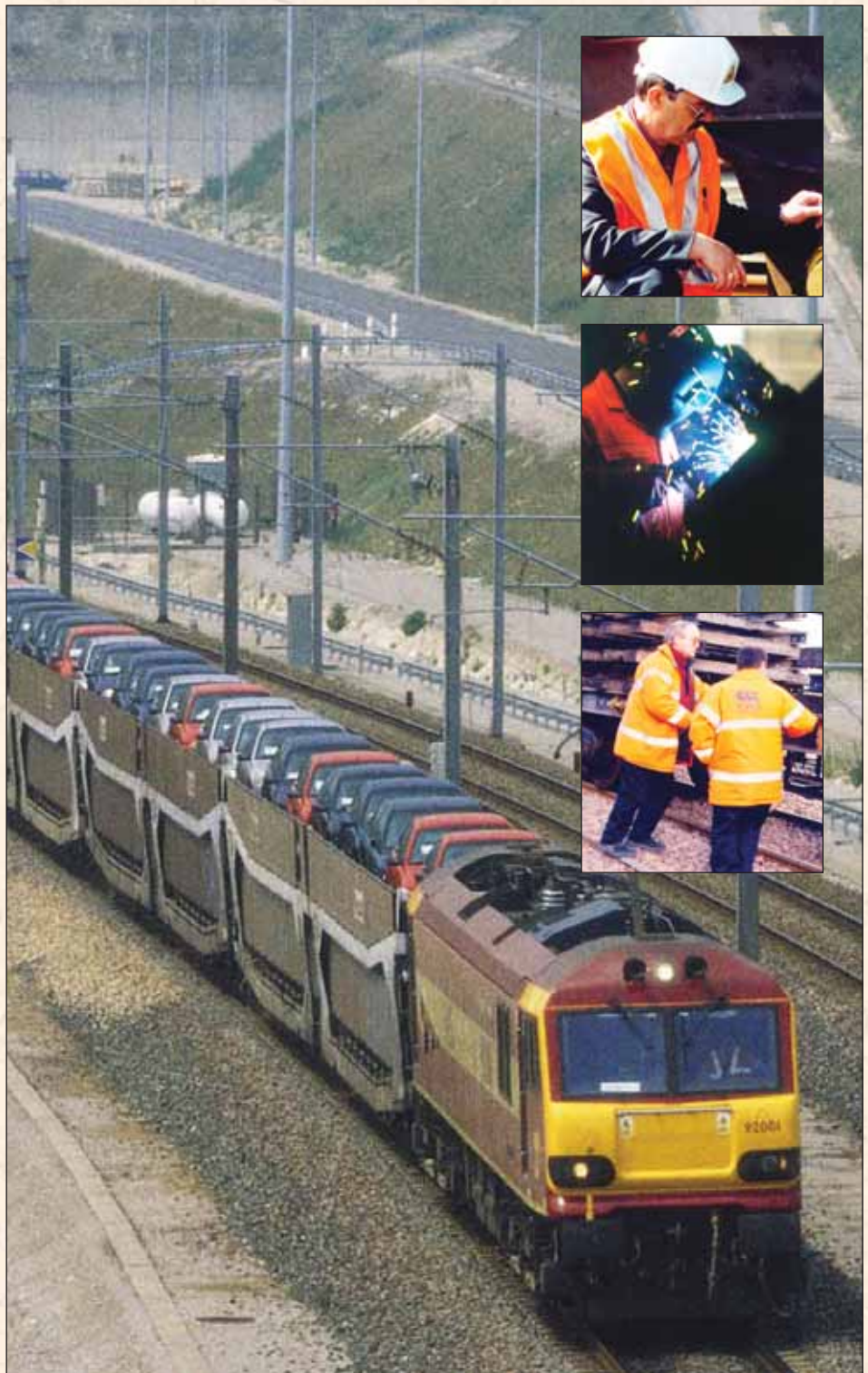




SKILLS

CSEU/Amicus responded to Government consultations and broadly welcomed the Government's Skills Strategy and the National Regional and Sector Skills Councils. CSEU/Amicus welcomed the re-launch of apprenticeships and argued for the upper age limit to be removed. CSEU/Amicus also welcomed the Tomlinson report on vocational education. CSEU/Amicus has continued to argue that skills should be recognised as part of the bargaining agenda for statutory recognition agreements and that employers should be required to contribute to a sector skills levy and for the right for paid time off for training.

EWS Railway management have informed the Engineering National Council that they will be taking on a small number of Engineering apprentices in September.



PENSIONS

Amicus was represented on the Employers Task Force on pensions, which produced a report in 2004. Amicus made significant interventions, through placing amendments to the pensions Bill. The Government introduced some important and welcome reforms to pensions law, including the introduction of the pensions protection Fund and the right to be consulted on changes to pension schemes, in particular Amicus successfully convinced the Government to introduce a Financial Assistance Scheme for workers whose pension scheme were not covered by the PPF. Amicus continues to argue for more funding for the FAS, and has recently been successful in convincing the Government that those workers who

will be covered by the scheme will be entitled 80% of their pension. The amendment calling for 50% member nominated trustees was accepted by the Government as an enabling clause which still needs to be enacted through the regulations. In cases of TUPE transfers within the private sector, there will be an obligation on employers to match employee contributions up to a level of six per cent. This still offers very limited protection for members of final salary schemes and AMICUS argued strongly that there should be comparable pension provision. Amicus further argued that there should be significant increase in the basic state pension and the link with average earnings should be restored.

1. CSEU feels that the EWS section of the Railway Pension Scheme should have its own Pension

committee to help the beneficiaries have a greater input into how the scheme section is managed.

2. CSEU does not support Companies taking on going pension holidays this surely will not help pension funds in the long term
3. Low Pension contributions now are not planning for the future at a time when stock markets are performing so badly steps should be taken now before the section as its contribution review.

The CSEU as written to EWS Railway regarding these points and will be asking for them to be put on the agenda of the next Engineering National Council meeting.

RMT, THE TUC AND POACHING

EWS Railway CSEU Lay Representatives, are extremely upset and concerned with the amount of material being circulated by the RMT discrediting the CSEU and affiliated unions. In particular, from the General Secretary, Bob Crow.

The problems that the RMT have with regard to their representation with EWS have nothing to do with the CSEU and have been brought about by their own actions with EWS. Their problems should be brought up with EWS directly and not through our members.

The EWS Railway CSEU Lay representatives are disappointed that a fellow trade union should be attempting to undermine and

discredit other TUC affiliated unions. Their misinformation from RMT correspondence, which are being distributed to our members, does nothing but exacerbate the problems of the EWS workforce.

A formal complaint against the ongoing activities of the RMT have been made to the TUC.

STRESS AT WORK QUESTIONNAIRE

CSEU Health and Safety representative will be asking members to complete stress at work questionnaires about their working environment next month.

These questionnaires are to help the union improve your working environment at EWS Railway depots.



EWS/EWSI Railway key contacts

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Organisers

Scotland & Borders – Craig Freebairn – Carlisle Depot
North East – Ian Ritchie – Knottingley Depot
West Midlands – Charles Harding – Crewe IEMD – Lead Organiser
East Midlands – Bill Harrison – Toton TMD
South Wales – Nigel Horswill – Margam TMD
London North & South – Ron Thompson – Hither Green Depot
Western – Pending elections