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Norwich Union bars Amicus from company premises

It was reported in the last E-bulletin that Amicus members in Norwich Union (NU) have serious concerns about the security of their jobs. This week Amicus launched a major recruitment campaign across various NU sites. However, on Monday 6th September NU management barred Amicus from its sites in Norwich and York. This reaction was clearly a response to the union survey on offshoring survey that showed 99.9% of staff fear further job cuts at the company.

The offshoring survey was sent to roughly 9,000 Amicus members within NU and attracted 1,909 replies. The results clearly show that NU staff have major concerns over the company's drive to offshore jobs.

NU management have refused access and denied accredited union representatives time-off to participate in this campaign. Amicus has a partnership agreement with the company that covers this type of recruitment activity, it grants the union access to carry out its business within company premises.

Amicus has pledged to continue the campaign. This week Amicus Officials were forced to stand outside NU premises.

In Norwich the company has gone even further and denied Amicus officers access to the union office where some of the full-time Seconded Representatives are based.

Amicus Regional Officer Mark Robinson said: "NU management are being totally unreasonable in banning Amicus from its premises. The effect of this is to force us to hand material to Norwich Union employees at the entrances of sites as they arrive and finish work. We will continue to do this until such time as the company allows us back in and we will continue to represent the 10,000 members we have already within Norwich Union".

Updates on this campaign are available from the Amicus website:

www.amicustheunion.org

Amicus expresses regret as AXA offshore more jobs

Amicus has expressed regret at the announcement today that AXA is to off shore 50 jobs as part of the company's on going policy of exporting work to India.

Amicus has been fully consulted over AXA's plans and have been given assurances that staff affected by the move, who wish to stay with the company, will be offered

retraining and the chance of alternative jobs. Amicus official Hugh Glass-Jones said: 'We always regret any jobs going abroad and we will ensure that any staff whose jobs have gone are offered alternative work.'

Jobs are going in Bristol, Ipswich and Tunbridge Wells over the course of next year. The work will be transferred to the company's wholly owned site in Pune, India. To date AXA has off shored approximately 1,200. Part of the UNIFI and Amicus charter on off shoring is to ensure where work is transferred the workers in the global sites have good terms and conditions of employment in line with the ILO convention including the right to belong to a trade union. AXA's site in India complies with these standards.

Outsourcing CEOs earn more

A study into executive compensation in the US has found that Chief Executives of US companies that outsourced the most drew bigger pay and benefits in the last year. The study has been carried out by the Institute for Policy Studies and United for a Fair Economy. The report found that the average CEO pay at the 'Top 50' outsourcing companies was USD 10.4 million last year, compared with USD 8.1 million for 365 companies.

Union seeks customer support to stop HSBC offshoring jobs

UNIFI is to mobilise customer support for its campaign to prevent HSBC from offshoring thousands more UK jobs abroad. The union will launch a customer petition in September and teams of UNIFI members will be demonstrating outside key branches up and down the country.

A UNIFI official said "We know that customers are experiencing real difficulties when their call gets put through to one of HSBC's global sites. We believe customers want to tell the bank just how they feel about the service they are getting from the global sites and by putting their name on a petition they can". UNIFI is calling on HSBC to stop - not accelerate - the transfer of UK jobs.

Windfall for workers at Admiral

Hundreds of staff at car insurer Admiral are to receive average windfalls of £37,000 when the company floats on the London stock market. The amount paid out to its 1,500 employees will depend on each person's role and length of service. Senior managers will get the most, but even the most junior workers will own shares valued at £10,000. The company has 1,100 staff in Cardiff and another 400 in Swansea.

Women 'fail to save for pensions'

Women are more likely to face poverty in retirement because of a "gender pensions gap", according to research from the Association of British Insurers (ABI). The research has found:

- Up to nine million women are either not saving enough for retirement or are not saving at all.

- About 35% of women do not belong to a pension scheme compared to 25% of men.
- Women are also less able to save for their retirement, as their work is more likely to be disrupted by childcare.
- Women are more likely to retire earlier and live longer than men and more likely to work for employers that do not contribute to pensions.
- This means that almost two-thirds of women's income in retirement is from the state and many women end up on means-tested benefits to fund the income gap.
- 35% of women do not belong to a pension scheme compared to 25% of men
- When they do save, over half of women contribute less than £100 per month to their pension
- 9% of women receive an employer contribution of more than 5% of wages, compared to 15% of men
- 83% of retired women have a total personal income of less than £1,000 per month compared with just 58% of men

The ABI believes the government should encourage employers to contribute to their workers' pensions. The ABI stated that, "The savings industry, government and employers must work together to help women save for a decent income in retirement."

First Data Europe is to shed 80 jobs at its credit card processing office in Basildon.

Bank of New York is said to be considering plans to relocate some of its back-office functions and hundreds of jobs from London to Manchester.

The Inland Revenue and Bradford Council are to open a joint call centre in Bradford later this year, with the creation of up to 200 jobs.

CPP Group is to create 200 new jobs at its consumer assistance services centre in York.

Moneysupermarket.com, the financial services company, is to invest GBP 1.2m in a second office at St David's Park, Ewloe, with the creation of 200 jobs.

London Scottish Bank has acquired certain assets of Morse's, the personal loans company with 500 staff, for an initial GBP 10m.

NU strengthens relationship with Co-op

It has been announced that Norwich Union will be the provider of payment protection insurance on loan and credit card products from the Co-operative Bank. The insurer has been providing payment protection insurance on Co-operative Bank loans since the mid 1980s but this renewed four-year deal also includes cover on Co-operative Bank credit cards.

In addition, Norwich Union has been appointed as the exclusive provider of Privilege travel insurance for the Co-operative Bank's Privilege Current Account customers.

Directors pay up 12.8%

Directors' pay climbed 12.8% last year - three times faster than average earnings - taking the average pay packet for a chief executive to £1.7m. The Guardian's annual pay survey has found that 190 directors were paid a total of more than £1m last year.

All the directors were men. Excluding gains from share options and other incentive plans, a chief executive's average basic pay is now just under £600,000.

Average earnings last year climbed by 4.7%, or 3.6% when City bonuses are stripped out of the national figures. Average pay in the UK is now about £24,600 - one 70th that of the average chief executive.

The Guardian survey also found that finds that the best paid employees are at Man, where the average is more than £100,000 a year. The chief executive, Stanley Fink, earned £6.9m last year. The worst paid workers are mainly in the food and drinks business and in supermarkets. The average wage at five companies was less than £10,000. Tesco workers are the ninth worst paid, picking up just under £13,000 a year.

The highest paid woman was Marjorie Scardino, the chief executive of Pearson, publisher of the Financial Times. She received total pay of £901,385 and was one of only six women to earn more than £500,000.

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