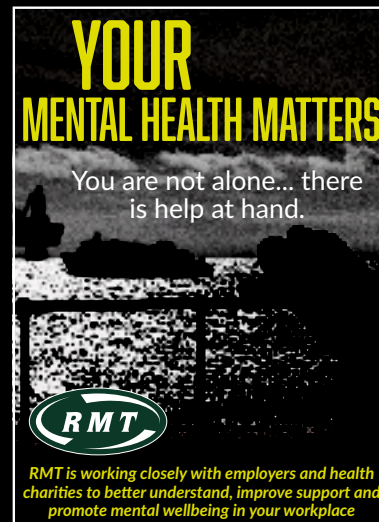
For more information on the RMT Maritime Pensions Campaign visit www.rmt.org.uk/about/pensions



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

MENTAL HEALTH

The issue of Mental Health on ships has been compounded further by the pandemic and this is an area that we have recently initiated a campaign to establish best practice. Some employers have developed educational courses, support networks, communication campaigns 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



HELP TO BUILD THE RMT AT DFDS – 100% FERRY CAMPAIGN

It is the responsibility of every RMT member at DFDS to help recruit the non-members at DFDS, we need members to be having conversations onboard with those not in the union about how issues are raised and addressed, or as the case may be, not addressed and understand why that is. We should be reminding those individuals who are not currently a member of RMT but continuously complaining about a particular issue to join RMT because nothing ever changed by doing nothing about an issue and RMT is the position of challenging your employer on the concerns of RMT members.

We are not an insurance policy in case of disciplinary action, we are a members' led, democratic organisation that represents the interests of seafarers within your workplace and at most Ferry companies within the UK.

The best people to recruit non-members and to organise with an agenda of improving your terms and conditions within the workplace are RMT members within your workplace.

Help build a stronger workplace by recruiting those non members within your workplace!

CONTACT DETAILS

All RMT members need to ensure that if you change employer, change jobs, change mobile numbers, change your email address etc., you inform head office. As was recently the case when we visited vessels, members had changed details but asked why they had stopped receiving texts and emails with updates from the union. If we don't have your correct details on file then we will be ineffective in our communication to you.

If you do not receive texts from RMT – we do not have your correct mobile number.

If you do not receive RMT news at home – we do not have your correct home address.

If you do not receive emails from RMT – we do not have your correct email address.

Contact RMT Head office on 0800 376 3706, use the app or log on to the website to update your personal details.

WHATSAPP GROUP

We have now set up a whatsapp group specifically for DFDS members and have asked a small number of individuals to invite RMT members into this group so that you can raise current issues and we can give you live updates and provide information on meetings with your employer, branch meetings, Ferry specific information or anything we believe to be relative to our members at DFDS.

You can send a text to any of your contacts below and we will add you and any colleagues to this group.

CONTACTS

In the first instance members are encouraged to contact your local representatives in order to raise issues, seek information, or to raise a query that you may have.

Dover Shipping Branch Secretary – Lee Davison
dovershipping@rmt.org.uk / 07471 350624

National Executive Committee Representative – Dale Kember
D.kember@rmt.org.uk / 07951 804245

National Secretary – Darren Procter
D.procter@rmt.org.uk / 07949 246219

Pensions Officer – Paul Norris
P.norris@rmt.org.uk / 0207 529 8806

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