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As a member of Amicus, you enjoy the protection of Britain's biggest private sector union. The union that stands up for the energy industry.

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# Amicus



## Energy Bulletin

DECEMBER  
2004

Connecting with our members

ISSUE ONE

## Keeping the lights on!

Amicus members working in the energy sector know how easily people can take their electricity supplies for granted.

Very few people ever stop to think how the producers, shippers, the power stations, national grid and suppliers interact to ensure that UK businesses and the population in general have a constant, secure and reliable source of energy, which is vital for the life of the nation.

Looking to the not so distant future, Amicus understands the serious problems blighting the UK's generating capacity and that blackouts affecting large parts of the country are a real possibility over the coming years unless there is immediate action.

The UK needs an energy policy that will ensure that energy; the environment and economic growth are properly and sustainably integrated.

Amicus supports a balanced energy policy, which includes a mix of clean coal, nuclear and renewables to achieve the right mix to ensure the security of supply for the nations' needs and one that meets the targets for the reduction of carbon emissions.

European directives which curtail the lifetime of existing coal fired power stations, combined with the reduction in nuclear generating capacity from the closure and decommissioning of the

Magnox nuclear power stations, mean that the UK's ability to generate its own dependable energy supply will be seriously reduced in the coming years. Furthermore, thousands of jobs are at risk and consumers face the sort of price hikes we have seen in recent months.

At the end of October having listened to the concerns of Amicus members working in the energy sector, the union launched a major media offensive to raise our concerns about the future security of the UK's energy supply. The aim was to generate public debate, raise the importance of the energy sector to the UK and to open Government doors.

Amicus received a massive amount of local and national press, television and radio coverage. The publicity has put energy policy firmly on the Government agenda. Amicus has had meetings with Mike O'Brien MP Minister of State for Energy and E-commerce at the DTI, who has made a commitment to meet with the union on a regular basis along with energy civil servants to discuss the UK's

future energy policy. General Secretary, Derek Simpson and National Officer, Dougie Rooney alongside the NUM also met with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rt. Hon Gordon Brown MP. Amicus and the NUM discussed the option of publicly funded research and development for clean coal technology with the Treasury, as part of a long-term energy policy for the UK. The unions and the Treasury will continue to meet and both unions will be playing a full part in the formation of a new energy policy on behalf of its members and for the good of the nation.

Our campaign for a new energy policy which seeks to ensure the UK can generate its own dependable energy supply, secure jobs and generate new jobs in the energy sector and in related manufacturing industries has taken a considerable step forward.



Derek Simpson, Keith Stanley, Steve Kemp, Gordon Brown, Dougie Rooney & Ian Lavery

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# Amicus fears on Sellafield jobs

Amicus is raising concerns about job prospects at Sellafield as the decommissioning process starts.

From April 2005 the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) will assume ownership of Sellafield and decommissioning will start. Although the process is due to stretch well into this century, permanent staff at the plant are likely to be cut from 12,000 now, to just 4,000 by 2011.

Derek Simpson, General Secretary of Amicus, visited Sellafield on Wednesday 17th November to support permanent Sellafield staff and their need to be retrained to perform the decommissioning work and to oppose the outsourcing of any core work at the plant.

No new jobs are likely to be created at the site during decommissioning; the focus must be on retraining permanent Sellafield staff to manage the transition from reprocessing into decommissioning and clean up.

Derek Simpson, General Secretary of Amicus, said:

"We need to maximise the number of job opportunities available through the decommissioning process by re-skilling Sellafield workers. Unless we start training people now, we are in danger of damaging the whole of UK manufacturing and disadvantaging existing Sellafield workers and the whole Cumbrian economy."

"Amicus is committed to maintaining our members' terms and conditions at Sellafield – ensuring that pay and pensions provision are not threatened by the outsourcing of work."

Job losses could also be offset if further THORP reprocessing contracts are agreed by the Department of Trade and Industry. We want

to see any new productivity targets agreed by themselves and the British Nuclear Group.

Last year, Amicus, along with GMB conducted a successful strike that resulted in a 30% shift pay increase for 2,400 blue-collar workers at the plant. The deal will see shift pay increase by £2000, a 30% increase, over the next 3 years for 2,400 shift workers to achieve parity with their white-collar counterparts by 2006.



# Dounreay and the decommissioning authority

Dounreay was Britain's first centre of fast reactor research and development from 1955 until 1994 and consisted of three nuclear reactors, reprocessing plants and a variety of experimental facilities. It is now being decommissioned by UK Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA), which in October announced a reduction in the timescale to 2036 and savings of £1 billion on previous estimates.

With such huge changes taking place Dounreay recruits its 1000th engineering apprentice in the same year that the UK Atomic Energy Authority is fifty years old.

19 young people have been recruited to apprentice and other training programmes this year at UKAEA.

Dounreay site director Norman Harrison said: "The tradition and quality of training opportunities for young people in the Highlands and Islands has always been regarded as one of the major benefits of Dounreay. I'm delighted that in such an historic



Back row Left to Right John Crowden - Amicus Steward, Maurice Edmunds - Head of Site Support Services, Alan Simpson - Engineering Maintenance Manager, Davie Alexander - Amicus Senior Steward  
Front row Dougie Rooney, Norman Harrison - Dounreay Site Director.

year for the site and the UKAEA, our continuing investment in the future of young people from this area is making its own history".

AMICUS National Officer Dougie Rooney visited the Dounreay site in the North of Scotland on the 28th/29th October 2004.

During his visit Dougie met Amicus stewards and members employed by site operator UKAEA and members employed by Facilities Management Contractor, Johnson Controls.

During his visit they discussed the setting up of the Nuclear

Decommissioning Authority and the effect that this move may have in respect of pensions and terms and conditions of employment as well as the recent announcement that the timescale for decommissioning the site has now decreased a further 11 years to 2036

Dougie Rooney National Officer said, "This has raised many issues the most important of which is ensuring that other opportunities are provided to ensure future employment prospects for the area."

## News in Brief

**Amicus has gained recognition with the worlds largest manufacturer of wind turbines, based in Scotland Workers at Vestas Celtic Wind Technology, which manufactures wind turbines for Scottish Power and Powergen, voted overwhelmingly in favour of union recognition.**

**BP Solvay Polyethylene is to close its Rigidex 3 HDPE plant at Grangemouth early next year, with the redeployment of 75 staff.**

**Alkane Biogas has unveiled plans to build a £6.8million biogas plant at Fivemiletown in County Tyrone by 2006, in order to convert animal and food waste into renewable energy and fertiliser.**

**MTEM, the Edinburgh University spin off company, has raised £7.4million to fund the manufacture of seismic equipment for extending the life of oil fields.**

**Scottish Power is to open a new £6.5million customer service centre in Hamilton in January, with the creation of up to 150 jobs.**

**Ceres Power is planning to raise £15million in a flotation. The aim is to fund the commercial development of its fuel cells.**

## Amicus stewards investigate the future for revenue protection

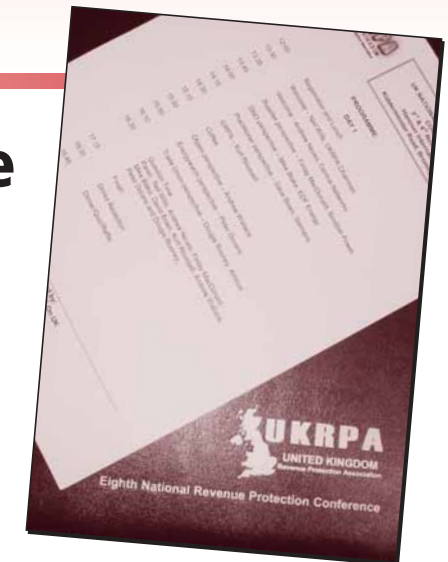
Amicus Senior Stewards Tony Caldicott, Jim Thomas and Ian Macdonald attended a two-day Conference of the United Kingdom Revenue Protection Association (U.K.R.P.A) to which their Companies are members.

The Conference was held at the Hanover International Hotel in Bromsgrove and was attended by 92 Delegates from various Companies and Countries. This was the eighth Conference to be held on the subject of Revenue Protection.

Apart from speakers from Companies in the UK there were also speakers from

America, Israel and India. They passed on their experience of Revenue Protection as it was affecting their Companies in the countries they are from.

There had previously been a Seminar held in London in June that was arranged by Ofgem to look at how Revenue Protection was conducted in the Industry and several of the Companies had written to Ofgem giving an outline of their Operations. From that Seminar two working groups were set up to look at this subject and were tasked with coming up with proposals on how it should operate in the future. These working groups are due to report back to Ofgem



by April 2005 and Ofgem will then make a recommendation in the second Quarter of 2005.

Currently the main differences appear to be;

1. Deciding where within the business the Companies feel that Revenue Protection belongs.

2. Whether the Companies believe this is a Supply or Distribution function.

Tony Caldicott senior shop steward said

“The conference was a good opportunity to meet and discuss with like minded people the problems that are being faced by the Revenue Protection departments across the Companies operating in the UK. Faced with the

added pressure on these departments to try to be more cost effective, the provision of good quality information is vital if the Revenue Protection Officers are to do their job effectively. This will need to be one of the main considerations that the working groups put forward to Ofgem.

The contributions made by all of the speakers over the two days were very

good and hopefully all delegates will have gone back to their Companies in an upbeat frame of mind with regard to the future of Revenue Protection”

The Stewards and the Union will continue to keep a watching brief on the progress made by the working groups and Ofgem.

## Do you want to make a vital contribution to your future pension?

Amicus has organised several courses over the years to look at ensuring that our trustees and people interested in becoming trustees, have the specific expertise required in relation to the protected regulations of the Electricity Supply Pension Scheme (ESPS).

We intend to hold a further course in the New Year. If you know of any shop steward, or member who aspires to become a trustee or is indeed a trustee then please email an expression of interest to:

briget.handley@amicustheunion.org

## The UK Emissions Trading Scheme

UK participants, including power generators, in the imminent European Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS), were this week faced with the likelihood of taking part in the scheme with no final confirmation of their allowances, the Government has admitted.

In the past month the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) conceded that baseline verification problems affecting hundreds of installations were holding up decisions on individual plants.

The ETS is due to start at the beginning of January but Defra's latest timetable signals that allocations for individual

sites will not be published until the 5th January 2005. They will then have to wait several weeks to allow for appeals before they can commence the ETS. Defra had originally hoped to reach this stage by late summer.

The Department of Trade and Industry has published revised emissions projections that explain in part why the Government has revised its allocation plans. For the power sector, the increases were due to an increase in electricity demand, changes in plant efficiency assumptions, a reduction in the contribution from nuclear power and an expected rise in gas-fired generation.

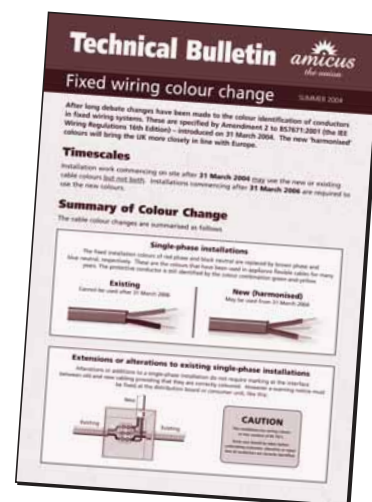
Dougie Rooney National Officer says

“This is an extremely important directive and together with the large combustion plant directive could have an adverse effect on the future of the fifteen coal fired power stations in the UK. If no action is taken by the government to ensure that the owners fit emissions abatement equipment to all of these stations and put significant finance into the development of a prototype clean coal fired power station then the lights will go out at the end of this decade.”

## Electrical Guides-Fixed wiring regulations

After long debate, changes have been made to the colour identification of colour conductors in fixed wiring systems. Installations commencing after the 31st March 2006 are required to use the new colours.

If you would like a copy of the technical bulletin that Amicus have produced then please contact Vicky Foxcroft in Research; Vicky.Foxcroft@amicustheunion.org Tel: 0207 939 7079



## CE Electric, terms & conditions attacked

CE electric sought to introduce new working practices for overhead line staff, which included a forty five hour working week, up to ten hours per week unpaid travel plus the removal of RDO days without compensation and for holiday pay, sick pay and pensions these would all be based on a thirty seven hour week even though it is a standard forty five hour working week. There would also be the inclusion of a none negotiable bonus where the targets would be determined by the company.

The company in their attempt to avoid negotiations, encouraged people to volunteer for this contractual change, the proposed changes also included a new starters agreement. The company refused to abide by the procedures, which included an avoidance of disputes procedure.

The unions' position throughout was to advise its members that they should not volunteer for any Greenfield units which have not been negotiated and agreement reached with the union.

Throughout the dispute the union has been in communication with its members by letter as the company have refused access to members through the shop stewards.

Following the campaign that lasted over a month the company eventually agreed to return to the negotiating table via the conciliation service ACAS. Through ACAS the union seek to ensure that there is no erosion of members' terms and conditions. The commitment to maintain every member's terms and conditions remains the over-riding principle of the union and we will never accept this no matter what workplace.

Kevan Parker Regional Officer said,

“I am pleased that the Company have had the courage to decide to return to the negotiating table to try to resolve the current issue. It must however be recognised that the change in the company's stance was brought about by the unity, strength and solidarity that was shown by all Amicus members working for CE Electric, who had indicated their reluctance to any changes without the endorsement of their Union.

I am extremely proud of the support the Amicus members have given the Union throughout this dispute and it proves once again the value of being a Trade Union member”.

## Northern Ireland members' oppose water privatisation

The Irish region hosted the latest meeting of Amicus water industry senior shop stewards in Belfast. This coincided with the proposed privatisation of the Northern Ireland Water Service, the increase of water charges to the highest level in the UK and the consequential loss of up to 700 jobs. MPs, MLAs and local councillors of all the major political parties attended a session to hear first-hand the experiences of water service reform in England, Scotland and Wales and the consequential impact on employees and consumers.

The meeting was given wide coverage on Northern Ireland (NI) TV and radio and demonstrated the leading role that Amicus is taking on behalf of members.

Steve Tweed, Regional Officer, told the meeting that the Government was refusing to provide a similar contribution for the upgrade of the infrastructure to that provided at the time of privatisation in England and Wales. This amounts to £350million and every householder in NI is expected to share this cost. On top of the current £130 annual charge, through the Regional Rating system, every household will also be expected to pay between £350 and £700 per annum for their water supply and waste.

All the political parties have agreed to meet again with Amicus to discuss how we can jointly oppose the Government's current proposals.

## New Energy National Sector Committee

On the 3rd and 4th of November this year the newly elected Energy National Sector committee (NSC) met at Esher Place the unions main training college.

At the first meeting they discussed amendments for the union rules and policy conference and agreed to amend the rules to allow for shop stewards meetings at least four times a year. They also discussed how the union, at every level, could best ensure the interests of energy members are met. From this discussion it was decided that at the NSC meeting in January a strategy document would be circulated for discussion with the membership as to what is required.

The next NSC is due to take place on the 19th, 20th and 21st of January 2005.

If you want a copy of the minutes from the last NSC, please contact your Regional Officer.



