

## GRAPHICAL, PAPER AND MEDIA SECTOR

# UNITE PANEL RECOMMEND PAY DEAL WITH BPIF

*A new pay agreement for 2008 is to be put to a ballot vote of Unite members working under the Unite-BPIF National Agreement following two days of intensive and frank negotiations between the employers' federation representatives and Unite officials and lay reps.*

The details of the proposed deal which is being recommended by the Unite Negotiating team is as follows: A pay increase for Craft/Class 1 of £9.60 per week; Class 2, £8.64; Class 3, £7.87.

This equates to an increase on minimum rates of pay of 3.54%, which will also be reflected through to Machine Classification Rates and will be calculable for overtime, shift premiums etc.

The full new minimum rates of pay for all grades, apprentices and learners and the minimum earning guarantee will be contained in the ballot paper.

During the negotiations the BPIF pressed for a re-affirmation of the cost recovery section of the Partnership at Work National Agreement. Both sides re-affirmed the section, but a letter to Unite will contain the commitment to pay the increase on the agreed date and that cost recovery should not effect nationally agreed minimum standards such as overtime, shift premiums and holiday pay calculations.

It was also agreed to refer to the National Partnership Panel an "anomaly" that may have occurred in regard equal pay and the rates of pay for 16 - 18 year old learners (not apprentices) coming into the industry. The BPIF intend to place the matter before their National Council in March.

Commenting on the proposed pay deal Tony Burke, Unite Assistant General Secretary said:

**"The pay deal reflects the state of the industry at present and where we think inflation will be later in the year. So we are asking the members to vote for it. However, we will also be taking steps to ensure all members working under the pay agreement get the increase. Last year we had a lot of 'mopping up' to do. We will be supporting chapels and members in companies who refuse to pay the increase in line with the deal, through procedures and through Industrial Action if needs be."**

## I&C DEAL AT COMMUNISIS

An Information and Consultation Agreement has been reached between Unite and print group Communisis covering over 2,000 employees at six sites - Bath, Crewe, Leeds, Lisburn, Liverpool and Manchester. The agreement will give staff the legal rights to information and consultation, prior to the company making decisions and will give the workforce the right to have an input before decisions are made.

Unite National Officer, Vernon Robson, said he was pleased with the way the agreement was speedily concluded and added: **"This is a very important agreement as it was concluded on a group basis with the full co-operation and agreement of the senior management. We look forward to the agreement being implemented in a spirit of goodwill and co-operation to benefit both the employees and the company."**

## APPRENTICES URGED TO ENTER PROSKILLS AWARDS SCHEME

Print and Paper sector apprentices in England are being urged to enter an awards scheme run by Proskills, the sector skills council for the process and manufacturing industries.

The Proskills Apprenticeship Awards 2008, launched to coincide with Apprenticeship Week, which ran from 25-29 February, comprise three categories: Apprentice of the Year, Advanced Apprentice of the Year, and Personal Achiever of the Year. The awards are open to apprentices working in any of the industries under Proskills' remit including printing and papermaking. Entry forms can be found at [www.proskills.co.uk](http://www.proskills.co.uk). The closing date for entries is 30 April.

## SUN CHEMICALS NATIONAL AGREEMENT

Unite and printing ink manufacturer Sun Chemicals have negotiated a new National Agreement covering in-plant technicians, lab technicians and office and administration staff. This is the first agreement of its kind and not only provides for good terms and conditions for this key group of employees, it also allows more participation in key decision-making processes within the company.

The new national agreement provides for 37.5 hour working week; 27 days holiday from day one; in-plant allowance for cover; Overtime (more than 4 hours at T2) for all staff up to Senior Project Leader; 26 weeks full sick pay; a 2008 Pay award of 4.9%; Information and Consultation rights; guaranteed representation at national bargaining forums; Shift Premiums; Paternity Leave and an annual workplace reps meeting.

Unite has now launched an organising campaign to recruit members working under the new national agreement. For more details you can download information leaflets from the Unite website, visit (<http://www.unitetheunion.com/gpm>) or contact Sun Chemical Unite National Convenor Mike Clarke at [Michael.clarke@eu.sunchem.com](mailto:Michael.clarke@eu.sunchem.com)

## BLEAK TWO MONTHS FOR PRINT

January and February proved to provide a bleak start to 2008 for the printing industry. **Quebecor World** in Corby closed with the loss of over 250 jobs after a struggle by the receivers and Unite to find a buyer for the stricken Canadian owned plant. Customers finally pulled the plug after the parent company put the Corby site into the hands of Ernst & Young. A buyer could not be found and the plant was immediately closed.

Unite Assistant General Secretary Tony Burke placed the blame for the closure squarely at the door of the Canadian parent company. He said: **"For the second biggest printer in the world to cut one of its companies adrift as Quebecor did at Corby, destroying hundreds of people's lives in the process is appalling in anyone's book. In the run up to this there was a distinct lack of information from Quebecor and we had to watch as the company collapse before our eyes - no wonder our members are angry, confused and dismayed with the management of the company in Canada."**

Unite FOC at Corby, Martin Rueby, said: **"The workforce have been unceremoniously dumped on the scrapheap by an uncaring parent company. It's so much easier to get rid of a UK worker than any other European worker. The workforce at Quebecor World have made many sacrifices, with the management breaking agreements and making broken promises of investment. Without the promised investment the company got left behind in the market."**

**Keating Gravure** who made printing cylinders for the packaging industry with sites in Lancashire, North Wales, Bedford and Dublin also closed its doors with the loss of over 100 jobs after the owners, who only bought into the company in July 2007 closed the company with minimal notice. But there was more bad news to come for Unite members at their Dublin site. The factory was closed, staff sent home and no receiver was appointed leaving members with unpaid wages and only an unanswered mobile phone number to contact.

Brendan Byrne, Unite Regional Officer in Dublin said: **"We were told that the liquidator had been appointed and somebody would be calling that day. We waited for them to come, but no liquidators turned up and the door was locked. It's an absolute disgrace."** After pressure from Unite a receiver has now been appointed. A small number of jobs have been saved at the Brdley Fold plant. Regional Officer Phil Morgan who is dealing with the company sites in Mold, North Wales and Lancashire said: **"We will be asking Ernst & Young to look very closely into what has gone on at this company since the business was purchased."**

At **Wiltshires**, part of Trader Media Group in Bristol - 160 staff face the loss of their jobs as the company moved production to its sites in the North. At the time of writing the company are in 90 days consultation with Unite.

Finally, the press room at **Polestar Greaves** in Scarborough is due to close in early April, following an agreement reached by National Officer Vernon Robson along with Andy Hogg, Regional Officer and chapel reps. Tony Burke said: **"The closure of Greaves is a sad event not only for our members and their families but for the industry. It was a long established company with one of the best chapels I have ever met. However, even after the company survived six years ago following a possible closure, the development of the gravure 'super plant' in Sheffield, I think, was when everyone recognised that Greaves was destined for eventual closure."**

**"These job losses and others in smaller companies in print and packaging means we lost over 1000 jobs from the industry in the first two months of the year. It is the worst I can remember in the sixteen years I have been a full time official. These are well paid, skilled jobs and it's yet another hammer blow for the industry and manufacturing in the UK."**



## UNITE ROCK'S AGAINST RACISM

Unite will be the main sponsor for the biggest anti-racism event in for over 30 years. We have joined up with 'Love Music Hate Racism' to mark the 30 year anniversary of the iconic 1978 Rock Against Racism carnival and march.

The event will take place in East London's Victoria Park on Sunday 27th April with Babyshambles as headliners. Also on the bill will be The Paddingtons, Roll Deep, Fionn Regan, Natty and Ace and Invisible. More bands and artists are to be added in the run up to the event.

Derek Simpson, Unite Joint General Secretary, said: **"Events like these that bring people together are vital to helping suppress the threat we face from racist organisations. These organisations are attempting to gain votes by playing off people's disenchantment with politics and their insecurities."**

Original 1978 headliner Tom Robinson is confirmed to appear. Don Letts and his production company Brassneck TV will be directing a documentary and live film of the event. For the latest on LMHR Carnival '08 visit <http://www.lmhrcarnival.com>

## UNITE BALLS TO POVERTY KICKS OFF FOR 2008

For the third year running the Amicus Foundation has agreed to sponsor the Balls to Poverty trip to South Africa. In March, 28 students, four of whom are female, from South Nottingham College will be providing football coaching sessions and distributing footballs to over 8,000 school-aged children in the townships of the Cape Town area.

In the last three years the students, with the help of donations from Unite members, branches, chapels and staff, have distributed 10,000 footballs across the townships. The long-term aim is to have distributed 35,000 footballs by the end of the World Cup month when South Africa hosts the 2010 finals. Unite's GPM sector donated £20,000 in 2007 to the project.

activities of trade unions and deliver positive help to developmental projects both internationally and in the UK. Derek Simpson, Unite Joint General Secretary, said: **"Unite is proud of its association with Balls to Poverty. Unite have sponsored this project for three years now and have been impressed at how it has grown and inspired youngsters to take positive experiences back into their own communities."**

**"Unite believes that change starts at the grass roots and that powerful things can be achieved by engaging with people through their universal**

**experiences, be achieved by engaging with people through their universal experiences, be that through football, through politics or peoples' experiences at work."**

Balls to Poverty has attracted interest from government, highlighted by a recent visit to the college by sports minister Gerry Sutcliffe

MP. The minister met with the students who are going

to South Africa and officials from the college who outlined the positive outcomes of the project.



### How can you help?

The students are currently doing a final push to raise money for the 8,000 footballs that will be distributed. If wish to make a donation either as a chapel or individually you can send a cheque payable to: South Nottingham College (on reverse of cheque put 'Buy A Ball') and post it to: South Nottingham College, West Bridgford Centre, Greythorn Drive, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 7GA.

For more information contact: [martin.scanlon@unitetheunion.com](mailto:martin.scanlon@unitetheunion.com) or [bernard.rutter@unitetheunion.com](mailto:bernard.rutter@unitetheunion.com)



## WORLD BOOK DAY

Unite is encouraging all workplaces to organise a book event or display on 6th March. Set up a book shelf or centre at your workplace to exchange, display or just give away books. World Book Day is held every year to celebrate the joy of reading, and to encourage people to read and explore the pleasures of books by providing them with the opportunity to have a book of their own.

This year, ten new Quick Reads titles have been introduced and include titles by bestselling authors and celebrities, including Adele Parks, Gordon Ramsey, Colin Jackson and John Bird. In the last three years, Quick Reads have firmly established themselves as the perfect books for people who have lost the reading habit or who struggle to read long and complicated books. Above all, they have proved that reading can be fun.

The Union has purchased a set of display stands that contain 60 books written for adults and over 200 children's books for each Regional Office. Similar display stands will also be in each of the learning centres. Encourage your employer, even if you don't have a workplace learning centre, to make available a set of Quick Read books. A display stand containing all the books costs £122.50. Or set up your own display; you could start book swaps or book sales for charity.

Publicity is being produced for the day and will take the form of stickers to be placed inside books bought by the union and bookmarks to be given out to members and potential members. More details are available from your regional office.

**Members who wish to register to receive a copy of the ebulletin, please send an e-mail to [ashraf.choudhury@unitetheunion.com](mailto:ashraf.choudhury@unitetheunion.com) and it will be sent to you once published. All ebulletins, including the Unite GPM Sector Health & Safety ebulletin and the Unite GPM Sector Learning & Skills ebulletin, can be downloaded (in PDF) from the Unite website, please visit [www.unitetheunion.com/gpm](http://www.unitetheunion.com/gpm)**

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## STORA ENSO CLOSURES IN FINLAND

Unite has sent messages of support to the Finnish paper union, Paperilitto in their fight against Stora Enso's decision to shut down paper mills in Kemijarvi and Summa as well as one machine at Anjala. Further cuts are also threatening part of its Swedish operations. Unions in Finland have called on the company to sell the mills to investors who are ready to continue production. They are also counting on intervention by the Finnish government (a key shareholder) to persuade Stora Enso to do so.

Unite has called on Stora Enso, as well as the Government of Finland, to live up to their responsibilities towards all Stora Enso employees, their families and the communities in which they live. Stora Enso, based in Finland, is a major multinational integrated paper, packaging and forest products company. It has 44 000 employees in more than 40 countries on five continents. It has an annual production capacity of 16.5 million tonnes of paper and board.

## UNITE HELPS THAI UNION REP TO GET REINSTATED

Thanetn Jhanluechai a union rep at the recently organised SIG Packaging plant in Rayong, Thailand, was reinstated following suspension and possible dismissal for advising his members on holiday arrangements.

SIG is part of the Rank Group, which is owned by Graham Hart who owns the Carter Holt Harvey Group in New Zealand. The reinstatement came after meetings between the Thai union and Hart's global Human Resources Manager and followed a global campaign of union action that included the New Zealand Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union (EPMU) together with Union Network International, ICEM and Unite.

The Thailand SIG Workers Union is affiliated to the Pulp and Paper Federation of Thailand who are affiliated to UNI, the Global Union Federation that represents printing and packaging workers and ICEM which

represents pulp and paper workers.

In November last year a global campaign began for the reinstatement of Thanetn. This saw demonstrations at New Zealand Embassy's and letters being delivered by unions to NZ embassies in Australia, Japan, Turkey, Switzerland, Panama, Argentina, UK and the United States. Unite also wrote to NZ prime minister Helen Clarke asking for her to intervene. Within 3 weeks Thanetn had been reinstated.

Tony Burke Unite AGS said: **"The campaign for the reinstatement of Thanetn, who had done nothing wrong, has been a great example of international union solidarity. A strong response from unions made this a successful campaign. The New Zealand print union were able to use their good relations with the SIG Packaging to make representations at the top level to get Thanetn his job back."**