

## EDITORIAL

On the bargaining front 2012 looks set to be a challenging year as UNITE members battle to protect their pensions and real wages. UNITE General Secretary Len McCluskey made it clear that UNITE will not accept the 1% pay limit for this year's public sector pay round, and has expressed anger that the Labour Party has embraced austerity measures and argued in favour of pay restraint. UNITE public sector members are however, back in talks with the government over the proposed changes to the public sector's pension scheme.

In the private sector, UNITE members are in dispute to protect their pensions at Unilever – where an 11 day rolling strike programme is underway, while members will shortly be balloted at General Electrics to oppose the closure of the scheme to new entrants and increases in contributions. Disputes over pension issues are looming in three companies in the road transport sector. UNITE tanker drivers employed by Wincanton have also voted by a huge majority (80%) to take strike action in support of their pay claim at Conoco, and a 7 day strike is due to begin from 21st January.

Contained in this edition is also a copies of two recent 'Action Alerts' that focus firstly on the government's attack on facility time for union reps – the alert gives excellent details of the benefits that union reps bring to workplaces and challenges head on the Tory lies and propaganda on the issue – and secondly, on the continued abuses faced by Agency Workers following the introduction of the Agency Workers Regulations and derogations allowing agencies effectively remove the right to equal pay.

For those colleagues entering negotiations it is worth noting that the RPI has declined from 5.2% to 4.8%, while the CPI has declined from 4.8% to 4.2%. It might well be worth pointing out that this is of little help when we have all been hit with an 18.6% rise in vehicle tax and insurance, a 10.6% rise in clothing and footwear costs, a 9.7% rise in petrol and oil prices, and a 7% hike in rail fares.

A Happy New Year to you all and please feel free to make any suggestions and comments on the style and content of this bargaining brief.

**Simon Dubbins**  
Director of Research

## DECEMBER INFLATION FIGURES

RETAIL PRICE INDEX (RPI) – 4.8% (down from 5.2% in November)

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (CPI) – 4.2% (down from 4.8% in November)

| BREAKDOWN OF KEY RPI STATISTICS                                              | ANNUAL RATE |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Housing                                                                      | 1.3%        |
| Petrol & Oil                                                                 | 9.7%        |
| Vehicle tax & Insurance                                                      | 18.6%       |
| Rail Fares                                                                   | 7.0%        |
| Food                                                                         | 4.6%        |
| Oil & other fuels                                                            | 3.8%        |
| Clothing & footwear                                                          | 10.6%       |
| Motoring costs                                                               | 6.8%        |
| Household consumable                                                         | 8.4%        |
| Source: ONS <a href="http://www.statistics.gov.uk">www.statistics.gov.uk</a> |             |

| INFLATION FORECASTS (RPI)           | ANNUAL RATE |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Quarter 1 2012                      | 3.8%        |
| Quarter 2 2012                      | 3.5%        |
| Quarter 3 2012                      | 3.3%        |
| Quarter 4 2012                      | 3.0%        |
| Quarter 1 2013                      | 2.6%        |
| Quarter 2 2013                      | 2.5%        |
| Source: IDS Pay Report January 2012 |             |

| ALL-ITEMS RPI FORECASTS (MONTHLY)   | ROUNDED AVERAGE |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| January 2012                        | 4.0%            |
| February 2012                       | 3.7%            |
| March 2012                          | 3.7%            |
| April 2012                          | 3.4%            |
| May 2012                            | 3.5%            |
| June 2012                           | 3.6%            |
| July 2012                           | 3.6%            |
| August 2012                         | 3.4%            |
| September 2012                      | 2.9%            |
| October 2012                        | 3.0%            |
| November 2012                       | 3.0%            |
| December 2012                       | 2.9%            |
| January 2013                        | 2.7%            |
| February 2013                       | 2.6%            |
| March 2013                          | 2.6%            |
| April 2013                          | 2.6%            |
| May 2013                            | 2.5%            |
| June 2013                           | 2.5%            |
| Source: IDS Pay Report January 2012 |                 |

## TRIBUNAL AWARDS 2012

The Department of Business, Innovation and Skills has set the new compensation limits, adjusted as always in line with the Retail Price Index, which will take effect from 1st February 2012 (see schedule below). The key changes are: (i) a week's pay – £430 (currently £400); (ii) maximum compensatory award – £72,300 (currently £68,400).

| Column 1                     |                                                          | Column 2                                                                                                                                                                                         | Column 3  | Column 4  |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Relevant statutory provision |                                                          | Subject of provision                                                                                                                                                                             | Old limit | New limit |
| 1                            | Section 145E(3) of the 1992 Act                          | Amount of award for unlawful inducement relating to trade union membership or activities, or for unlawful inducement relating to collective bargaining.                                          | £3,300    | £3,500    |
| 2                            | Section 156(1) of the 1992 Act                           | Minimum amount of basic award of compensation where dismissal is unfair by virtue of section 152(1) or 153 of the 1992 Act.                                                                      | £5,000    | £5,300    |
| 3                            | Section 176(6A) of the 1992 Act                          | Minimum amount of compensation where individual excluded or expelled from union in contravention of section 174 of the 1992 Act and not admitted or re-admitted by date of tribunal application. | £7,600    | £8,100    |
| 4                            | Section 31(1) of the 1996 Act                            | Limit on amount of guarantee payment payable to an employee in respect of any day.                                                                                                               | £22.20    | £23.50    |
| 5                            | Section 120(1) of the 1996 Act                           | Minimum amount of basic award of compensation where dismissal is unfair by virtue of section 100(1)(a) and (b), 101A(d), 102(1) or 103 of the 1996 Act.                                          | £5,000    | £5,300    |
| 6                            | Section 124(1) of the 1996 Act                           | Limit on amount of compensatory award for unfair dismissal.                                                                                                                                      | £68,400   | £72,300   |
| 7                            | Paragraphs (a) and (b) of section 186(1) of the 1996 Act | Limit on amount in respect of any one week payable to an employee in respect of a debt to which Part XII of the 1996 Act applies and which is referable to a period of time.                     | £400      | £430      |
| 8                            | Section 227(1) of the 1996 Act                           | Maximum amount of "a week's pay" for the purpose of calculating a redundancy payment or for various awards including the basic or additional award of compensation for unfair dismissal.         | £400      | £430      |

# LRD PAY & CONDITIONS DATABASE ONLINE – SUMMARY OF PAY ROUND

## Recent Unite settlement as reported to the Pay & Conditions database online

| SETTLEMENT DATE | AGREEMENT                                 | STANDARD INCREASE |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 01/01/12        | EDF Energy (Cottam Power Station)         | 4.66%             |
| 02/01/12        | Michelin (Stoke-on-Trent)                 | 4.00%             |
| 01/01/12        | British Airways Pilots & Flight Engineers | 3.50%             |
| 01/01/12        | Gai-Tronics                               | 3.00%             |
| 01/01/12        | ITV                                       | 3.00%             |

## EARNINGS AND PAY

### Full-time average weekly earnings by occupation

(the table below shows estimates of full-time average weekly earnings by occupation. It is based on the median earnings figures published by the ONS in the Annual Survey of Hours 2010, uprated by the 3.3% increase in the average weekly earnings figures between April 2010 and September this year)

|                                                                                                              |        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| All workers                                                                                                  | 610.90 |
| All male                                                                                                     | 665.20 |
| All female                                                                                                   | 526.50 |
| Managers                                                                                                     | 910.40 |
| Professionals                                                                                                | 810.00 |
| Associate professionals                                                                                      | 615.40 |
| Administrative and secretarial staff                                                                         | 425.30 |
| Skilled/craft                                                                                                | 501.20 |
| Services                                                                                                     | 356.70 |
| Sales                                                                                                        | 333.90 |
| Operatives                                                                                                   | 458.50 |
| Other manual jobs                                                                                            | 356.90 |
| Source: <a href="http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_250593.pdf">www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_250593.pdf</a> |        |

### Percentage Annual Rise in Average Weekly Earnings October 2011

|                                     |      |
|-------------------------------------|------|
| Whole Economy                       | 2.0% |
| Private Sector                      | 2.1% |
| Public Sector                       | 1.7% |
| Finance & Business Services         | 3.3% |
| Manufacturing                       | 1.4% |
| Services                            | 1.4% |
| Source: IDS Pay Report January 2012 |      |

## ACCESSING DATA

The data contained in this brief can all be obtained by using online facilities available to Unite members and general websites.

Unite has provided a workplace representative's guide to the web and this is available at [http://www.unitetheunion.org/pdf/Reps\\_guide\\_to\\_web.pdf](http://www.unitetheunion.org/pdf/Reps_guide_to_web.pdf)

In addition all Unite members can access the pay and conditions database maintained by LRD at: [http://www.lrd.org.uk/payline/index.php?auth\\_token=6c54e1a919aba7bca4c206fd0201eb03](http://www.lrd.org.uk/payline/index.php?auth_token=6c54e1a919aba7bca4c206fd0201eb03) or through the LRD website - username: unite and password: opal961

## RPI/CPI – UPDATE

Great news. We have reached the necessary number (100,000) of signatures which means the petition will now have to be considered by the House of Commons Backbench Business Committee. This is the committee who will decide whether or not the e-petition will be debated in the House of Commons. This committee meets weekly to hear representations from MPs for debates. The committee can consider any subject for debate, including those raised in e-petitions but MPs must also make the case for consideration. For the next stage of the campaign we are asking you to lobby your Member of Parliament asking them to make representation to the committee to ensure this debate reaches the floor of the House. If you do not know who your Member of Parliament is please go to <http://findyourmp.parliament.uk/> and this webpage will assist you.

Another useful webpage is <http://www.parliament.uk/about/contacting/mp/> which outlines the many ways you can communicate with your MP.

## ACTION ALERTS

Please find attached Unite's latest Action Alert briefs on Trade Union Facility Time and Agency Workers.

## Contact Details

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