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RAILWAYS

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Thursday 18 March 2010

## DB Schenker newsletter

For those members/employees at DB Schenker who wonder why our colleague union, RMT for five years have not been involved in any wage negotiations for Engineering and Ground Staff, a period during which RMT also have not had any shop stewards recognised in any grades within EWS/DBS.

Unite members in 2004 virtually unanimously voted to terminate the discredited "Partnership Agreement" (PA), subsequently following the full involvement of the TUC this agreement ceased to apply 31/12/04. EWS/DBS at this time invited the four Unions, Aslef, Unite/CSEU, RMT and TSSA to continue to discuss new procedural arrangements to replace the defunct PA and advised that whilst these discussions took place all the facilities for shop stewards contained in the old agreement would continue until replacement procedures were agreed.

Aslef, Unite/CSEU and TSSA did reach agreement, RMT chose to take two weekends of strike action, EWS/DBS responded by withdrawing the facilities for RMT reps. Following the failure of a second RMT ballot for strike action autumn 2005, The TUC convened a meeting 27/11/05, chaired by F. O'Grady (assistant Gen Sec TUC) and attended by the four General Secretaries of Aslef, Unite/CSEU, RMT and TSSA the company were represented by their H.R. director G. Skelton.

It was agreed by all parties that the RMT's problems should be addressed at a meeting between RMT and EWS/DBS, this was arranged for 6/12/05. At the meeting 6/12/05, RMT were represented by a full time official, a draft procedural agreement for Ground staff Grades emerged which was subsequently forwarded to the RMT General Secretary and then approved by the RMT grades committee. In a letter to EWS dated 12th December 2005 the RMT General Secretary advised that the proposed procedural agreement had been accepted. EWS were naturally delighted that RMT had accepted this agreement as it contained a no strike clause! This clause had of course been rejected by the 3 other unions.

Once the news of the RMT's sweet heart agreement was exposed RMT vehemently denied that they had agreed a no strike deal, however after years of such denials at a further TUC meeting, again chaired by F. O'Grady and attended by the three General Secretaries of Aslef, Unite/CSEU and TSSA, a full time officer represented RMT, again G. Skelton attended on behalf of EWS/DBS.

The RMT admitted they had "**made a mistake**" and **begged** the company to remove the no strike clause, G. Skelton, holding aloft the letter 12/12/05 from Bob Crow stated that "when we make an agreement you expect the company to honour the agreement, we expect the RMT to honour agreements it makes **"Our colleague union has no one to blame other than themselves for the absolute mess that it has made of it's relationship with EWS/DBS**, in 2005 there were 1,400 ground staff employees now there is less than 250 ground staff who feel they have been abandoned.

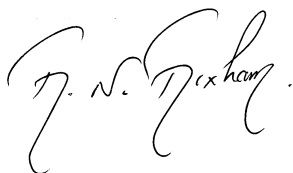
RMT **DO** have a procedural agreement with DBS, it does though have a **no strike** clause in it.

**Unite can reiterate that it deplores no strike sweet heart deals and will never enter into another collective agreement with RMT at DBS.**

Unite's record with EWS/DBS is one of defending engineering jobs reducing redundancies through consultation and negotiation, and where necessary taking industrial action to improve members terms and conditions, for example Unite members at Axiom Rail, Stoke stood firm in the face of a pay freeze and the threat of depot closure took 2 days a week strike action over a 10 week period and won an improvement in basic pay of **12.5%** and a reduction in the working week of 1 hour, our members were supported by Unite paying £30 per day strike pay.

Whilst in the wider Engineering workforce a recent ballot of Unite Engineering grade, members overwhelmingly rejected the latest pay offer from DBS.

**When will RMT come clean and tell their long suffering members at DBS the truth?**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R.N. Rixham".

**R.N. RIXHAM**  
**National Officer - Railways**