



ISSUE No: 1

SEPTEMBER 2009

Ministry of Defence Guard Service 2/619 National Branch UNITE NEWSLETTER

.....

UPDATES FOR UNITE MEMBERS IN THE MGS

UNITE NATIONAL BRANCH FOR MOD GUARDS

There are quite a few items and details in this issue, but we thought it important that Unite ensures that our members are kept as fully informed as possible, with the current issue(s).

As you know, our National Branch is made up solely of Unite members who are solely employed in the MGS. We have National status and the branch elect their own executive biennially. All of our shop stewards and representatives are employed in the MGS as guards, something that we are very proud of, ensuring that our members are represented by the very people who have the day to day knowledge of the terms and conditions for MGS and associate rules and regulations for shift workers.

If you know of a colleague who is not a Trade Union member and wants to join Unite, please ask him/her to contact one of the reps listed on the back page of this newsletter.

Unite the Union

2/619 National Branch Secretary; Ken Tuckwell: 01952 672603 (07881916191): ken.tuckwell416@qcis.mod.uk
2/619 National Branch Chairman; Gordon Woodyatt: 01690 720291 (07788571118): gordon@woodyatt.fsnet.co.uk



MGS ISSUES

Unite members will be well aware of the many issues facing the MGS. You will also be aware of some of the current issues such as enforced detached duty and the 48 hours notice to change your shift and/or rest days anywhere in the roster - just 2 important enforced issues that our members disagree with.

It is intended in this Newsletter to explain the rationale of Unite's actions and recommendations and how, with your help, we could improve the way currently, that our members are being treated, especially whilst the PR09 measures are being implemented.

The following pages list many specific outstanding MGS issues.

ART

The actual trial is now complete and the TUs are now waiting for a consultation document from management on any proposals for implementation (or otherwise).

Our members at the ART sites will be kept fully involved during the consultation process - it will be your views that Unite will represent.

MMA

Under another Mandatory Instruction (No 15), the MDPGA have decided that our members could not now claim MMA when making an additional attendance at their duty station.

Notwithstanding PR09, Unite have been pursuing this issue with MDPGA - **who have failed to give a formal response.**



TOIL ON COURSES

Unite has attempted to resolve the unfair implementation of TOIL when attending courses. In addition, our members also, in certain circumstances, suffer financial detriment when attending courses. This is totally unacceptable and unfair to our members in the MGS - you will see later in this Newsletter reference to this issue.

DETACHED DUTIES

MDPGA have recently enforced guards to move on detached duty, making our members in the MGS, cover shortfalls at other sites, as an outcome of PR09. Unite members will know that under PR09, where there are gaps (vacancies etc) the task should fall, and the advice from Wethersfield to forceably move our members to cover such gaps is in direct contradiction of the PR09 proposals from Wethersfield.

Unite advises members that until the dispute is resolved they should, when being forced to go on a detached duty, either offer an acceptable reason why you cannot go, or advise your manager that you will be going under protest and that you will raise a grievance on this issue.

The latest advice that Unite has received from PPPA is that an individual cannot be compelled to use their private vehicle to cover a detached duty. Therefore, if you are placed in this situation, and you are not a volunteer, you should ask your manager to provide a duty vehicle for you to take you to, and return you from, the detached duty site within your normal working hours.

Until further notice we advise members to keep a record of all details under these circumstances.

A Formal Disagreement from the Joint TUs has been submitted to Susan Scholefield, the Agency owner to try and resolve this issue.

Unite the Union

2/619 National Branch Secretary; Ken Tuckwell: 01952 672603 (07881916191): ken.tuckwell416@qcis.mod.uk
2/619 National Branch Chairman; Gordon Woodyatt: 01690 720291 (07788571118): gordon@woodyatt.fsnet.co.uk



48 HOURS NOTICE TO CHANGE SHIFTS

Unite met with representatives of DCP (Director of Civilian Personnel) on 11 Mar 2009 regarding imposing changes to our agreed working patterns (shift rosters) on our members in the MGS, with just 48 hours notice (please note this is in addition to the flexi week).

Unite argue that this imposition is discriminatory and unreasonable. Quite simply our members may not know what their shifts or rest days would be from one week to the next, members will not be able to plan ahead and it is an invasion on our personal life. Therefore, at our meeting on 11 Mar 09 (at which there was a representative from MGS HQ) it was agreed that:

- Wethersfield were requested by DCP (the policy maker) not to impose the 48hr notice, and that:
- Wethersfield are to formally consult with the TUs on their proposals on this issue.

Unite must advise members that Wethersfield have continually refused to carry out either of the bullet points above, which were agreed at the meeting. Unite and other TUs therefore, some 6 months later, were afforded a second meeting with DCP where again we outlined our concerns.

Unite consider that an implementation of management's 48 hour rule is unjust and unfair. It is simply a way of management being able to make our members more flexible without remuneration. Such an imposition does not consider our members rights to a reasonable expectation of a home life away from work.

Unite advises members, at this stage, that until this dispute is settled, if you are instructed to change your shift and/or rest day, outside of your flexi week, you should advise your manager that you are doing so under protest and that you will raise a grievance against such an imposition. Unite further advises members to keep a log of all details.

MEAL BREAKS

Our members are now forced to take meal breaks. Unite do not oppose the taking of meal breaks but oppose the way Wethersfield seem to have ignored how difficult it is for some of our members just to leave a gate unstaffed. Our members still have a concern for the reputation of the MGS, and the way in which this was imposed, causing difficulty to our members with the local customer which is totally unacceptable - Unite believe this was just a knee jerk reaction by Wethersfield without being thought through.

It is unfair to our members and to local MGS managers.

Unite the Union

2/619 National Branch Secretary; Ken Tuckwell: 01952 672603 (07881916191): ken.tuckwell416@qcis.mod.uk
2/619 National Branch Chairman; Gordon Woodyatt: 01690 720291 (07788571118): gordon@woodyatt.fsnet.co.uk



TIGER TEAM AGREEMENTS

The TUs met with management and representatives from DCP in **Jul/Aug 08** and finally agreed:

- a. To introduce proposals to improve the working life balance of all guards, improve morale and agree further constructive arrangements that will apply across the MGS, **this has not yet been completed!!**
- b. Wethersfield would clarify how TOIL would work when our members are unable to take it. Management agreed to establish the problems and consult with the TUs - **this has not yet been resolved!!**
- c. **Respect Agenda:**
 - Facilities/Accommodation. It was agreed that Wethersfield would ensure that the minimum standards expected are provided by the customer - **this item is still outstanding.**
 - MGS HQ to review the JSP 315 (accommodation manual) - **not completed.**
 - MGS HQ to consider replacing standards of dress and behaviour mandatory instruction into a PRG - **not yet completed!!**
- d. MGS HQ will brief the TUs on the Terms of Reference for all CSO grades - **not yet complete!!**

It has now been a year since the first meeting and you will see from above that there were many issues raised by the TUs, on behalf of our members, which were agreed by management, yet are still outstanding.

However, most other issues raised by management have either been implemented or are about to be!!!!



PR 09

As part of PR09 nearly all overtime has been stopped. Our members, for over a decade, have had to work a considerable amount of overtime to help cover shortfalls and to keep the MGS afloat.

Indeed, Sandy MacCormick (then DRO) made a written plea to guards in early 2004 asking the MGS to work more overtime, as, because of the corporate structure, he had concluded that the less bad option is to ask YOU to work overtime where necessary, whilst realising this may be an imposition to you. The DRO finishes by asking for our forbearance and support.

Our members have shown forbearance and support along with professionalism and loyalty for over a decade. However, with one stroke of a pen, all overtime is stopped, and, quite rightly, our members are angry - senior management have, for years, asked our members to work overtime and it is clear that our members, over this long period, would become accustomed to the additional increase in their pay.

Where are we now:

Unite will shortly be meeting with their executive and National Officers to discuss these issues. It may be likely that the executive will recommend and agree that we organise an indicative ballot of all Unite members in the MGS - **we would ask for your support on any proposed industrial action**. Unite believes that if we are to protect our members, your jobs as MGS Officers - then we need to take action now - and our members must be allowed to voice their concerns. Our members in the MGS are professional and loyal, but there comes a stage when that loyalty and professionalism is tested.

Industrial action is not something Unite do without due consideration. However, if management intend to continually erode our members terms and conditions and impose practices that are draconian, affecting our work life balance - then this, we believe, is worth fighting for and worth protecting.

Unite will, as ever, seek to work with our colleagues in other Unions in a united bid to show solidarity and to prevent management from continuing with these unfair and unjust impositions. Unite are also prepared to talk with management to find acceptable solutions.

Please be assured that once the executive has met, our members will be informed of the outcome on any proposal to ballot. If you have any questions please contact anyone on the Branch Executive - details are on the last page of this newsletter.

Unite the Union

2/619 National Branch Secretary; Ken Tuckwell: 01952 672603 (07881916191): ken.tuckwell416@qcis.mod.uk
2/619 National Branch Chairman; Gordon Woodyatt: 01690 720291 (07788571118): gordon@woodyatt.fsnet.co.uk

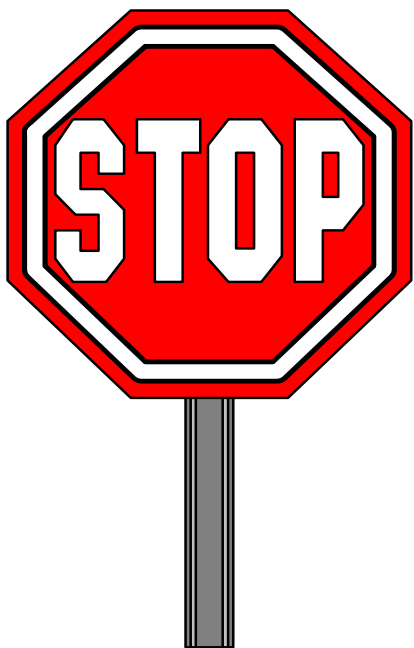


UNITE REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR OUR MGS MEMBERS

Listed below are the names, telephone numbers and e mail addresses of our Branch Executive who also act as Regional Representatives:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>Telephone No</u>	<u>E-Mail Address</u>
Gordon Woodyatt	Region 3	01690 720291	(gordon@woodyatt.fsnet.co.uk)
Ken Tuckwell	Secretary	01952 672603	(ken.tuckwell416@qcis.mod.uk)
Tam Franks	Region 1	0131310 5349/2873	(tamfranks@aol.com)
John Edwardson	Region 1	07599306442	(john_edwardson@hotmail.com)
Brian Roberts	Region 2	01904 66 2866	(roberts_brian6@sky.com)
John Clark	Region 4	01980 674002	(clarkofthecourse@ntlworld.com)
Roy Hughes	Region 4	01869 256864	royhughes@derwent15.freerve.co.uk)
Laurie Bowden	Region 5	01803 67 7244	(lawrence@lbowden1.orangehome.co.uk)
Michael Keenan	Managers Rep	01412242541	michaelkeenan@hotmail.com

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF A TRADE UNION?.....



If not, why not join :

UNITE the Union....

a Trade Union that has specifically set up a National Branch solely to represent MGS Officers.

The National Branch has Regional, Area, Group and local reps, all of whom are MGS Officers themselves, this does not happen in any other recognised Trade Union.

If you want more information or wish to join us, please contact Ken Tuckwell on 01952 672603 (mil: 94480 2603), or 07881916191, or ken.tuckwell416@qcis.mod.uk or ken.tuckwell@unitetheunion.com

Unite the Union

2/619 National Branch Secretary; Ken Tuckwell: 01952 672603 (07881916191): ken.tuckwell416@qcis.mod.uk
2/619 National Branch Chairman; Gordon Woodyatt: 01690 720291 (07788571118): gordon@woodyatt.fsnet.co.uk