



## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR NATIONAL SECRETARY

Dear Colleagues,

I hope this Orsted specific update is of interest to members and non-members alike.

As a trade union we are seeking to protect and improve terms and conditions of employment for you and your colleagues; engaging with industry bodies and regulators; building intelligence from the various sectors and working with our international colleagues organising within renewables around the globe. However, as a trade union, we can only act upon the information provided by members and we are only as strong as the membership in the workplace. Thankfully our strength is growing at Orsted and other employers within renewables too.

Our union would prefer to have a recognition agreement with your employer that allows us to discuss issues of concern and enter into joint

initiatives around areas such as safety, pensions and mental wellbeing as well as promoting employee engagement to the benefit of the company and employees. Until such a time when we achieve formal recognition with your employer we will endeavour to initiate regular communication that allows you to raise your concerns and provide you with information that is relevant to your employer and to your sector alongside representing members in disciplinary and grievance hearings.

I would respectfully request that you share copies of this update with colleagues who are not currently in the RMT union and encourage them to make your workplace stronger by Joining RMT.

*Regards,  
Darren Procter*



## **EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT FORUM**

We have been made aware this week of dialogue surrounding the EEF and concerns surrounding the content being discussed internally. We are being contacted by members of RMT and individuals who are not members but looking to sign up due to concerns surrounding the intention of your employer.

We as a union have an opinion that EEF's are not constructive. We believe they do nothing more than outline the employers intention to representatives who have the best of intentions but generally leave them with little to no training or support in how to carry out the role of a workplace representative. Furthermore, any questions referring to policy documentation can not be discussed at the EEF; concerns on policy documents are directed to HR and Line management.

With this being said, **we are keen to understand what your opinion is of the EEF at Orsted?** What if you don't like what the impositions on you are after talking to the EEF? If your employer wants to make fundamental changes to your terms and conditions, what would you and your colleagues do? This is the single most important reason to be a part of a trade union that will represent the interests of its members: to protect and progress your terms and conditions of employment.

Is it vital, whilst discussing the points raised at the EEF, that current RMT members are speaking with colleagues who are currently not a member of RMT, making them aware that the best way to protect your terms and conditions of employment is to stand together and combine your views, be organised as a collective by the RMT union and generate greater influence with your employer whether through recognition or otherwise.

## **SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE**

RMT is in dialogue with HSE and has raised concerns on behalf of members. This we know has focused the attention of your employer.

We would appreciate hearing from any individual who has safety concerns or who has raised safety concerns but believes that they have not been acted upon in a prompt manner.

Contact details for regional officers with responsibility can be found below, alternatively you can contact Jonathan Havard in our health and safety department by email at [j.havard@rmt.org.uk](mailto:j.havard@rmt.org.uk)

## **AGE CONCERNS**

We have been approached by a number of members with concerns surrounding age related comments and targeted actions. Given the physical nature of some of the roles with the renewables sector we would appreciate hearing from any employee who has similar concerns.

## **UNDERSTANDING HOW RMT WORKS FOR YOU**

Our priority as a trade union is workplace organising; ensuring where possible that we have elected workplace representatives both in industrial and health and safety matters, covering all shifts in all workplaces but it is equally important to identify how members can become actively involved within the union on matters that are important to you.

Within the RMT we have 17 branches specifically for Maritime and Offshore members. The role of the branch is to organise all workers within its geographical spheres of influence. As a member of RMT you will be in one of the following branches: Aberdeen shipping, Belfast Shipping, Douglas Shipping, Dover Shipping, Eire Shipping, Glasgow Shipping, Harwich Shipping, Holyhead Shipping, Humber Shipping, Liverpool shipping, Manchester Shipping, OILC, Oban Shipping, North East

Shipping, River Thames, Southampton Shipping, South West and South Wales Shipping. In each company where we have recognition or substantial membership, an elected Regional Organiser or National Shipping Official is allocated by the General Secretary as being responsible to organise and negotiate for that particular company. They work closely with the local branch and local representatives to raise the issues on behalf of RMT members. RMT is a democratic trade union, every position from the workplace representative to the General Secretary is elected by the members and accountable to the members.

As a union we are continually developing and progressing our strategies and in order to do so we need members to be actively engaged on matters that are of concern to **YOU** and relevant to your colleagues within the workplace.

## **EARNINGS ARE ON THE INCREASE AT ORSTED!**

Your employer racked up pre-tax earnings for 2021 of DKr 24.3bn or £2.74bn, a 34% increase on the previous year. Dividend of DKr 5.3bn or £600m paid out to the Danish Government (51%) and private shareholders (49%). Orsted's Annual Report states "A large part of our earnings is generated from offshore wind, with the UK and Continental Europe being the key contributors." Baroness Brown, a member of the UK Government's Committee on Climate Change is on Orsted's Board of Directors.

**Based on the information above and now we are beginning to feel the increases in the cost of living, what is the expectation of you and your colleagues for a pay increase?**

## **INTRODUCTION OF NIGHT WORKING**

It appears that there is a lot of concern surrounding the intention of the company to introduce night working on the west coast hub even though, we are reliably informed by our members, this is a move away from what management had previously agreed. When introducing the Operational Flexibility Allowance (OFA) back in 2018, they agreed "*The Introduction of the OFA is not intended to require an increase in flexibility from technicians. The OFA is intended to represent the flexibility that you all provide the business with at present. We understand that the wording used to describe the OFA can be interpreted in a way that we are asking for a new way of working or asking for additional time from employees. We want to be very clear that this is **NOT** the case.*"

We understand that your employer is looking into 24hr technical cover and that current allowances are laid out in the newly produced variable pay policy. This now stipulates:

- Complete control of start and end times.
- Total flexibility to change shift times.
- Currently only a 20% uplift for 8 hours would be paid to night workers.

**What are your views on this?**

## **GWO TRAINING**

As a trade union we are actively engaged with various bodies surrounding all elements of renewables. One area of concern being raised from within our membership is duplication of training for those members looking to transition from oil and gas into the renewables sector. It would be good to hear feedback from members regarding GWO training courses, whether this be positive or negative it's important that we are aware of your views, so please get in contact with us on the contact details below identifying your views.

## **TRADE UNION RESPECT AT ORSTED?**

Your employer has a code of conduct for all business partners within the supply chain that

identifies respect for workers' rights to join a trade union of their choice and will not discriminate against any individual who chooses to be a member of a trade union.

Whilst management at Orsted in the UK may prefer that employees are not members of RMT, this is because we are effective in organising and giving members a voice in the workplace on key issues such as pay, pensions, overtime, health and safety and articulating your concerns in a constructive manner.

For ease of reference the statement contained within the Orsted code of conduct can be found here;

### **Freedom of association and right to collective bargaining**

*"Our business partners shall respect employees' and other workers' rights to join or refrain from joining any lawful workers' association or collective bargaining association of their choice, or, when restricted, alternative forms of independent and free workers representation.*

*Business partners shall not discriminate against worker representatives and employees who choose to affiliate or not affiliate. We expect our business partners to engage in bargaining with employee representatives in good faith."*

## **COMMON ISSUES OR COINCIDENCE?**

RMT is aware of concerns across the renewables sector where established sites and workforces are seeing manoeuvres by employers to attack terms and conditions of employment with a number of consultations taking place.

As was stated to RMT in Grimsby recently by a renewables worker "There wasn't a need for a trade union within renewables 5-7 years ago, it is now most definitely a requirement as employers are seeking to impose changes and attack terms and conditions of employment and we need protection that we didn't need before".

## **WHAT IS A BRANCH MEETING?**

The majority of RMT members currently employed by Orsted will have been placed in Liverpool 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 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 on the back page of this newsletter.**

# Get Active, Get Involved...



# MENTAL WELLBEING

Mental Health has been compounded further over the last two years by the pandemic and this is an area that RMT have recently initiated a campaign within the maritime sector to establish best practice.

Some employers have developed educational courses, support networks, communication campaigns and are leading a proactive approach to Mental health, whilst other employers are doing very little.

It is important to take notice of how your employer deals with the mental health issues that arise in your workplace.

**How well do you think your employer is approaching mental Health?  
Do you believe there is enough support, education and awareness of Mental Health understanding within your workplace?**

If this is an area that you are interested in then please get in contact for more information including available educational courses. For specific information on Mental Health get in contact with our health and safety department at [j.havard@rmt.org.uk](mailto:j.havard@rmt.org.uk)

## YOUR MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

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



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

## CONTACT DETAILS

All RMT members need to ensure that if you change employer, change job title, change mobile numbers, change your email address etc you inform head office. 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.**

# ***SOME OF THE BENEFITS OF BEING AN RMT MEMBER...***

## **WORKPLACE REPRESENTATION**

As a member of RMT, whether you are covered by a Collective bargaining agreement with RMT or not, we will ensure that you are represented in the workplace should you require it.

## **EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNALS**

Should a member find themselves unfairly dismissed, discriminated against or have any claim which has reasonable prospects of success at an Employment Tribunal, RMT will provide legal representation. Even if the union is advised that the claim is unlikely to succeed, members who make a claim are eligible to receive free legal advice.

## **BRANCH STRUCTURE**

Every member of RMT is allocated to a branch. Within the Maritime section of the RMT we currently have 17 branches allocated to organising workers within those geographical regions. As a member you can attend a branch meeting to raise your workplace issues, propose initiatives that you think the union should undertake, listen to the wider concerns from the Maritime sector and become actively involved in union activity should you choose to do so.. Any RMT member can attend any RMT branch meeting and help is always at hand should you need it.

## **CAMPAIGNING**

The union has a political fund to run campaigns and provide a political voice to benefit members' interests in the workplace. RMT has a very active parliamentary group which raises issues of concern for members at Westminster, the Scottish Parliament and Welsh assembly. The recent change to NMW legislation is an example of a successful political campaign undertaken by the Parliamentary group.

## **PERSONAL INJURIES**

Personal Injury claims cover if you suffer an accident in work or outside of work. RMT underwrites settlements that would not be provided by no-win, no-fee companies. Call 08457125495 for more information.

## **INDUSTRIAL DISEASES**

Members who have suffered an industrial disease will receive free legal support to make a claim. Such claims are underwritten by the union and members will not have any deduction from their claims unlike claims run by no win, no fee companies. Call 08457125495 for more information.

## **ACCIDENT BENEFIT**

Accident Benefit is payable if you have an accident at work or on the way to or from work, Accident benefit is only payable if you have been off work for 3 days or more. Accidents must be reported to your branch secretary within 26 weeks in order to qualify for accident benefit.

## **RETIREMENT BENEFIT**

This benefit is payable to any member who retires over the age of 60 or 55 if retired through redundancy or resettlement. Ill health retirement is also payable; proof of this must be sent with application for retirement benefit.

## **DEMOTION COMPENSATION**

This benefit is payable to any member who is experiencing loss of wages through being permanently demoted or downgraded as a result of illness or injury. The member will receive

payment of £300 provided that the member reports this to the branch secretary within 12 weeks.

## ORPHAN FUND

The beneficiaries of this fund would be any child of a member or spouse if the member dies in service or if a member's spouse dies and the member has responsibility of the children. Benefit is paid whilst a child in full time education up until the age of 22. Payment is made quarterly and the rate is £12.00 per week for children up to the age of 16, then £12.75 per week from 16 to 22.

## BEREAVEMENT BENEFIT

A Death grant of £600 is payable to the nearest relative or legal representative if a member dies through any cause prior to retirement.

## EDUCATION COURSES

As an RMT member you have access to education courses held at our Bob Crow National Education Centre in Doncaster or within the regions.

The education courses are developed and designed to best equip our Unions activists, workplace representatives and officials to support, advise and represent our members across the union. The programme includes the core skills courses for all grades seeking education for Workplace Representatives and Branch Officials roles as well as a number of specialist courses to equip our Representatives and Officials with the skills and knowledge to deal with those issues in the workplaces.

The learning style is one of collaboration and participation with reps from across our union learning as a multi grade Union from each other and strengthening our union for all.

## FREE £5000 ACCIDENTAL DEATH COVER

As a benefit of your RMT membership you can register for £5000 Free Accidental Death cover. Cover is for UK residents aged 18-69. The 12 months FREE annual cover must be renewed on an annual basis.

# RMT CREDIT UNION

The RMT Credit Union is a mutually beneficial savings and loan organisation which offers ethical savings and loans to its members. The key to the RMT Credit Union is 'keeping it simple'. You must save a minimum of £5 per month with us. You can then after a short time borrow from us. As you pay down your loan amount each month, you only pay interest on the outstanding balance.

If you pay up early you simply pay the balance and any interest due at the time. NO Handling or Administration charges and NO penalty charges.





## WHAT NEXT?

We would appreciate your feedback on the content of this update and we will be seeking to organise a physical meeting to discuss your key issues and how we progress your concerns. Once we establish the best day / times to maximise attendance we send out further communication.

## IMPORTANT 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.

### West Coast

Daren Ireland (Regional Organiser) - [d.ireland@rmt.org.uk](mailto:d.ireland@rmt.org.uk) / 07817 037019

### Liverpool shipping branch

Nate Andrews - [liverpoolshipping@rmt.org.uk](mailto:liverpoolshipping@rmt.org.uk) / 07392 353813

### East Coast

Gaz Jackson (Regional Organiser) - [g.jackson@rmt.org.uk](mailto:g.jackson@rmt.org.uk) / 07830 781752

Gerry Hitchen (Organising Unit) - [g.hitchen@rmt.org.uk](mailto:g.hitchen@rmt.org.uk) / 07834 352834

### National Executive Committee member

Sean Miskimmon - [s.miskimmon@rmt.org.uk](mailto:s.miskimmon@rmt.org.uk) / 07875 276001

Scan the QR Code to join RMT  
or visit

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