

GMB Congress 2005

CEC SPECIAL REPORT

A Framework for the Future of the GMB

INTRODUCTION

In this special report to Congress 2005, the Central Executive Council (CEC) makes a series of recommendations aimed at developing a framework for the future of the GMB. The CEC believes that the structural and other reforms that it recommends are an essential step towards rebuilding membership strength, encouraging greater membership involvement and thereby securing the future of our Union.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting of 6th July 2004, the CEC established a special task group to examine the national, sectional, regional and financial structures of the GMB. The full resolution that was passed by the CEC to establish the Task Group is at Appendix A.

The Task group membership comprised two members from each GMB Region, one of whom was also a member of the CEC, along with the President, Vice-President, General Secretary, and Deputy General Secretary. Additionally, the Task Group co-opted two members, nominated by the National Race Committee, from amongst the members elected to the CEC as Race Reserved Seats. The membership of the Task Group is listed at Appendix B.

The Task Group began by holding a series of meetings to discuss how it should proceed with its work in accordance with the terms of reference set by the CEC, and to identify the priority issues which it would need to focus on in its examination of the national, regional, sectional and financial structures of the Union.

CONSULTING THE MEMBERS

Following its initial discussions, the Task Group then issued a consultation document to obtain the wider views of the membership and inform its future discussions. The consultation period closed on 31st December 2004.

The Task Group sought views on specific questions, covering a total of 44 topics, throughout each of the following three subjects:

- A strategy for growth
- Democratic structures
- GMB finances

The 44 questions contained in the Task group consultation document are in Appendix C to this report.

Each Region was responsible for conducting its own internal consultation exercise. It was a matter for each Region how this was conducted, although the Task Group specified that as a minimum, consultation was to take place with: Branches; Regional Committees and Regional Councils; Regional Equal Rights Advisory Committees; Regional Race Committees, and officers and staff

employed within the Region. Each Region co-ordinated its own consultation exercise and collated the results into a single regional response which was then reported back to the Task Group through its two regional representatives.

The General Secretary was responsible for arranging and reporting back the results of the consultation that took place with: Sectional National Committees; the National Equal Rights Advisory Committee; the National Race Committee; the Retired Members and Spouses Association; the Officers Negotiating Committee; the National Staff Representatives Committee, and officers and staff employed at National Office and the National Administrative Unit.

REACHING A CONSENSUS

Following the consultation period, the Task Group held a special two-day meeting in January 2005. It took full account of the results of the consultation in the discussions that it held prior to reaching the conclusions and recommendations that it outlined in its interim report to the CEC.

The CEC subsequently held a special meeting in March 2005 to discuss the Task Group's interim report and recommendations. The recommendations are set out below in this report under three headings:

- a strategy for growth
- democratic structures
- GMB finances.

A STRATEGY FOR GROWTH

Campaigns, communications and marketing

The positive responses received to the range of questions posed in the consultation document about the Union's campaigning, communications and marketing activities demonstrated that there was a clear majority in favour of the GMB becoming a more effective campaigning union.

The consultation resulted in a wide variety of suggestions for campaigns on a number of different themes, and it is clear that the common aspiration or aim that all these suggestions reflected is for the GMB to become a more proactive and visible organisation through more effective campaigning and marketing.

The Task Group recognised that taking the measures required to achieve this objective will have resource implications that will need to be carefully examined. It acknowledged that it is the CEC's role and responsibility to determine periodically which campaigns are pursued as the Union's priorities and to take decisions about the resources necessary to support these.

There was very strong recognition of the need to strengthen communications at all levels throughout the organisation, with a majority in favour of an increased focus and resources dedicated to improved regional communications.

Recommendation 1

The CEC Communications Committee will examine how best to achieve improved communications at all levels throughout the organisation, and will incorporate into this examination an assessment of how best use can be made of information technology to assist with improving communications. Each Region should examine communications within the Region to inform the work of the Communications Committee.

Retention and servicing of members

The Task Group posed questions about whether the retention and servicing of existing members should be given a higher priority, and be as high a priority for the Union as recruitment of new members. It also considered whether the GMB's motto should be "Recruit, Organise and Train"?

The conclusion reached was that the GMB should place as much emphasis on the retention and servicing of existing members as it does to recruitment of new members. Both retention/servicing and recruitment are of equal importance to the overall objectives of the Union and should be viewed as complementary, not competing, activities. There is a 'virtuous circle' of recruitment, retention and servicing, and the Task Group believes that if as much effort is put into supporting the current membership as is put into recruiting new members this will pay dividends – the provision of an effective service to members will assist in achieving our recruitment aims.

There was no support whatsoever for the adoption of the motto "*Recruit, Organise and Train*". However, this was largely due to the acronym "*ROT*" that would result, rather than opposition to a new motto *per se*, and a variety of other suggestions were made for a possible motto that the GMB could adopt to reflect the Union's priority aims and objectives

Recommendation 2

The CEC recognises the strong consensus that retention and servicing of existing members should be given a higher priority, and will take proactive steps to ensure that this is reflected in the GMB's priorities. These proactive steps will include developing a system to allow the CEC to monitor the success of the Union's retention and servicing activities.

Young people and ethnic minorities

The Task Group sought views on two significant and sizeable groups within society, namely young people and ethnic minorities, which are recognised as being seriously under-represented within the ranks of the GMB – both as members and activists.

There was strong support for an increased focus on young people. It is clear that there is serious concern within the Union about the lack of involvement and "trade union consciousness" amongst young people, and a belief that the GMB needs to try and ensure that young people are educated on the role of trade

unions. To help address this, the majority favoured a campaign to lobby for the inclusion of trade union studies as part of the national educational curriculum.

The Task Group's view is that the GMB needs to examine how to develop a new strategy on young people – and that the development of this strategy must involve talking to, consulting with, and listening to, young people. However, the Union needs to be careful not to put any renewed focus on young people exclusively on those at school or university, and must not overlook the young people in the workplace who are potential members.

The Task Group view is that there needs to be some “joined up thinking” on the issues influencing and affecting the (lack of) involvement of both young people and ethnic minorities, as both of these groups are under-represented within the Union.

Recommendation 3

A CEC Race Task Group is already looking at ethnic minorities and how to attract more of them into membership of the GMB. The CEC will establish a special working group on young people, whose terms of reference will be to examine how to raise trade union awareness amongst young people, how to attract more young people into membership of the GMB and how to increase the participation of young people in the Union.

Education, training and support for activists

The Task Group consulted about whether better education, training and support for frontline workplace activists should be the Union's top priority, and posed a corresponding question asking whether the GMB should examine how we spend our money on education and training.

In response, there was a consensus that frontline workplace activists are the key to the future of the GMB and they should be trained to agreed common benchmark standards.

The Task group's view was that the GMB's approach should be based around the regional delivery of training for workplace activists, according to the aforementioned national standards. It is recognised that establishing and maintaining a system of national benchmarking will have resource implications that will need to be considered, and that the CEC Training Committee should have a role in overseeing the establishment of the national benchmarked standards.

The implications of this proposal being accepted are that there will no longer be any GMB advanced national training courses delivered nationally - ie that the Union will not seek to replace the GMB National College with any other national training centre. However, the policy proposed does not preclude any GMB regions collaborating with each other to achieve viable course numbers and run joint advanced courses – it is recognised that regions may not always have sufficient numbers to run a viable advanced course within the region. This will

ensure the continuation of the type of regional co-operation on training provision that is beginning to develop since the closure of the National College.

Recommendation 4

The CEC Training Committee will progress the development of education and training for workplace activists on the basis of the proposal outlined above.

Best Practice

The Task Group asked whether the Union should seek out best practices – e.g. branches that are active, recruiting and growing; recruitment and retention strategies that work; campaigns that bring success etc – and adopt them across the Union.

There was a clear agreement that the sharing of best practice must take place at all levels throughout the GMB. The Task Group considers that there is a need to foster a new spirit of co-operation within the GMB, and that this should be reflected in a clear policy statement on the sharing of best practice. Best practice should be adopted and implemented on a wide range of issues. The priority must be to find what works and implement it as widely as possible.

The Task Group recognised that good practices already exist, but they are not always shared as well as they might be.

Recommendation 5

The CEC will ask for examples of the good practice that already exist at all levels throughout the Union (nationally, regionally, at branches and in workplaces) to be gathered and presented to the CEC. In particular, examples of recruitment and retention strategies that work should be identified. The aim should be to identify what works most effectively and implement it as best practice throughout the GMB as widely as possible.

Increasing Participation of GMB Members

A wide range of views were expressed on this issue, and a number of suggestions were received about how the Union could increase the participation of members in GMB activities.

The Task Group believe that developing a sense of identity amongst members with their Union is the key to our future, and that the range and volume of responses to the question of how to achieve this reflect the sense of importance that active members place upon achieving this. It is clear from the consultation that improving participation is viewed by the majority as crucial to the GMB's future prospects of being a successful and effective union.

The Task Group recognise this to be one of the most important challenges facing the GMB – arguably the most important challenge. The issue of improving levels of membership participation relates closely to the terms of reference that the CEC set when it established the Task Group – namely to address the question: *“how can the Union best meet the challenges of organising and*

involving as many members and prospective members during the next ten years to ensure growth and wider member involvement as possible?"

The Task group concluded that the importance of increasing membership participation is such that a further period of widespread consultation is necessary to allow the the generation and submission of more ideas and suggestions from active members throughout the GMB. It considers that a further consultation exercise will, in itself, encourage and allow increased participation in the Union's activities.

Recommendation 6

The CEC will make arrangements for further consultation with members at branch, regional and national level, to ensure further discussion and debate about how to achieve increased membership participation.

Developing new recruitment strategies

The Task Group considered the responses to the following series of questions about whether and how the Union should best adapt our recruitment targets and activities.

Should we seek to develop new strategies that allow us to target and recruit in small to medium companies and in the growing parts of the service economy? Should the Union look again at the recruitment targets that we have? Is there further scope in all sectors of the economy and should we identify priorities in manufacturing, private services and public services? How do we achieve 100% membership in every workplace where the GMB has recognition?

The response to these questions indicated that there is a clear and widespread recognition that the Union needs to develop a strategic response to the economic and industrial developments that have created new recruitment opportunities amongst the working population.

The Task Group noted that the General Secretary had recently established an Organising Working Group to identify effective strategic responses to the challenge of increasing GMB membership levels amongst the sectors that offer the Union the best prospects for sustained growth.

Recommendation 7

The CEC will refer these issues to the recently established Organising Working Group for its consideration.

Improving our focus on the workplace

There was strong support for the focus of the GMB to be more strongly centred on the workplace, with more resources, effort and time put into the work that the Union carries out in members' workplaces.

Recommendation 8

The CEC recommends that the GMB should adopt and implement this increased workplace focus as *policy*, and will refer this matter in the first instance to the Recruitment & Organisation Committee for the Committee to identify how to progress this.

GMB activities and their value to members

There was unequivocal support in favour of the Union examining its current activities and assessing their value to GMB members.

The Task Group considered that this should, in any case, be an on-going part of what the GMB does and that the CEC, by establishing the Task Group, had demonstrated that this was the case.

Recruitment of GMB Officials

The responses to the consultation document recognised that the recruitment process for GMB Officials needs to be reviewed.

The Task Group took into account that a Management sub-group had recently been established to examine the Union's recruitment process and procedures.

Recommendation 9

The CEC recommends that this sub-group should continue its deliberations and to report its findings as soon as possible.

DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES

GMB Structures

A majority supported an examination of GMB structures and the layers that these incorporate to see if they are still relevant and whether we need all of them.

The Task Group was of the view that these issues are being addressed by the matters that, throughout this report, it recommended should be referred to the various CEC Committees and working groups.

Branches

There was a mixed response, with no clear consensus emerging, to the question posed by the Task Group asking whether the Union should consider the expansion of community branches. This appeared to reflect, in part, a degree of uncertainty about what a community branch is.

There was, however, strong support for the need to increase branch activity.

The Task Group noted that following the adoption of the Special Report to Congress 2001, '*Fresh Start for Branches 2001*', that this is already GMB Congress policy.

Recommendation 10

The CEC recommends that:

- (i) **Midlands & East Coast region be asked to prepare a short summary document describing and defining the principles of a community branch. This document would then be distributed by the CEC to regions for onward distribution to branches in order to help develop understanding and inform and stimulate discussion and debate on the subject of community branches.**
- (ii) **Regions are asked to report to the CEC on progress to date to implement the GMB policy '*Fresh Start for Branches 2001*', and for each region's report to outline what steps will be taken to progress implementation further where this has not yet been achieved.**

Nationally Serviced Branches

The consultation exercise resulted in strong support for a review of the current arrangements in regard to all nationally serviced branches, providing that further consultation took place. The consultation exercise also showed a strong majority in favour of consideration being given to returning this membership to the Regions, where it is believed that it could be better serviced.

Recommendation 11

There will be a full examination of all nationally serviced branches by the Recruitment & Organisation Committee. This examination will be conducted with full consultation with the members of the nationally serviced branches and the Regions.

The Regional Structure

The response to the consultation underlined the need for regions to remain part of the Union's structure as currently constituted, and for the current number of regions to remain unchanged. However, there was support for a "tidying up" exercise on regional boundaries.

Recommendation 12

The CEC will examine the issue of "tidying up" some regional boundaries where any alterations to these could enhance and improve the service to GMB members.

Sections

The responses to the questions posed by the Task Group about GMB sections revealed that the majority favoured a reduction, but not abolition of, the sections.

The Task Group's view was that there should be a reduction to three sections, that these should be based around Public Services, Private Services and Manufacturing, and that these sections should hold sectional conferences.

In the event of the Task Group's recommendation being accepted by Congress 2005, it took the view that the matter of any transitional arrangements that will be necessary to achieve the reduction should be referred to the CEC Recruitment & Organisation Committee.

The Task Group was of the view that Industrial Conferences would be a necessity under a structure comprised of the three sections proposed, in order to allow and encourage the active participation of specific industrial groups of members within the new structure.

Recommendation 13

The CEC recommends that:

- (i) there should be a reduction to three sections based around Public Services, Private Services and Manufacturing, and that these sections should hold sectional conferences.**
- (ii) the CEC Recruitment & Organisation Committee progresses this matter, and in doing so considers the creative use of industrial conferences under the new sectional structure to encourage greater participation by the members in the work of the Union.**

GMB Congress

The majority of respondents were in favour of a return to an annual GMB Congress.

Recommendation 14

The CEC recommends that there should be a return to an annual Congress and that the 'traditional' existing structure remains. Further, that Congress should debate the implications of this proposal, and consider a variety of options for the future running of an annual Congress, taking into account factors such as the location, timing and overall cost.

The Central Executive Council and Regional Councils

The consultation exercise resulted in split views on the question of whether the CEC and Regional Councils should be reduced in size. However, the Task Group viewed the positive response on the subject of whether elections to these bodies should be on a regional (rather than a sectional) basis as a "cry for a change", which supports the need for an examination of the size and effectiveness of these important decision-making bodies.

There was no support for any change to the current system whereby only members of Regional Councils are eligible for election to the CEC.

Recommendation 15

The CEC recommends that:

- (i) an examination should take place of the size and effectiveness of the CEC and Regional Councils and;**
- (ii) the current system whereby only members of Regional Councils are eligible to stand for election to the CEC should be maintained.**

The GMB rulebook

In response to the question of whether the Union should review our rulebook and identify those rules which are either no longer relevant or act as an impediment to our growth and success, the majority viewpoint was that a review and overhaul of the GMB's rulebook is necessary. There is a strong opinion that the rulebook should be written in plain English.

During its discussions, the Task Group took into account that the recommendations contained in its special report to Congress, if accepted, would also result in a number of necessary rule revisions to facilitate the changes to the Union's structures being proposed.

The Task Group considered it necessary to establish a special working party to review the rulebook at an appropriate time. The purpose of the working party would be to identify any contents of the rulebook that are irrelevant and an impediment to the GMB's success, not whether people 'like' the rules themselves. The Task Group recognises that only GMB Congress has the authority to change the Union's rules.

The legal implications of any proposed rule changes must be carefully considered, and the working party would need a balance of members to give full consideration to the issues involved. For example, as well as senior officials such as the General Secretary and a Regional Secretary, the working group should include lay members and/or officials.

Recommendation 16

The CEC will establish a working party to review the rulebook (at an appropriate time) following Congress 2005.

GMB Election Rules

There was an overwhelmingly positive response in support of a review of GMB election rules to allow campaigning and canvassing for all future elections. The Task Group recommends that the CEC decides the action necessary to proceed in the light of this information.

Recommendation 17

The CEC has established an Election Working Group chaired by the Vice President to review GMB election rules for future elections, and recommends that any CEC decision should await the outcome of the Working Group's report.

GMB FINANCES

Financial Restructuring

The results of the consultation on this issue were that a re-structuring of the Union's finances should take place.

The Task Group considers that:

- the current funding split between the Regions and National Office should be reviewed;
- there should be a new method of accounting so that Regions have complete control of their budgets and can properly manage their finances;
- accounting procedures should be simplified so all members can understand them;
- the Union's money should be held and spent in the Regions and;
- the current practice of Regions spending money and then sending 50% of any surplus to National Office should be reviewed.

Recommendation 18

The CEC recommends that the Finance Committee and Senior Managers review all the financial restructuring issues identified by the Task Group with the aim of identifying appropriate reforms that can be implemented immediately and, in the case of reforms requiring changes to Union Rules, recommending detailed Rule Amendments for the CEC to propose to the next GMB Congress. Senior Managers have already taken preliminary steps so that the financial restructuring review can proceed quickly should Congress 2005 accept this recommendation.

GMB Expenditure

The responses to the questions posed on GMB expenditure reflected clear support for the principle that GMB members should ultimately decide how we spend our money. There was a diverse range of views on the various ways that the Union's membership income could be utilised to further the union's aims and objectives.

The Task Group consider that a starting point would be to identify and examine unproductive areas of expenditure, and believe that the adoption of a more simplified form of accounting procedure (see *financial restructuring* above) would assist this process.

Recommendation 19

The CEC will look at all areas of expenditure to identify those that are unproductive and to make recommendations that these practices are stopped, to free up resources for direct servicing of members and ensuring the growth of the Union.

The National Administrative Unit

The consultation displayed widespread support for a review of the National Administration Unit (NAU), and for a return of its current functions to the Regions.

The Task Group considered that the implications of the return to Regions of the NAU's current functions need to be carefully examined. The Task Group noted that a review of the NAU had been on-going for some time, and expressed its concern at the delay in this review reaching its conclusion.

Recommendation 20

The CEC considered the report from the NAU Review Group on 19 April 2005 and endorsed its conclusions and recommendations. Action is already under way to implement the recommendations, notably identifying a Regional Secretary to work with the NAU and Regions in encouraging employers to switch to direct debit and to increase the use of electronic data transfer.

Review of GMB Costs Centres

There was widespread support for a review to determine whether the GMB costs centres give value for money. The Task Group considers that in making the recommendations contained in this report it has, in effect, taken the action necessary to ensure that the value for money given to GMB members has been fully reviewed.

Branch Commission

The results of the consultation were inconclusive about whether a review of branch commission payments should take place.

The Task Group's view was that nevertheless the Finance Committee of the CEC should conduct such a review. This conclusion was reached after taking into account the potential equalities issues that might arise from the payment of differing rates of branch commission throughout the Union.

Recommendation 21

The CEC Finance Committee will conduct a review of branch commission payments.

Members' Benefits

There was a clear and strong consensus that the Union should consider upgrading members' benefits.

Recommendation 22

The CEC Finance Committee will conduct a full review of members' benefits to consider upgrading them. The review will be based upon all the relevant data and information available on current benefits.

Direct Debit Membership

The consultation resulted in strong support for the proposal that the Union should consider how best to increase the number of members paying their subscriptions by direct debit. There was less appetite (albeit a slight majority) for the idea that members be given incentives to convert.

The Task Group considered that giving incentives to convert to direct debit could create a sense of unfairness amongst those members already paying their subscriptions in this manner. It was of the view that this is a matter to be dealt with on a regional basis, rather than seeking to prescribe a uniform approach.

Recommendation 23

Regions should examine how to increase the number of members paying by direct debit, and whether incentives to convert to direct debit should be offered in the Region.

APPENDIX A

The CEC agreed, at its meeting of 6th July 2004, the following motion:

1. The CEC authorise the establishment of a special CEC Task Group to examine the National, Sectional, Regional and Financial Structures of the Union.
2. The Task group shall comprise of two members per Region of which one must be a CEC member.
3. The President, Vice-President, General Secretary, Deputy General Secretary shall be members of the Task Group.
4. The Task Group will be provided with such administrative support and financial or statistical information as it requires in order to examine its task.
5. Each Regional Committee/Council and National Sectional Committees should make submissions to the Task Group.

6. The Group should aim to establish at least an interim report for the CEC by no later than January 2005.
7. In the event of any proposed changes to existing rules or structures of the Union the CEC will consult with all Sectional Committees and Regional Councils prior to any final report being prepared for Congress 2005.
8. The Task Group's Terms of Reference are "How can the Union best meet the challenges of organising and involving as many members and prospective members during the next ten years to ensure growth and wider member involvement".

APPENDIX B

MEMBERS OF THE CEC SPECIAL TASK GROUP

Mary Turner	President
Malcolm Sage	Vice-President
Kevin Curran	General Secretary
Debbie Coulter	Deputy General Secretary
Linda Clarke	Birmingham & West Midlands Region
Nigel Smith	Birmingham & West Midlands Region
Kevin Flanagan	Lancashire Region
Sheila McKane	Lancashire Region
Doug Henry*	Liverpool, North Wales & Irish Region
Sue Lee *	Liverpool, North Wales & Irish Region
Bob Crosby*	London Region
Sandra Vincent	London Region
Andy Worth	Midland & East Coast Region
Les White	Midland & East Coast Region
Jean Chaplow	Northern Region
William Hughes	Northern Region
Pauline Russell	GMB Scotland
Cathy Murphy	GMB Scotland
Derrick Baker	Southern Region
Sarah Hamlin	Southern Region
Allan Garley	South Western Region
Don McGregor*	South Western Region
Jerry Nelson	Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region
Kath Manning	Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region
Peter Foley	CEC Race Reserved Seat
Samanda Caveney	CEC Race Reserved Seat

* = substituted

*Doug Henry – substituted by Paul Evans at two meetings

*Sue Lee – substituted by Jim Philbin at two meetings

*Bob Crosby – substituted by Gary Doolan at one meeting

*Don McGregor – substituted by Sheila Bearcroft at three meetings

APPENDIX C

CEC TASK GROUP CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

A STRATEGY FOR GROWTH

1. Should more focus and resources be directed at GMB campaigns, such as the “Keep Public Services Public” campaign, to raise GMB visibility in the media and among working people?
2. Should retention and servicing be given a higher priority and be as high a priority as recruitment? Should the GMB’s motto be “Recruit, Organise and Train”?
3. Should we launch a new campaign – with the TUC – on manufacturing?
4. Should the GMB invest in merchandise and materials such as posters, literature and badges to increase our visibility and for use as recruitment tools?
5. Should there be an increased focus on young people? Should we get back into schools and universities and seek to educate young people on the role of trade unions? Should the GMB campaign to have trade union studies made part of the national curriculum?
6. As frontline workplace activists are the key to the future of the GMB, should support and better training for workplace activists be the Union’s number one priority in the future? Should improved communication with these activists – from all levels of the union – be made a top priority?
7. Should the Union seek out best practices – e.g. branches that are active, recruiting and growing; recruitment and retention strategies that work; campaigns that bring success etc – and adopt them across the Union? There should be no ‘sacred cows’ or fear of upsetting any vested interests, the only priority is finding what works and implementing it as widely as possible.
8. Should we seek to develop new strategies that allow us to target and recruit in small to medium companies and in the growing parts of the service economy?
9. Should training and education of activists be the Union’s top priority? Should the GMB look at the way it spends its money on education and training?
10. Should the Union review our Rule Book and identify those rules which are either no longer relevant or act as an impediment to our growth and success?
11. Should the Union look again at the recruitment targets that we have? Is there further scope in all sectors of the economy and should we identify priorities in manufacturing, private services and public services?

12. Should the focus of the GMB be more centred on the workplace and the Reps who look after our members? Should more resources, effort and time be put in to the work that we do in our member's workplaces?

13. Should we look at everything the Union currently does and assess its value to GMB members? If it does not benefit our members, should we stop doing it?

14. How do we improve and develop a strategy, structures and an approach to attract young people and ethnic minorities into trade unions?

15. How do we achieve 100% membership in every workplace where the GMB has recognition?

16. Should the Union consider the expansion of community Branches?

17. Should the Union consider moving National Officers out into the Regions and away from National Office? Would this allow National Officers to be closer to the members that they represent?

18. Should there be increased focus and resources dedicated to improved Regional communications? Should the majority of communication resources be committed at a Regional level?

19. Should we review the recruitment process that we currently use to employ GMB officials? Should we consider if the Recruitment Officer entry level is successful or if it is what the GMB requires? Would it be more appropriate to consider specifically recruiting servicing officers?

20. Should we develop common benchmarked standards on education across the Union?

21. Should the GMB commission research into why trade union membership is falling?

22. Should the GMB set out our vision for the future of our union and communicate this clearly to our members?

23. How can the Union make best use of information technology?

24. Should the GMB set up a call centre where members can get advice and information quickly? Would this be useful in those workplaces where the Union has no shop steward or where we have few members?

DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES

25. Should the Union seek to increase Branch activity? The 2001 Congress Special Report 'Fresh Start for Branches' will be revisited by the Task Group and consideration will be given to expanding Branch Forums. Should we look closely at those branches that don't seem to be working and assess what help they need to succeed and grow?

26. Should we examine the layers between GMB members and their union – do we need all of them? As GMB structures have not changed since 1937, should we review them to see if they are still relevant?

27. Should the Union consider either the abolition or a radical reduction of the GMB's Sections? Should Section Conferences be replaced with Industrial Conferences?

28. Should there be a return to an annual GMB Congress? Is it your view that Congress should not be along the traditional lines? Should industrial and topic led meetings be held during Congress? Should motions to Congress be submitted via Section or Industrial Conferences?

29. Should the Central Executive Committee (CEC) and Regional Councils be reduced in size and should they be elected on a regional rather than sectional basis?

30. Should the Union review the amount of GMB Regions and the size of Regions? Should there be a tidying up exercise on Regional boundaries? Do we need Regions as currently constituted at all?

31. Should the Union examine the future of nationally serviced Branches? Should consideration be given to returning this membership to the Regions? Do you believe they could be better serviced in the Regions?

32. Should there be a review of our election rules to allow campaigning and canvassing for all future elections?

33. Should the current system where only Regional Council members are allowed to stand for election to the CEC be maintained?

34. How do we increase the participation of GMB members in everything we do and give GMB members a sense of identity with their union? If we replace sections for example, what will we put in place that will enable our members to identify with and take ownership of?

GMB FINANCES

35. Should the retired life members rate be increased?

36. Should financial re-structuring take place? Should, for example, the current funding split between the Regions and National Office be reviewed? Should there be a new method of accounting so that Regions have complete control of their budgets and can properly manage their finances? Should accounting procedures be simplified so all members can understand them?

37. Should the Union's money be held and spent in the Regions? Should the current practice of Regions spending money and then sending 50% of any surplus to National Office be reviewed?

38. GMB members should decide how we spend our money. Should that money be overwhelmingly spent on our members in the workplace and not on maintaining the Union's bureaucracy? At present 68% of our budget is spent on operating costs.

39. Should the future of the National Administration Unit be reviewed? Should their current functions be returned to GMB Regions?

40. Should we review Branch Commission and seek a common rate across the Union?

41. Should the GMB consider upgrading members' benefits?

42. Should the Union consider how to increase our Direct Debit membership? Should the Union look at giving incentives for members to convert to Direct Debit payment?

43. Going into the future, should the GMB consider becoming a pension provider to GMB members?

44. Should the GMB review whether each of its 12 costs centres (the 10 Regions, the National Administration Unit and the National Office) gives value for money to the members?

APPENDIX D

SCHEDULE: RULE AMENDMENTS: ANNUAL CONGRESS

The rule amendments required to return to an annual Congress simply involve reverting to the previous rules and do not require further detailed consultation i.e. annual Congress; rules revision Congress every third year; election of President and Vice-President; and removal of the (obsolete) CEC power to increase contributions in a non-Congress year.

The only slight variation from previous practice is to maintain the four-year term of office of the President and Vice-President, in line with other office holders, rather than hold elections in alternate Congresses.

On the that basis, the required rule amendments are as follows

Rule 8 Congress of the Union

Clause 1, lines 3 and 4:

Delete *"in 1999 and thereafter in alternate years"*

Substitute *"every year"*

Clause becomes:

"1. The supreme authority of the Union shall be vested in the Congress (Ordinary or Special) composed of delegates from the Regions of the Union (in these Rules referred to as Regions). The Ordinary Congress shall be held every year on dates to be determined by the Central Executive Council, which shall have full power to settle all matters financial and otherwise appertaining to the Ordinary Congress. A Special Congress may, however, be held at such time as the Central Executive Council shall determine, and the Central Executive Council shall have full power to settle all matters financial and otherwise, appertaining to such Special Congress."

Rule 9 Business of the Congress

Clause 3, lines 3 and 4:

Delete *"the Ordinary Congress held in 1999 and thereafter to every second Congress"*

Insert *"the Ordinary Congress held in 2006 and thereafter to every third Ordinary Congress"*

Clause becomes:

"3. The Congress by a majority vote shall have power to rescind, alter and add to any of these rules. Consideration of amendments shall be restricted to the Ordinary Congress held in 2006 and thereafter to every third Ordinary Congress. The Central Executive Council shall, nevertheless, have power to submit to any Congress (Ordinary or Special) amendments to rules."

Rule 12 President

Clause 1, lines 1 and 2

Delete "*at each alternate ordinary Congress*"

Insert "*in 2005 and at every fourth Ordinary Congress thereafter* "

Clause becomes:

"1. The President shall be elected in 2005 and at every fourth Ordinary Congress thereafter from amongst the members of Congress elected in accordance with Rule 8.2, and from the members of the Central Executive Council. S/he shall hold office for four years; shall preside at the Congress succeeding that at which s/he is elected and shall be eligible for nomination and re-election at the expiration of his/her term of office. During his/her term of office s/he shall preside at all meetings of the Central Executive Council and such other Union meetings as the Central Executive Council may direct. S/he shall be responsible for the proper conduct of the business of all such meetings; shall sign the Minutes and in conjunction with the General Secretary and Treasurer, endeavour to secure the observance of these Rules by all concerned. S/he shall attend the Trades Union Congress and Labour Party Conference, and such other conferences as may be deemed appropriate."

Rule 13 Vice-President

Clause 1, lines 1 and 2

Delete "*by each alternate ordinary Congress*"

Insert "*in 2005 and by every fourth Ordinary Congress thereafter* "

Clause becomes:

"1. The Vice-President shall be elected in 2005 and by every fourth Ordinary Congress thereafter from amongst the members of the Central Executive Council and shall hold office for four years. If between one Ordinary Congress and another a new Central Executive Council requires to be elected and the Vice-President is not a member thereof, a new Vice-President shall be elected at the first meeting from amongst its own number. In the absence of the President, the Vice-President shall preside at meetings of the Central Executive Council and be responsible for the proper conduct of the business."

Rule 47 Contributions

Delete clause 6