

No. 491/22

12th December 2022

Dear Colleagues,

CWU Non - Cooperation to Royal Mail's Unagreed Recovery Revision Programme & Unagreed Headcount Reduction Activity within Delivery

Branches and Representatives will recall that there have been several LTBs (Letters To Branches) and supplementary ODMs (Outdoor Department Memos) which have covered the issue of Royal Mails' unagreed revision programme and planned headcount reduction activity within Deliveries and across Royal Mail.

As far back as July this year and from the start of our dispute, Royal Mail has sought to position its unagreed revision activity as being part of the 'Year-Two' revision and productivity targets in line with the **Pathway to Change** (PtC) National Agreement. Whilst this has never been the case and has been disproven many times; we are aware that in many locations local management continue to pedal the narrative that the unagreed revision plans and targets remain part of the PtC Agreement. This is despite the fact that Royal Mail has changed the revision plans, parameters and targets on countless occasions since July.

However, we are now aware that Royal Mail has again revised its revision plans, (which have not been shared with the CWU directly at national level) and we further understand that these plans are built on direct headcount reduction which is seemingly driven by an 'across the board approach' for each Delivery unit based on applying a forecasted reduction in traffic of 7% against the Q1 reference period (April to June 2022), increased improvements in WIPWH (Weighted Items Per Work Hour) productivity against the same reference period, and unit's AWD level being planned on both a fixed and variable spend.

Indeed, at this point, it is relevant to advise Branches that Royal Mail has only provided CWU Headquarters with direct notification of headcount reductions for those Delivery units where their unagreed plans seek to reduce this by 20 or more, and in order to comply with Section 188 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act of 1992. The Union's advice on this is also contained within LTB 450/22.

During the course of the disputes on pay and change we have sought to ensure Branches, Representatives and members alike are kept up to date and advised of any plans for revision activity. Accordingly, and given Royal Mail's sharp escalation in this activity in regards to their unagreed recovery revision plans, it is timely to reiterate the CWU position of non-cooperation and non-involvement.

To recap, the revision processes and the criteria set out by Royal Mail for these revisions, which has been revised by the Company on countless occasions up to this point, have not been shared or agreed with the Union at a National level and the revisions remain based on the following unagreed parameters which are also contrary to several National Agreements:

- **Despite Royal Mail's claims to the contrary the revisions are based on an unagreed targetry and forecasted reductions in traffic, which is not in line with the commitments within the Pathway To Change Agreement and recommendations of the Productivity Joint Working Group.**

- **There is no agreed Model Week baseline setting. Moreover, the unagreed revision reference period upon which the headcount reduction is planned does not account for any USO (Universal Service Obligation) or service and products failures, meaning that the revision start point used by Royal Mail could be set at a point within a unit when it is not even USO compliant and was failing service.**
- **The revisions are based on an unagreed process, unagreed forecasted traffic level and against a pre-determined criterion – which are not in line with our National Agreements and Joint Statements.**
- **PDA Outdoor Actual data to be directly used on outdoor route planning – which is outside of our relevant National Agreements.**
- **Pre-determined duty patterns and later start and finishing times for units – which are outside of National Agreements, and in many cases go beyond that which Royal Mail has set out in its direct employee communications within their current change proposals.**
- **The establishment of pre-determined Dedicated Parcel Routes and Hubs (DPRs) which is not agreed.**
- **Local disagreements and the application of the Industrial Relations Framework are only to be accepted on particular points, these are determined by Royal Mail centrally.**

The clear limits and restrictions set out by Royal Mail on the application of the IR Framework negates any opportunity for meaningful engagement at local level and, in short, the suggested engagement being offered to our Reps by Royal Mail is effectively meaningless, as our Reps will have no opportunity to influence the revision pre-determined plans or their direct impact upon our member's jobs and working lives.

Royal Mail have been clear and this is repeated within their recent 'best and final offer' document, which is clear that at no point would Royal Mail managers be allowed to, or accept any points of disagreement on any of the outlined unagreed revision process, including the parameters; criteria; data; timeline; or the outputs.

The union simply cannot accept Royal Mail's arbitrary position that job cuts and changes to our members' working lives are non-negotiable. If we accept this, then Royal Mail will simply announce further and ongoing job cuts whilst imposing endless unnecessary and unrealistic changes and expect the CWU and its Reps to make such change work with our members being placed under unacceptable pressures.

It is fully understood that this is not an easy task, but the position on non-cooperation and non-involvement is absolutely the right stance. We cannot lose sight of the need to remain collective and united in response to Royal Mail at what is another example of unacceptable and provocative executive action being taken against our members. We are equally mindful of the direct stress and anxiety Royal Mail plans are now having on our Representatives and members alike. As such, we will provide our Reps and members more detailed information and advice going forward, which the department will look to issue as soon as possible and via an ODM (Outdoor Department Memo).

If and where Local/Area Reps are contacted or approached by management in terms of such un-agreed revision proposals, can they please continue to refer this directly to their respective Divisional Reps.

Any queries to the content of the above please contact the Outdoor Department reference 555, email address: njones@cwu.org

Yours sincerely,

Mark Baulch
CWU Assistant Secretary