



NATIONAL NEWSPAPER REPS MEET TO DISCUSS STRATEGY AND ORGANISING

A national network has been established as the first organisational activity arising from a seminar attended by Unite union reps across the National Newspaper Industry at Quorn to develop an organising strategy and how to respond to the major changes in the workplace.

Unite reps shared information and experiences on an email network that will also provide Unite Reps easy access to data about the industry. Reps from the printing and publishing sections of the industry discussed issues such as agency and temporary workers, Information and Consultation, organising and co-ordinated collective bargaining.

Unite National Officer, Steve Sibbald has been keen to restore cross company and chapel communications: **"Whether our members are facing the challenges posed by new media or agency workers the ability to swap information and learn from each others experiences is fundamental to the union being both effective and consistent.**

"The establishment of this network will go a long way to developing a collective approach to the challenges facing us. For some time now there has been a tendency to respond on the basis of individual companies but this has led to an imbalance in terms and conditions. We have some excellent Unite Reps and it is our intention to encourage a greater cohesion between them."

During the two-day programme Unite reps debated the best ways forward for unionised labour. Newspapers remain highly profitable products but the industry has seen regular reductions in the numbers of employees over



the last twenty years with technology, product changes, and significant productivity gains all taking their toll. But as Steve says: **"Newspapers are one of the few UK products that are not threatened by off shoring just as nobody wants one made yesterday. They are an important part of our knowledge society, culture and economy and Unite is determined to increase the influence of the workplace Chapels."**



Unite reps from across the National Newspaper Industry at Quorn

PRINT TRAINING LEVY ON THE AGENDA

The UK printing industry is facing pressure from Unite for a training levy after it emerged that the government's Train to Gain scheme was in danger of missing its targets by two years. Unite has put the issue of a statutory training levy back on the agenda after the Learning and Skills Council revealed that the free skills brokerage system is falling behind on its target to ensure that 90% of adults have level-two qualifications by 2020.

Train to Gain was launched after last year's Leitch Review of Skills, which called for legislation to force firms to train their staff if enough progress had not been made by 2010.

Bernard Rutter head of learning and skills for Unite's GPM sector and the trade union member of the board of the sector skills council for Print and Papermaking, Pro Skills, has warned that unless it starts to make use of government funded programmes, the levy will come back onto the agenda. In an article in the print industry weekly Print Week Bernard, said: **"We would welcome statutory legislation that ensures that companies invest in their workforce. We have tried all we can to get the print industry interested in training."** He revealed that just five companies have shown an interest in funding from the current Learning and Skills initiative, out of more than 140 approached."

Terry Watts, chief executive of print sector skills council Proskills, said:

"We need more printers to do more training. Smaller businesses need to understand what training is available. There is a lot of government money for printers."



Bernie Rutter, head of learning and skills for Unite's GPM sector

HAIN URGED "NOT TO FAIL DISABLED WORKERS"

The future of thousands of disabled workers' jobs hangs in the balance as unions representing Remploy workers rally to urge Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Peter Hain "not to fail disabled workers" at the last public event before he is expected to make a decision about the future of Remploy.

Disabled workers from factories around the UK lobbied MPs at the rally at the House of Commons last week, urging MPs to press ministers to deliver on the new direction agreed at Labour Party Conference based on choice for disabled workers and public procurement to ensure a flow of work to keep the Remploy factories open.

The unions have slammed the failed management of Remploy who have proposed the closure of 28 factories, which would result in the sacking of 2,000 disabled workers. An alternative business plan has been presented to the Government by the unions that proposes sweeping rationalisation to cut running costs, and entails the Government to play its part in securing an additional £50million in public procurement contracts out of an annual total of £126billion.



"SUSTAINED ORGANISING CAMPAIGN" WINS UNION RIGHTS AT DERRY NEWS

Following a sustained organising campaign in Derry News, part of the River Media Group, the Industrial Court in Northern Ireland has granted Unite recognition at the Derry News in Northern Ireland. The Derry News was established in February 2001 and was acquired by River Media in July 2006 and over the last six years Derry News has grown from a small family concern to a prosperous business and Unite membership has grown with it.

Joanne McWilliams, Unite Regional Organiser, said: **"This Organising campaign was a great success for the members and could not have succeeded without their support and indeed, involvement throughout. It only goes to prove that member lead campaigns work."**

Unite Representative at The Derry News, Cathy Feeney, said: **"We currently have over 65% membership and we expect more to join once the recognition agreement has been signed. We now have members in every department from printing to sales and administration and I am sure that we can create an organisation that will deliver real benefits to our new members."**

UNITE AND USW MERGER TAKES A STEP CLOSER

The potential merger between Unite and USW took a step nearer in November when USW Officials and lay reps met with Unite officials and lay reps from the papermaking industry over a four day period at Unite's training facility in Quorn.

The four days included an exchange of information on multi nationals within the papermaking industry and an explanation of the new national agreement between Unite and the CPI and exchange of information on Health & Safety and Learning & Skills in the UK and US/Canada papermaking industries.

Heading up the meetings were Unite AGS Tony Burke, along with National papermaking Officer Peter Ellis and the USW's Mike Bolton from District 2 (Wisconsin) along with Sally Feistel and Laurie Aldridge lay rep from SCA and Mike Heinritz from Kimberly Clark.

USW colleagues also visited the Kimberly Clark mill in Northfleet, Kent where the company gave a presentation and USW delegation were able to tour the mill and meet with Unite members. Other meetings took place between Unite reps in the papermaking industry and the USW delegation.

A visit to the House of Commons was also arranged for our USW colleagues along with a presentation of Unite's political work.

Tony Burke, Unite AGS, commented: **"This was an excellent opportunity not only to exchange information but to learn about each others Unions. One thing is clear, the problems that Unite members face are almost identical to those faced by USW members in the USA and Canada. We're dealing with the same multi national employers who are able to move work around the globe as well as opening and closing new businesses at will.**

"The only way that we will be able to combat this globalisation is by having a strong global union and I believe Unite reps that attended the meetings with our colleagues from the USW recognise the need for a strong global union."

Unite National Officer Peter Ellis said: **"We had a first hand illustration of how working people can gather strength and support from each other and the four days we spent together was living testimony to the need to cement ties**

between our two organisations.

"We parted company in the firm belief that merger talks between Unite and the USW were the way towards a global unity that can only be of benefit to workers in industries dominated, as they are, by powerful conglomerates across the world."

Mike Bolton, USW Official, added: **"Our members want to provide a living for their families, put their kids through school and have a comfortable retirement. They don't want a whole lot, just to live comfortably, but companies want to take that away. The only way to stop that is to unite globally because if we don't they will move jobs on to worse places."**



wishes all our members
a merry Christmas
and a prosperous
2008!

QUEBECOR WORLD AND ROTO SMEETS MERGE – UNION LEADER BANNED FROM QW INDIAN PLANT

On 7th November, the Dutch high-value print company RSDB acquired all the European printing operations of Quebecor World thus creating the largest pan-European print company called 'Roto Smeets Quebecor'.

Quebecor World's print and print finishing facilities in Europe are based in France, Belgium, Spain, Scandanavia, Austria, Germany and in Corby in the UK. Under the deal, Canadian-owned Quebecor World will retain a 29.9% stake in the business in the form of a share issue, while Roto Smeets will pay £129m to Quebecor World. The acquisition more than doubles the size of Roto Smeets and will, according to the firm, create the largest independent gravure and offset print group in Europe in terms of production capacity.

Unite Assistant General Secretary Tony Burke said: **"The deal puts to an end months of speculation and uncertainty for Unite members in Corby and QW workers throughout Europe. But it was not a surprise. Quebecor World has been in play for some time with previous rumours of a merger with Polestar and others. We will be meeting with union reps from across Quebecor World and Roto Smeets from across Europe as soon as is possible**

and seeking meetings with the new company."

In another development involving Quebecor what was meant to be a straightforward fact finding visit to a Quebecor printing plant in India for members of the Union Network International Executive and UNI Graphical quickly turned sour when the local management barred one of the visiting group. The company took exception to Talwar Madan, who is a member of the UNI Graphical Executive and a leading member of the All Indian Newspaper Employees Federation that has launched a drive to step up union organising in multinational companies in India such as Quebecor.

On clear solidarity principles the UNI group changed their plans and, instead of visiting the plant, held a gate meeting for workers and out came the UNI banners. Inside the plant instant overtime was laid on - with no work - to keep workers from joining the meeting. Talking to workers the UNI Graphical team discovered that they don't have access to drinkable water in the plant, said Duncan Brown from Quebecor's home country Canada, who promised an immediate approach to group management over the incident.

THE PRINTING INDUSTRY PENSION SCHEME (PIPS)

What is the Printing Industry Pension Scheme?

The Printing Industry Pension Scheme was first established in 1986 to provide pension arrangements for companies in the printing industry that did not offer company schemes. Now, 21 years on, the scheme has over 250 participating companies, with funds of over £100 million under management.

The ethos of PIPS is to provide competitive pension arrangements for the industry, with added value, giving confidence to employers/employees through the endorsement of the BPIF and Unite. PIPS is at the forefront of promoting the Government's policy on Combined Pension Forecasts for members, and now supplies CPFs to all members on an annual basis.

What is the pensions future for PIPS, employees and employers?

Following a report by the Pensions Commission, the Government have brought in proposals for a National Pensions Savings Scheme (NPSS) which is due to start in 2012. When the legislation is set in place (Pensions Bill due in December 2007), this will mean that every employer will automatically enrol employees into the scheme and pay a 3% contribution (of band earnings) into their account.

What is the future for PIPS?

Once the exemption criteria are known, the PIPS management committee and advisers will ensure we will continue to offer a good value PIPS scheme which is user friendly and attractive to both employees and employers. The new Personal Accounts regime is the biggest change in the history of pension provision and the printing industry needs to be aware of what's coming and be ready for it. PIPS will certainly be ready!

For more information, contact the advisers – Meridan on 0800 132100, Bentley Jennison on 020 7920 3203, or Barry Dixon at barrydixon99@hotmail.com or visit www.printstakeholder.com



FINNISH PAPER UNION TO FIGHT STORA ENSO JOB CUTS

The Finnish Paper Worker's Union, Paperiliitto, is to fight Stora Enso's decision to make 1,700 job cuts. Paperiliitto president Jouko Ahonen claimed the announcement from the paper company to close mills and make sweeping job cuts, around 1,400 of which would be made in Finland, was **"a shock to the company's employees and gives rise to great concern about the future"**.

The company said restructuring was necessary to remain competitive, but Ahonen claimed media reports suggest improving prospects for the paper industry which haven't been accounted for in Stora Enso's plans. **"They can and must be considered in the coming consultation procedures and in making the final decisions,"** he said. Unite, United Steelworkers and Union Network International have pledged the Finnish union their support.

PAY ROUND – 2007

This is to remind all Unite members working in commercial printing under the British Printing Industries Federation National Agreement that the pay rise for 2007 was as follows: **Class I - £8.70, Class II - £7.83, Class III - £7.13.**

This equates to 3.3% on minimum rates. This percentage is also applicable to machine extras, and the pay increase should also apply to shift premium and overtime calculator rates.

In Scotland those members working under the Scottish Print Employers Federation, the Agreement for 2007 was: **Grade B - £8.59, Grade C - £7.73, Grade D - £7.09.**

This equates to 3.3% in minimum rates. The same provisions apply as in England, Wales and Northern Ireland in regard to shift and overtime premiums. A number of Chapels

have contacted local Officials and indicated that their companies had not or could not pay this year's pay increase.

We are pleased to report that a number of those companies have now settled the 2007 pay increase and a number of Chapels are in the process of balloting for industrial action to secure the pay increase.

If your Chapel have not secured the 2007 pay increase for the commercial print industry under the BPIF or SPEF, you should notify Andrea Przystupa via e-mail Andrea.Przystupa@unitetheunion.com or call 01332 548400 as soon as is possible. Where there has been a failure to pay the increase, even at this late stage, the matter will be referred to a local Full-Time Official to provide advice and assistance.

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