

HM Coastguard keep worker status after court ruling



HM coastguards will keep their hard-won worker status after an appeal by employers failed today [Wednesday].

The Court of Appeal agreed with an earlier ruling by the Employment Appeal Tribunal; that HM Coastguard officers are workers and a contract existed between the parties in circumstances where coastguards had the right to be remunerated for their activities.

In 2024, GMB won a landmark workers' rights case against the Maritime and Coastguard agency.

The hearing was regarding a coastguard officer – Martin Groom – whose membership was terminated in a meeting where a trade union official was not allowed to be present.



Mr Groom claimed this was in breach of the Employment Relations Act 1999 (ERA) – but to rely on the act had to prove he was a worker and not a volunteer.

Tushar Singh, GMB National Legal Officer, said:

“GMB welcomes the fact the Court of Appeal has affirmed the Employment Appeal Tribunal’s findings that our members in HMN Coastguard have workers status.

“The outcome of the case is hugely significant, with potential implications for the voluntary sector as a whole.”

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Member requiring help?

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