

Industry Profile

Employment

The UK's financial services sector employs over a million people and generates a turnover equivalent to 14% of GDP. The insurance industry is a major player in this key sector.

The insurance industry:

- is the largest in Europe and the third largest in the world;
- pays out £300 million a day in insurance benefits and claims;
- accounts for 20% of investment in the stock market;
- 354,000 people, a third of all financial services jobs..

Trade Unions

Amicus currently has 50,000 members in the insurance sector.

UNIFI will be bringing 150,000 more insurance and banking members.

Employers

The insurance market is dominated by a handful of giant institutions - the largest ten motor insurers handle 87% of motor business.

Key players in the industry where Amicus is organised include:

Alba Life, Allianz-Cornhill, Aviva, AXA, Britannic Assurance, Churchill and Direct Line (part of the Royal Bank of Scotland), Co-Operative Insurance Services, DAS Legal Expenses, Friends Provident, UK Life Services (formerly AMP), Legal & General, NFU Mutual, Prudential, Royal London, Royal & Sun Alliance, Scottish Widows (part of LloydsTSB).

Current Issues and Activities

Offshoring

The offshoring of tens of thousands of service sector jobs is the biggest threat currently facing finance sector employees. Offshoring could have a devastating impact on the UK economy.

It is vital that the government, business and the unions get together to devise a strategy for mitigating the effects of offshoring.

Following lobbying by Amicus, offshoring inquiries have been held by the Trade & Industry Select Committee, the DTI and the European Parliament.

We will continue to lobby the Government once the reports are published in the summer.

At industrial level, the Amicus finance sector has negotiated groundbreaking offshoring agreements with the Prudential, Axa and Royal & Sun Alliance.

Organising and Industrial Relations

Aviva- The agreement is currently under threat from the company who are in the process of circumnavigating the union through new arrangements (in anticipation of the I&C Directive). We are organising a major recruitment campaign to strengthen our position within NU.

Royal London has also announced its intention to replace the union negotiating procedures with new staff representative structures, again using the anticipated I&C Regulations as the tool.

Corporate social responsibility

The Amicus finance sector will be raising awareness amongst workplace representatives about how we can use CSR as a negotiating tool.

We will be highlighting examples of best practice such as the social charter signed by AXA's EWC, and Legal & General's CSR Committee (a sub-committee of the main Board committee), on which an Amicus seconded representative has a seat.